



The Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council

Freight Subcommittee Minutes from the January 26, 2021 Virtual Workshop

Committee Members

Gregory Stuart, Broward MPO (Chair)
Greg Slay, Capital Region TPA
Gary Harrell, Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO
Lisa Silva, Hillsborough MPO
Jeff Sheffield, North Florida TPO

MPOAC Member Organization Participants

William Cross, Broward MPO
Paul Flavien, Broward MPO
Rebecca Schultz, Broward MPO
Sai Edara, Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO
Lakshmi Gurram, Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO
Alex Trauger, MetroPlan Orlando
Brandy Otero, Collier MPO
Caitlin Cerame, Emerald Coast RPC
Austin Mount, Emerald Coast RPC
Mary Beth Washnock, Emerald Coast RPC
Michael Escalante, Gainesville MTPO
Marybeth Soderstrom, Heartland Regional TPO
Ron Gogoi, Lee MPO
Beth Beltran, Martin MPO
Nick Lepp, MetroPlan Orlando
Alex Trauger, MetroPlan Orlando
Lisa Colmenares, Miami-Dade TPO
Kevin Walford, Miami-Dade TPO
Chandra Frederick, Polk TPO
Steven Bostel, Space Coast TPO

FDOT Participants

Rickey Fitzgerald, FDOT ^P
Scott Philips, FDOT
Huiwei Shen, FDOT

Other/Partner/Staff Participants

Michael Williamson, Cambridge Systematics ^P
Daniel Crotty, Whitehouse Group ^P
Jeff Kramer, CUTR

MPOAC Staff

Carl Mikyska, MPOAC

^P *Presenter*

31 Total Participants

Discussion Items

All Discussion Items are based on the Meeting Agenda ([Appendix A](#)).

1. **Gregory Stuart** (Committee Chair) and **Carl Mikyska** (MPOAC Executive Director) welcomed all participants and opened the virtual workshop with introductions.
 - a. The **MPOAC Executive Director** explained that the gathering was considered a “workshop” since the participants were not meeting in person.
 - b. **Beth Beltran** from the Martin MPO announced that her Board [updated their bylaws to establish a freight transportation advisory committee \(FTAC\)](#).
2. The **Committee Chair** gave the Committee Chair Update:
 - a. **The Chair** stressed the importance of freight and goods movement, especially during the pandemic.
 - b. **The Chair** shared his optimism for the continued support for freight coming from the Office of the President of the United States while also noting that [sustainability would be a renewed focus](#) of the new administration.
 - c. **The Chair** projected that community centers and grocery stores (e.g., [Publix](#)) would take on new roles following the delivery plan of the COVID-19 vaccine, making freight even more critical in the future.
 - d. **The Chair** suggested that there are many new topics for the Committee to discuss in the near future. As our transportation system begins to change, new funding policies (i.e., reforms for the dwindling fuel tax revenues) will be needed for emerging technologies (e.g., autonomous vehicles).
3. **Rickey Fitzgerald** gave the FDOT Freight and Multimodal Operations (FMO) Office Update to review their recent work and activities.
 - a. The [FMO Office](#) completed its [Freight and Mobility Trade Plan](#) (FMTP) in April 2020.
 - b. On November 30th, 2020, FDOT held [a workshop](#) with its internal stakeholders (i.e., District Freight Coordinators or DFCs) to define the National Highway Freight Program (NHFP) by policy.
 - c. On December 10th, 2020, the FMO office participated in a [Truck Parking Workshop](#) with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).
 - i. The FMO office completed a statewide [Truck Parking Study](#) in March 2020, and FHWA reached out to set up a [series of at least three \(3\) workshops](#).
 - ii. **Rickey Fitzgerald** noted it would be an excellent opportunity to identify tangible solutions to Florida’s truck parking needs. They are forming new partnerships and receiving lots of constructive feedback from a national perspective.

- d. On December 15th, the FMO Office [met with the Florida Freight Advisory Committee \(FLFAC\)](#), where they discussed [updates to the FMTP](#), the FMTP's Implementation framework, and FLFAC's membership turnover.
 - e. The FMO submitted their [FMTP Investment Element](#) to FHWA.
 - i. The document summarizes Florida's yearly allotment of NHFP funds.
 - ii. **Rickey Fitzgerald** noted that they successfully [programmed \\$361 million of NHFP funds](#) for 64 projects between FY 2021 through FY 2026. He thanked the MPOAC Freight Committee for submitting the projects that made it on that list.
 - iii. **Rickey Fitzgerald** also discussed the [updated focus of the FMTP Implementation phase](#).
 - f. The FMO's FMTP process will begin again in February.
 - i. Call-for-Projects – February
 - ii. Project Prioritization – April to May
 - iii. Funding Assessment – June to July
 - iv. Project Programming – September
 - v. Product Delivery to FHWA – December
4. **Daniel Crotty** gave the [2021 Freight Priorities Program Update and Roll Out presentation \(Appendix B\)](#).
- a. This year marks the fourth year the MPOAC Freight Committee has supported the *Freight Priorities Program (FPP)*.
 - b. No substantial changes were made to the FPP's application process for 2021.
 - c. The program's schedule will begin February 1st, which is two weeks earlier than 2020.
 - d. An interim list of projects will be submitted to FDOT once the call-for-projects ends.
 - e. The final list will be presented to the MPOAC Freight Committee on April 29th, 2021.
 - f. **Alex Trauger** from MetroPlan Orlando elevated his MPO's concern regarding the use of [National Highway Freight Network \(NHFN\) roadway designations](#) (e.g., Primary Highway Freight System, Critical Urban Freight Corridor, Critical Rural Freight Corridor).
 - i. At present, the network mileage limitations impact an MPO's ability to identify and subsequently fund priority freight projects.
 - ii. **Paul Flavien** from the Broward MPO shared a success story where they partnered with Miami-Dade TPO and the DFCs from FDOT District 4 and District 6 to [make a designation change](#). **Alex Trauger** noted that over the last five (5) years, there had been some turnover at the District 5 DFC position that has impacted their ability to move forward.

- iii. **Alex Trauger** suggested that a statewide study should be done to reallocate the network mileage. **Rickey Fitzgerald** expressed mutual concern over the issue and noted that FDOT Central Office had experienced delays on the issue due to the pandemic. He also stated that he would be looking for answers regarding the reallocation of network designation mileage during this year's FMTP process.
- 5. The **Committee Chair** asked the **MPOAC Executive Director** to go over Administrative Items.
 - a. The Committee must have an in-person quorum (i.e., [one-third of its members present](#)) present at the April 29th, 2021 meeting to endorse the FPP list. The **Committee Chair** suggested that only the necessary members attend in-person to establish a quorum.
 - b. The **Committee Chair** noted that he is meeting virtually with House and Senate staffers and USDOT appointees in February to discuss the upcoming reauthorization bill, climate resiliency, and discretionary programs.
- 6. The **MPOAC Executive Director** opened the floor for Public Comments.
 - a. **Daniel Crotty** recalled **Beth Beltran's** announcement regarding the Martin MPO's newly established FTAC to encourage other MPO's to try and follow suit and to use them to propose and vet projects for the FPP.
 - b. **Beth Beltran** noted that virtual meetings had empowered their freight industry stakeholders to participate more often. They were responsible for identifying a need for an FTAC.
- 7. The **Committee Chair** concluded with the Meeting Adjournment.

Action Items

1. **Carl Mikyska** will provide the MPOAC Freight Committee with the application information for the FLFAC turnover process once he receives it from **Rickey Fitzgerald**.
2. Review and reorganize the MPOAC Freight Committee membership to reflect any changes that have occurred.

Appendices

<u>Appendix</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Page</u>
Appendix A:	MPOAC Freight Committee Meeting Agenda	7
Appendix B:	2021 Freight Priorities Program Update and Roll Out	8

Appendix B

Florida Freight Advisory Committee Update – 2019 Activities

An agenda slide with a green and blue design. The MPOAC logo is in a blue oval at the top right. The word "Agenda" is in large blue font. Below it are five horizontal bars of varying lengths, each containing an agenda item. The bars alternate in color: blue, green, grey, blue, and green.

Agenda

- Program Purpose
- Overview of Process and Updates
- Project Funding Eligibility and Competitiveness
- Program Recap
- 2021 FPP Schedule

Purpose of the FPP

- To provide MPOs with an opportunity to identify high priority freight projects on an annual basis
- To use the MPOAC as a united voice to promote and endorse these priorities on behalf of its members, for consideration by FDOT



Overview of Process

1

Each MPO submits up to 3 freight projects

Projects must fall on state highway system or NHFN, be post-PD&E or PD&E underway, or PD&E funded

Projects must be able to accept construction funds (e.g., be unfunded, partially funded, able to accept accelerated funding)

2

Screening checklist (including new DFC checklist) must be completed for each project and submitted to MPOAC

3

Staff will respond to follow up questions from consultant team

4

Statewide project list will be developed and shared with FDOT CO and DFCs to help ensure FDOT is aware and supportive of the projects

5

Statewide project list will be presented to MPOAC for approval (Freight Committee, Staff Directors, and Governing Board)

Overview of Process

- Program contains the following requirements for MPOs:
 - Each MPO can submit up-to-three (3) freight projects
 - Projects must fall on state highway system, and be post-PD&E or PD&E underway, or PD&E funded, or project does not require PD&E (ready for design and/or construction)
 - Projects must be able to accept funds in the current Work Program (e.g., be unfunded, partially funded, able to accept accelerated funding)

Overview of Process

- Program contains the following requirements for MPOs (continued):
 - Screening Checklist must be completed for each project and submitted to MPOAC
 - Staff need to respond to any follow up questions from consultant team
 - Project list will be developed for Florida and presented to MPOAC for approval
 - Approved list will be transmitted to FDOT to inform annual Work Program development activities

Overview of Process

- Review and Vetting
 - Checklist inputs for each project will be reviewed for completeness and content
 - URLs must be provided to source documents (LRTP, TIP, Work Program) for projects to be confirmed
 - Follow up questions will be developed based on
 - Missing data
 - Incomplete data
 - Data unable to be confirmed with provided URLs
 - Questions will be submitted to MPOs for additional data and clarification as necessary
 - Revised Checklists will be reviewed and used to develop project list

Overview of Process

- Final Vetted Projects will be Used to Develop the 2021 Freight Priorities Project List
 - Additional Backup will be Provided as Part of the Final List



Updates to the Process

- No substantial changes for 2021
- Changes in 2020:
 - Simplified Checklist and Instructions
 - Expanded on the “defined action” (i.e., “advance phase,” “funding request”) portion of the list to clarify whether a project is partially funded
 - Develop Checklist for MPOs to follow when working with the District Freight Coordinators that helps verify project eligibility and defined action
 - Submit an **interim draft report** of the FPP list to FDOT in March



Freight Priorities Program Overview

The Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC), in partnership with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), has developed the Freight Prioritization Program (FPP) to annually identify and promote high-priority freight projects within the State's Scenic and Florida's Metropolitan Planning Organization for consideration in FDOT's 5-Year Work Program and other potential funding sources. The FPP's objective is to better collaborate across MPOAC's members and to partners to develop a vetted list of freight projects that represent the united goal of the MPOAC.

Why is Interacting with Your FDOT District Freight Coordinator Important?

A critical resource that each MPO should consider in the FPP process is the knowledge and input of their FDOT District Freight Coordinator (DFC). Part of each DFC's job is to understand the federal and state funding processes (i.e., State Funding, Federal Grants, and Infrastructure, National Infrastructure Council, Strategic Investment System) that can support freight projects in Florida. They will know which projects within your region align with the criteria for such programs, as well as which ones stand a better chance for funding when the FPP list reaches higher levels of review.

It is critical that each MPO work closely with their DFC to make a more informed decision about which projects they should nominate for the MPOAC FPP. Remember that your DFC must also submit a District Priority Project list, which Central Office will consider, so it is beneficial to know if any MPO's freight priorities may also be on that list because those projects could score higher during FDOT's internal project prioritization process.

Notes that this overview is meant to create a stronger partnership between the MPOAC and FDOT and to inform your decision-making. We are not endorsing MPOAC members to allow FDOT to choose MPO priorities. We are simply calling for more coordination between the FPP and the DFC's District Priority List. Below is a checklist that can help your MPO choose which projects to submit for this year's FPP.

What to Cover when Working with your FDOT District Freight Coordinator

- Identify your MPO's assigned District Freight Coordinator. If your FDOT District has a vacancy at that position, you will likely learn from Central Office.
- Let your DFC know that your MPO is considering submitting a project(s) as part of this year's MPOAC Freight Priorities Program.
- Ask them to share the list of projects they are considering for their District Priority Project list that are located within your MPO's planning boundary. Note that that list may still be in development.
- Compare the list to the projects you may be considering from your MPO's portfolio (e.g., Regional Freight Plan, Transportation Improvement Program, Long Range Transportation Plan).
- Meet with your DFC to understand any differences between both lists. They might not be considering your projects for several reasons (e.g., ineligible for MPO funding, ineligible for State funding, the project is not in their MPO's planning boundary, or they may have already submitted your MPO's list).
- Choose up to three projects for the FPP. Note that you do not need to choose projects that appear on your DFC's District Priority Project list (but you can). Submit them to the FPP.
- If your project aligns with your DFC's list, work with them to define the Project. Submit a letter for each chosen project to explain how the project advances goods movement in Florida.
- Ask your DFC if they are considering any projects within your MPO's planning boundary for other funding opportunities (e.g., I-95, I-10, I-75). These can be added to your three project submissions.

2021 Freight Prioritization Program INSTRUCTIONS

Program Overview

- Identify up-to-three projects that meet the defined criteria.
 - Projects should fall on a priority freight network (e.g., State Highway System, National Highway Freight Network).
 - Projects must be post-FOAE or have a FOAE funded or underway.
 - Projects should be unfunded, partially funded, or able to accept accelerated funding.
- Complete the Project Submission Form.
 - The form provides an opportunity for MPOs to describe the characteristics of up-to-three priority freight projects that are eligible and ready for construction-related funding.
 - Two 30-minute GoToMeeting training webinars will be scheduled for the weeks of February 24th and March 2nd. Stay tuned for the invitations. MPOAC's consultants also are available to provide technical support (Daniel Crilly at 784-707-7607 or dcrilly@carlsonpartners.com and Michael Williams at 404-531-4115 or mwilliams@carlsonpartners.com).
- Collaborate with your partner District Freight Coordinators to complete the Project Submission Form.
 - MPO staff should work with their District Freight Coordinators (DFCs) to know what projects they are planning on submitting as a District Priority Project and to ensure FDOT is aware of any additional projects the MPO may want them to support.
 - Your DFC will likely know which projects within your region align well with FDOT's Work Program scoring criteria, the Freight Mobility and Trade Plan (2018/2023/2030), and the criteria of other funding programs (e.g., MPO, SIB).
 - It benefits each MPO to know what projects their DFC has in mind for their District Priority Project list, because you may have a mutual project that allows you to work together to complete the Project Submission Form.
 - If your DFC does not have your desired project(s) on their District Priority Project list, fill out a Project Submission Form anyway and work with your DFC to get project-specific information for your submission. Additionally, provide them with the necessary information (e.g., the project is new and has been identified in a new regional freight plan to advocate for your projects when going after this and other funding opportunities (e.g., I-95, I-10, I-75, SIB, district discretionary funds)).
 - A workflow checklist to help work with your DFCs will be provided to you during/after the GoToMeeting training webinars.
- Transmit the completed form(s) by March 27th, 2020.
 - The completed form(s) should be transmitted to the MPOAC's consultants for review by March 27th (To Daniel Crilly and Michael Williams).
- Respond to any follow-up questions from the consultant team and your DFC.
 - Follow-up questions may be necessary after projects are submitted. Questions will focus on confirming eligibility, details from your Project Submission Form, and documenting that the project(s) is an MPO freight priority.

2021 Freight Prioritization Program Project Submission Form

Notice: Please read accompanying instructions carefully before completing this form. Each agency may submit up to three (3) projects by providing the requested information.

Project Profile

MPO Name [Click here to respond]	Other MPO(s) Involved [Click here to respond]	
County/Cities Involved [Click here to respond]	FDOT District Freight Coordinator (DFC) Name, is this project a DFC Priority Project? [Click here to respond] (Y/N/A/Not Yet)	
Facility Name [Click here to respond]	Project Name [Click here to respond]	
F# Number(s) [Click here to respond]	FDOT Roadway (US) [Click here to respond]	Direction [Click here to respond]
Extent of Project (Mileage) [Click here to respond]	From: [Click here to respond]	To: [Click here to respond]
Extent of Project (Intersected Roadway) [Click here to respond]	From: [Click here to respond]	To: [Click here to respond]
Project Type	<input type="checkbox"/> Capacity Expansion <input type="checkbox"/> New Connection <input type="checkbox"/> Reconstruction <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance and Operation <input type="checkbox"/> Maintenance <input type="checkbox"/> Other(s)	Please specify if select "Other(s)" [Click here to respond]
Existing Truck Activity [Click here to respond]		
Project Description [Click here to respond]		
Describe Project Rationale [Click here to respond]		

Page 1

Carl Mikyska, Executive Director
 605 Suwannee Street, MS 28B · Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0450
 1-866-374-3368 x 4037 or 850-414-4037 · Fax 850-414-4895
www.mpoac.org

Project Funding Eligibility

- What funding programs are we trying to influence?
 - Funding eligibility is tied to network designations
 - National Highway Freight Network (NHFN) and Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) allocations are controlled by FDOT Central Office
 - Funding for all other state highways are primarily controlled by FDOT District Offices in coordination with MPOs
- Final list of projects includes identification of network designations to facilitate consideration by appropriate funding program(s)
- Feel free to identify MPO priority projects off the SHS; however, it is reportedly more helpful if they connect to a network that is tied to a funding designation (e.g., NHFN)

Project Competitiveness

- FDOT has integrated the FPP into their funding decision process
- Lessons on how to increase project competitiveness
 - Champion the list **during and after** the final FPP list is approved
 - Establish and maintain **strong relationships with the FDOT coordinators**
 - Understand your DFC's freight priorities
 - Share and reconcile each project's information early and often
 - Coordinate efforts when seeking other funding opportunities (e.g., BUILD, INFRA)
 - Identify all related freight networks (e.g., NHFN, SIS) associated with your project(s)

2018 FPP Recap

16 of Florida's 27 MPOs Submitted Projects **(59%)**

37 total projects **7** FDOT Districts

33 Projects are on the SIS, 24 are on regionally significant roadways, and 10 are on the NHFN

100% of projects have a PD&E completed, underway, planned or not needed

All projects support at least 2 FTP goals

2019 FPP Recap

14 of Florida's 27 MPOs Submitted Projects **(52%)**

30 total projects **6** FDOT Districts

24 Projects are on the SIS and 9 are on the NHFN

All projects support at least 3 FTP goals

100% of projects have a PD&E completed, underway, planned or not needed

Funding requests totaled \$2.7 billion (one project alone was \$1.5 billion) representing phase advancements and new funding requests

2020 FPP Recap

18 of Florida's 27 MPOs Submitted Projects **(67%)**

32 total projects **6** FDOT Districts

25 projects are on the SIS, 21 are on a regional freight network, and 14 are on the NHFN

All projects support at least three FTP goals

78% of projects are District Freight Coordinator priorities

81% of projects are for roadway capacity

Funding requests exceeded \$1.2 billion representing phase advancements and new funding requests

Okaloosa-Walton
Transportation Planning
Organization



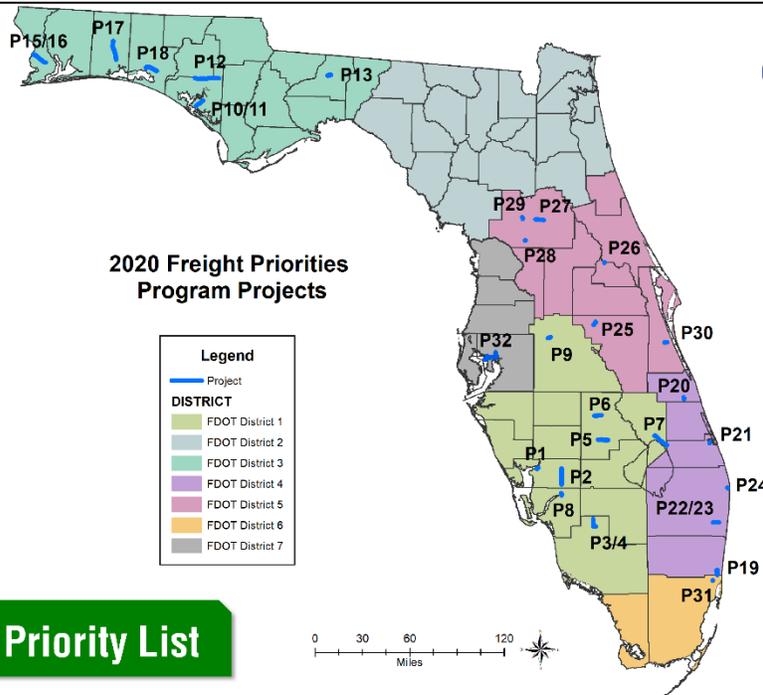
Carl Mikyska, Executive Director

605 Suwannee Street, MS 28B · Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0450
1-866-374-3368 x 4037 or 850-414-4037 · Fax 850-414-4895

www.mpoac.org

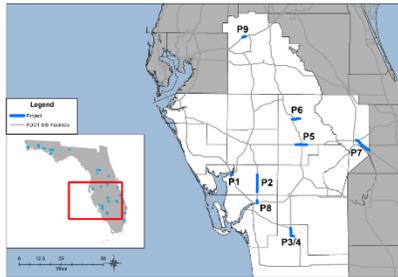
Summary of Submittals

- List includes 2020 INFRA and 2020 BUILD grant application projects
 - **I-95 Interchange at Oslo Road** (2020 BUILD submitted by FDOT)
 - **Port of Palm Beach rail (onsite), Port Road and Middle Road (onsite)** (2020 INFRA submitted by Port of Palm Beach)
- Project list captures “other freight priorities” that represent key MPO priorities, but do not currently meet the defined program criteria
 - Port of Palm Beach rail (onsite), Port Road and Middle Road (onsite)
 - SR 31 Road Widening from Cook Brown Rd to CR 74

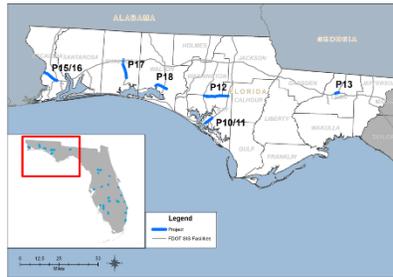


2020 Project Priority List

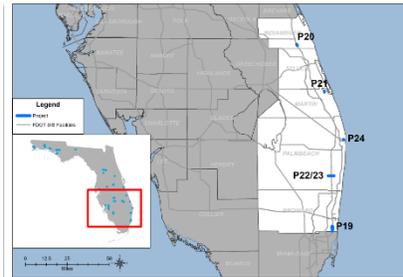
2020 Projects By District



District 1

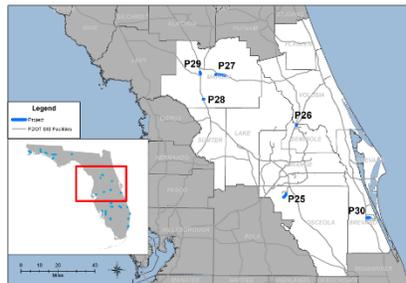


District 3

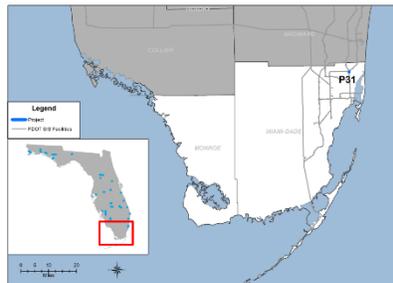


District 4

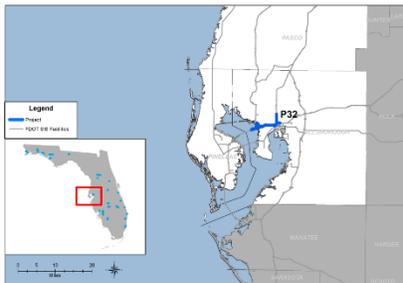
2020 Projects By District



District 5



District 6



District 7

2021 FPP Schedule

- February 1: **Call for Projects** will go out via Email to each MPO
 - MPOs will be provided with **Instructions**
- Early February: Two **training webinars** will be scheduled
- March 12: MPO **Project Submissions** are due
 - **Interim list** will be transmitted to FDOT soon after
- April 29: Present **Final Draft List** to Freight Committee, Staff Directors, and Governing Board for approval and transmittal to FDOT
 - **Endorsed List** will be transmitted to FDOT soon after

Questions?

