



Statewide Collaboration Meeting

Location: Microsoft Teams

Date: April 5, 2024

Friday, April 5th

Florida Metropolitan Planning Partnership (FMPP) Meeting Summary

Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), and Florida's Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) met to collaborate on transportation planning activities in Florida. The partnership between these entities provides valuable support for funding and program implementation.

Welcome & Introductions

Donna Green, FDOT Office of Policy Planning (OPP), introduced the FDOT team and welcomed everyone to the meeting. Donna introduced Cathy Kendall, FHWA Florida Division Planning Team Leader, Michael Sherman, FTA Leader, and the following presenters:

- Huiwei Shen, Chief Planner
- Dana Reiding, Manager Systems Forecasting & Trends Office
- Kim Likens, Director of Investigations for FDOT, Office of Inspector General (OIG)
- Larry Burns, Deputy Director of Investigations – Training Manager, OIG
- Anthony Jackson, Deputy Director of Investigations, Accreditation Manager, OIG
- Jeff Sheffield, Executive Director, North Florida TPO

American Institute for Certified Planners (AICP) and Profession Engineer (PE) credits will be provided for this course.

- AICP information is available here:
<https://www.planning.org/cm/provider/99046/details/>





Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Update

Huiwei Shen and Dana Reiding provided a GHG update.

- On December 21st, 2023, Florida joined other states in the Kentucky Federal Court in the GHG target lawsuit. FHWA postponed the hearings to April 1st, 2024.
- On April 2nd, 2024, the 2023 Greenhouse Gas Rule was vacated.
- A federal court in Texas struck down the GHG target reporting requirement in a separate lawsuit on March 27th, 2024.
- FDOT has not received any official communication from FHWA, but other states have been informed that they are not required to provide GHG targets.
- As of now, FDOT and Florida's MPOs are not required to comply with the rule or submit any justification. FDOT will provide updates on this matter.
 - FDOT will wait for the 30-day appeal window to expire before making any further decisions.
- Despite not submitting GHG information to FHWA, FDOT has already began collecting calculations on GHG information to support Florida's MPOs.

FHWA Update

Cathy Kendall provided an update from FHWA.

- FHWA is conducting Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) reviews. FHWA is also working with FTA to get their comments.
- FHWA is pleased with the new Grant Application Process (GAP) System.
- Fiscal constraint for Transportation Management Areas (TMAs) and non-TMAs has been a concern for FHWA. FHWA has noticed improvement in this area.
- FHWA has found inconsistencies when performing Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP), and Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) reviews.
- Changes in 2018 for factors like Strategic Highway System (SHS) plans, resiliency and reliability, stormwater mitigation reports, and travel and tourism should be incorporated into the new LRTPs.
- Project information from the TIP should be included within the first four years of the Cost Feasible Plan (CFP) of the LRTP. MPOs should be using the updated Federal Planning Factors when drafting the LRTP.



- When FHWA states that the first four years of the LRTP should show the projects in the TIP, what information should be included?
 - The LRTP should show base year to twenty years out and show projects covered in the CFP identifying the years, the phases, and funding.
- Some MPOs reference the TIP and include it in the LRTP when they do amendments. Does the LRTP need to be amended when the TIP is amended for consistency?
 - The TIP comes from the LRTP, so there needs to be consistency between what is in the LRTP and what projects are being prioritized in the TIP.
 - Can projects be lumped together in the consistency plan?
 - It depends on the categories these projects fall under.
- The revenues of projects in the TIP does not necessarily match the revenues in the LRTP. This makes matching for consistency difficult. Some MPOs have over 500 projects in these documents.
 - FHWA has been directed that the LRTP includes all projects in the twenty year horizon. All of these projects need to be included in the LRTP.
- Why does the LRTP need to include the first four years? If the twenty year horizon goes to 2050, why would it not start in 2030? It would be helpful if a workshop were provided on LRTP expectations.
 - FHWA has tried to keep a consistent definition of what the twenty year horizon means. According to the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), the years beyond the first four years are considered the outer years. FHWA is open to a future workshop on this.
 - Calling it the twenty year horizon is confusing.
 - This was a Florida decision, not an FHWA decision.
- Balancing the Work Program can bring unexpected changes to project costs. It can be difficult to know when to amend the TIP and LRTP.
- Does the MPO need to submit modifications of the TIP and/or LRTP to FHWA?
 - FHWA does not approve modifications, but it would be helpful for FHWA to have the modified documents.
- Any regionally significant project needs to be provided in the LRTP. With regards to small, non-capacity projects, FHWA reviews the funding group of projects.

MPOAC Coordination Workshop Results



Donna Green provided an update on the results from the MPO Advisory Committee (MPOAC) coordination workshop.

- Donna: During the January 2024 MPOAC meeting, OPP conducted a Priority Process and Programming workshop as part of a series of workshops designed to identify enhancements to the coordination and collaboration processes between the MPO, FDOT, and FHWA. There were 24 people who participated during the January workshop. Some highlights:
 - Participants were pleased with the partnership between MPO and FDOT which has greatly improved over the past few years.
 - Overall, participants were happy with the process but not so happy with the availability of funds.
 - Funding and project prioritization flexibility would help MPOs meet their planning goals and strategies.
- During the January MPOAC Coordination Workshop, OPP focused the 1-hour workshop on the Priority Process of Federal funding for the List of Priority Projects (LOPP) submitted to the FDOT by the MPOs.
- Participants were asked to fill out cards for two discussion questions:
 - Question 1: What do you like about the existing process for identifying priority projects and selecting projects for federal funding?
 - Question 2: How would you enhance the existing process for identifying priority projects and selecting projects for federal funding?
- Once participants filled out these cards, OPP presented common themes from the responses and then asked participants to speak on the common themes captured for each question.
- Notes were taken on a flip chart.
- The following notes for Question 1 were recorded on a flip chart during the workshop:
 - Consistent coordination with the District MPO Liaisons and Local Agency Programs (LAP) office.
 - Regular coordination meetings to review MPO and FDOT priorities.
 - Discussion on how priorities flow out of the Cost Feasible Plan.
 - MPOs and District MPO Liaisons are working closely to watch funds through the process.



- More engagement and involvement between MPOs and FDOT on LRTP process for capacity projects.
- Increased role of District MPO Liaisons on the LRTP process for capacity projects.
- Coordination on funding for member projects.
- Forming consensus on projects through collaboration and coordination between the District MPO Liaison and District Staff.
- Question 1 Feedback from participants
 - MPOs have the flexibility to prioritize their projects in a way that matches their region's goals, strategies, and unique features.
 - Sounds like the process may vary across the State - perhaps consistency would be a positive change. We like taking the lead on setting our priorities and working with the district to get them programmed.
 - Our MPO process is data analytics driven and performance based, so the priorities adopted are valid and will implement the LRTP and assist FDOT in meeting its stated goals.
 - The formal follow-up by the district confirming receipt of the list and meeting the FDOT Secretary and staff to review and discuss priorities and local/regional insights.
 - The Liaisons meet with MPO staff before the Draft Tentative goes public. This meeting is for FDOT to show the MPO which priorities are being funded. This is extremely helpful and transparent and gives MPO staff the chance to comment and ask questions before the public.
 - FDOT begins programming at the top of the MPO priority list and works its way down. Providing explanation for any project stopped. This provides a level of predictability to the MPOs and how we manage the priority list.
 - The MPO as a whole has a call for projects which staff likes to do, then we rank internally and provide to FDOT via the LOPP. FDOT comes back with the Tentative Work Program (TWP). The process is in between the TWP and TIP is a good as well. There are multiple meetings and staff involvement from MPO and FDOT.
- The following notes for Question 2 were recorded on a flip chart during the workshop:



- Would like to see draft programming from the District.
- More coordination between the MPO and District Office of Work Program and Budget (OWPB).
- Better understanding of how the district prioritizes projects.
- Reducing turnover at the District MPO Liaison position.
- More frequent meetings between the District MPO Liaisons and District Executive Team.
- More frequent coordination between the District MPO Liaison and District OWPB.
- Discussion on the success of project implementation between the MPO and District MPO Liaison.
- More coordination on strategy for the delivery of projects.
- MPO priorities, not FDOT priorities. Discussion between the two on differences.
- Providing regular variance and gaming reports to the MPOs would be helpful.
- Providing regular reports on FDOT priorities to the MPOs would be helpful.
- Linking the Cost Feasible Plan and projects that are being programmed.
- Resolve issues with revenue projections.
- Allocation came out close to the Draft Work Program release.
- Question 2 Feedback
 - Consistency of process across Districts and the State.
 - Follow up consultative-type meetings to further discuss project priorities and options being considered by the district. Through this process, there may be opportunities for more local partnerships or other options reviewed to implement projects.
 - Enhance coordination after the submittal of the draft LOPPs. After the MPO submits its draft LOPP in March, we often do not see a draft programmed project list until the release of the Draft TWP. MPOs can be caught off guard and have little time to react to needed changes.
 - Improve transparency in the application of federal funds. Maintain cost feasibility by only applying FF to projects in LRTP. Provide MPO with





- necessary resources (variance reports, MADDOG, etc.) regarding funding availability and movement from project to project.
- Have district liaisons and work program staff work in concert with MPO staff.
- Develop a draft programmed list of projects prior to the release of the DTWP. We have found that the DTWP is not the ideal place to make changes on proposed programmed projects and we would like more time to read so we do not disturb the District's work program staff.
- Coordination between liaisons and work program staff. This results in the different staff being familiar with each other's processes.
- Survey Results
 - Most respondents had a favorable opinion of their partnerships and generally of the overall process; however, most people did not have a favorable view on the availability of funds.
 - We are using the closing survey results and workshop feedback to schedule MPO interviews in April through July.
 - Please reach out to us if you want to meet with us on this topic.
- Next Steps
 - OPP recapped the results from the activity at today's FMPP meeting.
 - OPP will conduct follow-up interviews with participants and will look into developing guiding principles and notable practices.
 - New workshops coming in future dates.

FDOT OIG Office

Kim Likens, Larry Burns, and Anthony Jackson presented ethics and accountability.

- OIG's mission is to provide independent and objective investigative and audit services that promote accountability, integrity, and efficiency within FDOT and its partners.
 - Section 20.055, F.S., states that an OIG is established in each state agency to provide a central point of coordination and responsibility for activities that promote accountability, integrity, and efficiency in government.
- An oversight activity performed by the OIG that involves employees, management officials, and affected Departmental programs and operations.
 - Audit objectives include:



- Assessments of program effectiveness, economy, and efficiency.
- Internal controls, which include the plans, policies, methods, and procedures adopted by management to meet its goals and objectives.
- Compliance with laws and regulations.
- An audit is to provide a proactive approach of a program.
- OIG investigates employee misconduct, falsification of documents, theft, contract fraud, bid rigging.
- OIG investigates issues to establish relevant facts, prove or disprove claims, and providing independent and objective investigations.
- OIG details a case example with Gainesville MTPO:
 - The objective was to determine whether Gainesville MTPO submitted invoices for planning grants G0U69 and G1N92 to the District in accordance with federal and Department governing directives.
 - OIG determined that Gainesville MTPO submitted invoices to the District in compliance with Federal and FDOT governing directives.
 - Gainesville MTPO's expenses are allowable, necessary, reasonable, and allocable in accordance with Title 2, Part 200, Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.)-Unified Administrative Requirements, Cost Principles, and Audit Requirements for Federal Awards, Subpart E-Cost Principles.
 - Gainesville MTPO has an Agreement for Professional Staff Services in compliance with subsection 339.175 (2)(b), Florida Statutes, (F.S.) (2021), and contractual agreements with the Department in compliance with subsection 339.175(10)(a)(1), F.S., (2021).
- OIG details a case example of an FDOT employee accepting gifts:
 - A Program Manager was accepting gifts from consultants who he supervised (Meals, drinks, tickets to sporting events)
 - The Program Manager was a long-term (26-year) Department employee.
 - The FDOT employee admitted to accepting gifts and resigned in lieu of termination.

North Florida TPO (NFTPO)

Jeff Sheffield presented on MPO projects prioritization.



- The MPO requests 30 to 35 studies in the UPWP with the idea of feasibly doing 10 to 12.
- NFTPO runs the North Florida Clean Fuels Coalition, a non-profit with a board of directors that allows the public sector to collaborate with various vendors focused on reducing local GHGs.
 - The coalition has had the greatest energy impact from alternative fuel vehicles of any local coalition in the country.
- Smart North Florida uses smart technologies, coordinated data, and regional collaboration to improve North Florida's economic competitiveness, sustainability, and quality of life.
 - This groups works to mitigate the barriers to innovation.
 - Notable projects include to following:
 - Filling potholes with artificial intelligence (AI)
 - Creating early train detectors
 - Using drain data to stop street floods
 - Assessing traffic with AI
 - Assessing intersections with AI
 - Using digital twins to provide smart parking in Saint Augustine
 - Using drone analysis for bridge inspection
 - Providing AI aerial vision mapping for roadway inventory
 - Using Light Detection and Ranging (LIDAR) analysis for asset conditions
 - Analyzing truck parking conditions using AI
 - Using unmanned aerial vehicles for overhead lighting
 - Filling the gaps with data coordination by performing data consulting projects for regional non-profits and the public sector.

Closing Remarks

- The 2024 Federal Planning Findings Meeting will be held on May 30 as a hybrid meeting on Teams and in the Executive Conference Room at the FDOT Central Office Burn Building.
- OPP provided a list of noteworthy upcoming MPO dates in the meeting chat and will include a copy in the summary to attendees.





- A virtual survey was provided to meeting attendees, a summary will be used by OPP to gauge meeting interests. OPP will email attendees the following items:
 - A list of noteworthy upcoming MPO dates
 - The virtual closing survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/6R7WQ6H>

