**Introduction**

Travel Demand Models and associated forecasting tools are used to analyze roadway and transit mobility in regional analysis, project specific studies, as well as special applications such as air quality and resilience analyses. Using travel demand models in these applications provides planners and decision makers with a proven tool that facilitates data driven decision making. The Communicating the Values of Forecasting Tools Committee will develop informative materials to illustrate, document, and educate planners and executive leadership on the benefit of forecasting tools and the data that supports these tools in a simplified format to promote interest, use, and understanding.

**Gaps**

While planners, engineers, decision makers and other stakeholders routinely use travel demand models and other forecasting tools, the narrative surrounding the use of these tools is that the development of models are complicated, not well documented, time consuming, and costly. However, data driven decision making using forecasting models is the most efficient approach to compiling large datasets for the evaluation of land use and transportation systems changes analyzing the impact of growth on transportation mobility. Forecasting models are critical components in support of the prioritization and allocation of financial resources.

The following are key considerations related to communicating the value of forecasting tools:

* Clear and concise guidance is necessary to explain complex models and associated methodologies.
* Workforce turnover and professional development necessitates the need for introductory guidance, basic training opportunities and a generalized understanding of the role of travel demand models in Planning and Engineering fields.
* Discussion of forecasting methodologies and results must be interpreted and communicated in a simplified format that non-technical parties can easily digest.
* Promoting the communication between users of varying capabilities and familiarity is paramount to developing an inclusive and progressive forecasting program.

**Committee Formation**

The gaps of using and communicating the technical aspects of forecasting tools were identified by members of the Florida planning/modeling community as vital elements to develop instruction and understanding through a targeted campaign. Discussions about this topic were facilitated in a generalized forum of forecasting practitioners which resulted in the formation of the Committee. This group specially aims to broaden the knowledge of application of forecasting tools to a wider audience of stakeholders such as planners and decision makers.

**Summary**

There is an immediate need, identified by the Florida modeling community to enhance and increase outreach related to the value of forecasting tools. The committee is convened to address the gaps in understanding and awareness and will spend the next 10 months conducting research on specific strategies to promote a broad understanding and application of forecasting tools. The committee will present findings, work products, and other targeted strategies at the next annual Florida Transportation Forecasting Forum meeting in December 2024.