

## Florida Metropolitan Planning Partnership (FMPP) Statewide Collaboration Summary

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

### Welcome and Introductions

Donna M. Green, Statewide MPO Administrator, FDOT Office of Policy Planning (OPP), welcomed everyone to the meeting and reviewed the agenda.

### Process Updates

Dana Reiding, Director, FDOT OPP, presenter

- Transportation Planning Exchange 2026
  - Will be held on July 28-29, 2026, in Orlando
  - An MPO Liaison meeting will be held at the Exchange on the morning of July 28.
  - Everyone is welcome to attend.
- The January 2026 MPOAC meeting was successful and was well attended.
- OPP Process Improvements
  - OPP is working to streamline various existing processes and procedures.
  - Recent accomplishments include releasing updated versions of the UPWP Checklist, FDOT/MPO Agreement, and Joint Certification Document.
  - The Joint Certification Process is still intended to be a conversation between the District and MPO about their partnership in the planning process.
  - OPP is continuing to work with FHWA on other process improvements, including potentially changing amendment thresholds.
  - OPP welcomes any ideas or conversations on other potential process improvements.

### Training Session 1: Project Development – From Planning to Maintenance

Steven Buck, District 5 Project Development Administrator, and Dustin Castells, District 3 Deputy Program Management Administrator, presenters

- Dustin provided an overview of FDOT's project development process, discussed how projects are programmed in the FDOT Work Program, and explained local government and MPO roles.
- Steven presented on the importance of the planning phase of the project development process and how decisions made during planning can affect later project phases.
- How projects enter the Work Program
  - Projects are identified through planning (LRTPs, corridor studies, safety plans, etc.) and are prioritized for funding based on the availability of appropriate funds and alignment with District and statewide priorities.
  - Preservation of the existing transportation system is also an important criteria when selecting projects for programming.

- Safety is also a priority for FDOT and safety elements are incorporated into every project, even if it is not specifically a “safety” project.
- Funding and resources are limited, so the Work Program tries to be strategic when aligning District priorities with MPO/local priorities.
- The Work Program has over 200 different fund codes and each fund code has unique requirements and rules for use. Therefore, matching appropriate funding with eligible projects requires a significant investment of time and effort.
- It is important to establish formal agreements with partners for project commitments so risks associated with changes in leadership or personnel are mitigated.
- Case Study Examples
  - Widening/intersection control upgrade project
    - A project to address congestion and delays included roadway widening and intersection control upgrades.
    - With limited funding resources, the project team realized that they could only address either the morning or afternoon congestion issues, not both.
    - The project team decided to engage the community to determine which timeframe was more important for the project to immediately address. The community indicated that morning congestion was a higher priority.
    - Therefore, the project team focused on improvements to address the morning issues and planned to address the afternoon issues later when more funding became available.
  - Trail Project
    - Trail projects often cover long distances and cross multiple jurisdictions.
    - Instead of prioritizing the entire trail as one project, it can be beneficial to break the project into phases with a focus on the most project-ready segment first.
    - Address origin and destination points first, or segments that will be more heavily used. Prioritize segments that can get implemented quickly.
  - Widening project
    - To address congestion and delays, a widening project was proposed.
    - After some analysis, it was determined that 91% of delays were to due crashes that blocked one travel line.
    - The project team determined that adding auxiliary lanes could address crash-related congestion, which was a significantly more cost-effective solution than a standard road widening.

### *Discussion*

- Is there an automated process for matching Work Program fund codes with eligible projects? FDOT needs to invest in resources that make it easier to track, interpret, and communicate Work Program funding and programming decisions.
  - Currently there is not. Work Program staff must know eligibility requirements, which is why Work Program values experienced staff.
- Is there a process for reviewing and confirming which fund codes are matched to which projects?
  - The Work Program system has an “edit reports” function that will send a notification when a fund code is not eligible for a project. To help with this in District 3, Work Program staff meets with other program areas, such as PD&E, design, and construction to make sure that fund codes are eligible for the activities those program areas have planned for the upcoming year.

- Can you elaborate on safety being an investment priority for FDOT?
  - Safety is incorporated into everything the Department does, even something as simple as a resurfacing project. There are, however, federal safety funds that can be used for safety projects that meet certain criteria and benefit-cost requirements.
- MPOs are required to report on safety performance and to specifically identify safety projects. If safety is a priority and is a part of every project, can Work Program help MPOs identify projects that can be used to report on safety performance?
  - The District Work Program office should be able to run a report that shows every project that has a safety-related fund code or work mix.
- Sometimes the work mix description provided in the Work Program does not capture the safety aspects of a project. Can Work Program help provide more data or information on this to better communicate the safety aspects of projects to MPO boards?
  - District Work Program offices can help identify the safety aspects of a project. Sometimes it can be difficult to quantify the specific safety aspects of every project, especially if they are secondary or tertiary benefits.
- How can MPOs partner more effectively with FDOT Districts on the programming of STBG urban area (SU) funds?
  - Every District does things differently. Some Districts may work with MPOs to match up SU funds with the MPO's priorities. It can take a lot of time and coordination to build these relationships and get everyone on the same page. But the outcome is that the MPOs are rarely surprised by programming decisions when the Work Program is published.

### *Activity Report Out and Takeaways*

- To mitigate community pushback on projects, take the time to educate the community about how the project will address their stated needs.
- Leverage data and technology resources (modeling software, ETDM process, planning screen, etc.) to provide quantifiable justification for projects.
- Do not rely only on standard AM/PM traffic analysis. Some roads are congested at different times. Consider the context of the project to improve the analysis.
- Collaboratively develop a feasibility or concept development study for the project before putting it on the priority list. This demonstrates commitment and documents analysis.
- Consider how elections and changes in leadership can impact the project over its lifespan. Get agreements or resolutions in place to document commitments.
- Provide visualizations and maps of the project to better communicate with the public. People may be skeptical until they can see what the project will look like.
- Regularly update cost estimates so the most current information is available.
- Limit the number of project priorities and focus on what is most important.
- Have a good network of contacts and know who to reach out to for different issues at local jurisdictions, MPOs, and FDOT offices.
- Use the MPO's Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC), Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), and other committees and community groups to engage the public and better understand their needs and concerns.
- Early on, identify who will build the project, not later on in the middle of the project development process.

- Roll out projects in segments or phases. Identify which segments are more ready for implementation and prioritize those first.
- For trail or bicycle/pedestrian projects, carefully consider roadway crossings and identify what design requirements will be needed for each type.
- Involve FDOT engineers in corridor studies so they can help identify what improvements are realistic and implementable.
- Early coordination with local partners can help prevent making plans that cannot get implemented.
- Understand who the stakeholders are, especially for multi-jurisdictional projects and coordinate with them early.

## Training Session 2: Florida's Statewide Transportation Backbone

Carsherah Jackson, SIS Work Program Lead Planner, FDOT Systems Implementation Office (SIO), presenter

- Carsherah provided an overview of FDOT's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) and discussed the SIS planning and funding process.

### *Discussion*

- How does the Strategic Investment Tool (SIT) work? Some MPOs don't typically prioritize SIS projects.
  - SIT includes criteria for safety, connectivity, economic competitiveness, and environmental stewardship. But the SIS prioritization process compares projects statewide. So, it is important to have SIS projects in the MPO's List of Project Priorities (LOPP) to communicate to FDOT and SIO they are a priority. The SIT tool is not publicly available, but MPOs can work with their Districts to better understand the criteria and prioritization process.
- Can you explain the timing of the SIS planning process?
  - The process typically starts in the spring each year. SIO reaches out to Districts about their priorities. The SIS Adopted 5-Year Plan and the Approved 2<sup>nd</sup> 5-Year Plan are updated annually.
- When SIO updates cost estimates in the SIS Cost Feasible Plan (CFP), that impacts the cost estimates that MPOs include in their LRTPs, CFPs, and LOPPs. There needs to be more communication when these changes happen so MPOs can update their plans.
  - SIO will look into this.

### *Activity Report Out and Takeaways*

- Strategies to address funding shortfalls
  - Focus resources on project completion. Avoid programming projects that lack funding and resources to be fully completed.
  - Address top priorities first.
  - Try to balance phases.
  - Maximize the funds that you have and prioritize spending the entire budget.

## Training Session 3: Land Use and Transportation Linkages

Jennifer Z. Carver, Community Planning Administrator, FDOT OPP, and Whit Blanton, Executive Director, Forward Pinellas, presenters

- Jennifer and Whit discussed the relationship between land use and transportation planning, the role of MPOs in land use planning, key concepts and tools for land use planning, and several notable case studies.

#### *Activity Report Out and Takeaways*

- MPOs should coordinate with local agencies to influence decision making. Schedule meetings with municipal staff and developers to guide development.
- MPOs must collectively be better prepared for how to accommodate increased development in areas that are already built out.
- MPOs should continue to have discussions about how increased development density and intensity does not necessarily always lead to an increase in vehicle traffic.
- Use the Public Participation Plan to conduct outreach to stakeholders and FDOT staff, especially for site development review and permitting processes.
- Make sure the LRTP modelling includes anticipated significant developments.
- Proactively, rather than reactively, address safety needs during development proposal.
- Strengthen the link between planning and transit, freight, and delivery operations.
- Access management changes can be controversial. It is better to plan and implement access management improvements early rather than to try and retrofit.
- Speak with a unified voice to communities to show alignment and consistent messaging.
- Collectively reinforce the roles and responsibilities of developers, such as by formalizing development commitments.
- Plan at the corridor scale. MPOs and FDOT set the big picture framework. Give guidance to local governments on their role at the more local scale.
- The plans and priorities that MPOs develop should match the readiness of the communities to support those projects.

### **Training Session 4: Legislative Process – From Idea to Implementation**

Dana Reiding, Director, FDOT OPP, and Rolando Valdes, Transportation Performance Coordinator, FDOT Systems Forecasting and Trends Office (SFT)

- Dana discussed the upcoming federal transportation funding reauthorization.
  - In April of 2025, FDOT submitted its reauthorization priorities to Congress. The State of Florida has an opportunity to weigh in on what may change during the next reauthorization.
  - The most recent reauthorization put more emphasis on discretionary funding. One of FDOT's top priorities is rebalancing discretionary and formula funding and re-emphasizing the importance of funding flexibility.
  - FDOT prefers formula funding to be based on population and economic factors, not performance, because FDOT facilities already perform well.
  - Re-authorization does not only affect funding amounts, it also affects funding requirements, such as disadvantaged business entity or set-aside requirements.
  - It is important for MPOs to consider how they might be impacted by these changes.
  - MPOs can provide comments on federal reauthorization through the federal register.

### *Discussion*

- Is FDOT recommending any changes to how SU funds are managed?
  - None that OPP is aware of.
- How can Local Funding Initiative Requests (LFIR) projects (also known as “member projects”) affect MPO funding?
  - If an LFIR project is approved, it may require reshuffling funds and potentially de-prioritizing another project to make funding for the LFIR project available. The money must come from somewhere.
  - LFIR projects also have specific requirements that are not always well understood by public officials, such as a one-year implementation requirement. LFIR projects also become “federalized” because they are using federal transportation funding.
  - MPOs should collectively inform and educate their representatives on the potential funding impacts an LFIR project can have.

### Wrap Up and Adjourn

- MPO PM1 Safety Targets are due February 26. These require board approval.
- OPP welcomes feedback on the format of the April FMPP meeting (more presentations, more workshops, hybrid approach, etc.)
- Transportation Planning Exchange July 28-29, 2026
- Beneficial to see what Work Program has to deal with when programming projects.
- Appreciate the land use and transportation session, especially as MPOs are required to consider housing. At future FMPP, present about datasets that can be used for this.
- April FMPP
  - Do you prefer what we did at the last FMPP, this FMPP, or a hybrid
- UPWPs will be wrapping up in April, might be helpful to have a refresher.
- LRTPs – Interesting to see the differences around the state and discuss best practices.
- Total attendance: 73

### OPP Action Items

- Coordinate with MPOAC to provide additional information on LFIR/member projects.
- Share January FMPP meeting summary
- Prepare April FMPP agenda

## Appendix A: Closing Survey Results

Q1: Rate your satisfaction with each of the following aspects of the meeting.

	Not satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied
Topics	0%	9%	91%
Quality of Presentations	0%	4%	96%
Presenters	0%	2%	98%
Opportunities for Participation/Interaction	0%	11%	89%
Structure/Organization	0%	17%	83%

Q2: Rate your satisfaction with each of the following presentations and breakout sessions at the meeting.

	Not satisfied	Satisfied	Very satisfied	No Response
Training Session 1: Project Development: From Planning to Maintenance	0%	4%	93%	2%
Training Session 2: Florida's Statewide Transportation Backbone (SIS)	0%	13%	85%	2%
Training Session 3: Land Use and Transportation Linkages	0%	13%	85%	2%
Training Session 4: Legislative Process: From Idea to Implementation	0%	9%	89%	2%

### Q3: To what extent did today's session meet your expectations?

- Overwhelmingly positive reception overall. Multiple respondents indicated this FMPP met or exceeded their expectations.
- Appreciation for the balance between presentations and interactive exercises.
- Peer interaction and cross-agency collaboration were highly-valued.
- The SIS and transportation-land use sessions were particularly well received.
- Many appreciated the higher-level approach, but some expressed a desire for a deeper dive on some topics, such as:
  - LFIR/member projects and their impacts to the Work Program
  - SIS - more introduction/background information and discussion on how MPOs prioritize SIS projects
  - Specific ways MPOs are engaged in land-use efforts
  - How MPOs are developing project purpose and need to connect with PD&E
- Snacks and coffee/tea were major positives.

To what extent did today's session meet your expectations?
Thank you so much for the well thought out topics, presenters, and snacks!
Greater opportunity to learn more in depth information.
Excellent work on balancing presentations with interactive exercises.
Session 4 above and beyond - need more
Awesome discussions
I liked/enjoyed the location
8/10 The information presented was helpful. I liked that this FMPP was a bit different from the past few with the trainings and interactive group activities. It gave a hands-on learning experience that will help me retain the information.
Was hoping for more detail on how funding can be used
Very happy with the training today
Provided high-level discussion for new MPOs
Yes. More on member projects and work program impacts.
The training and guidance was pertinent and beneficial for both FDOT and MPO
Did not expect the push from MPOs to quantify the cost of safety improvements within a larger improvement. MPOs should highlight what the safety improvement are - focus on the results - not the cost of getting there.
I enjoyed the sessions. I think we needed longer amount of time for the training session activities. A few of them were complex and needed time.
As expected

**To what extent did today's session meet your expectations?**

It surpassed my expectations. Very informative and great opportunity to interact with other agencies and in a different capacity.

The variety of topics

SIS presentation was very helpful

Met/exceeded. Thank you for cookies and tea!

It was more fun than I had anticipated

Material and presentations were as advertised. Appreciate the opportunity to ask questions of different presenters/in general

Format is good with a mix of large-group and small-group discussion

Exceeded - High-level topics, great meeting

I wish that session #2 gave more of an introduction to the SIS. As a relatively new transportation planner, the SIS is a bit of an enigma. I would've gotten more out of the presentation if I have a better basic understanding of the SIS.

Good topics but it was geared towards general knowledge and theoretical scenarios. It would have been good to cover more specifics about process: What specific ways are MPOs engaged in land use efforts? How specifically are MPOs developing Purpose and Need and how that process works with PDE and planning studies? Are MPOs prioritizing SIS projects? How should they prioritize the SIS Central Office process?

Exceeded. The work exercises were helpful.

Loved the interaction, especially training session 2. 3 was also engaging.

It did meet my expectations

This has been my favorite FMPP to date! Especially the SIS presentation. The activity for it was very insightful.

Did a great job!!

It exceeded my expectations, the presentations and presenters were great!

Today exceeded my expectations. I learned so much useful and applicable information. Loved interacting with different Liaisons and MPOs.

#### Q4: What were your key takeaways from the training?

- Clearer conception of the connection between land-use and transportation.
  - Some indicated this was not something they previously thought much about.
- Stronger understanding of the SIS programming process, as well as better appreciation for the scale and complexity of managing the SIS program and work program.
  - The SIS activity was frequently cited as valuable.
- Clearer insight into the legislative process
- Importance of coordination and communication between MPOs, FDOT, and local partners was reinforced.

What were your key takeaways from the training?
Land Use and Transportation Linkages was excellent. This will help a lot going forward when strategizing how to incorporate housing as an emphasis area in the MPO's plans and programs.
Coordination between agencies
Pasco needs more interaction with county departments
Better understanding SIS funds
I liked the participation and group exercises. I also met new participants
Legislative breakdown, SIS explanation
Land use was good. I could use more training on the subject. When we have difficult subjects, don't gloss over it, address in. Case in point: the member project discussion.
Presenters were very informative and knowledgeable
The collaboration between different agencies.
Appreciate the work of SIS office even more. Running the largest statewide program is a difficult job.
Legislative issues - process - better understanding of the proposed legislation. Good mix of high level overview of information and more detailed discussion.
Talking with other people at my table, getting different ideas about different topics. I thought it was good to switch tables and sit with new people.
Land use presentation was extremely informative
Land use, so far I haven't thought about transportation's effect on land use and vice versa
Legislation Process, SIS overview
FDOT partnerships with MPOs and coordination, Work program exercise was insightful
Cooperative critical thinking
Earmarks and the impact on work program
Great refresher, overview, and new insights. Well-structured and organized - fun exercises. Really enjoyed the round table to interact and meet people.

**What were your key takeaways from the training?**

Role of MPOs and Liaisons in land planning

Better practical understanding of work program.

I learned a lot and met some great people. I just started in November so I don't know much.

Peer exchange and activity dynamics were great

Project development process, funding types/requirements, land use & transportation integration importance

Did a great job of touching base on a multitude of projects

Coordination and communication are key.

The SIS presentation and activity and the land use presentation and activity both greatly expanded my knowledge of these subjects. Loved the activities! And having people who specialized in each area.

What were your key takeaways from the training?

## Q5: What topics would you like to explore in the April FMPP?

- Follow up on legislation and outcomes from this year’s session.
- Deeper dive on Work Program, including its development, fund codes, creative funding strategies, and coordination between MPOs and Districts.
- UPWP development, administration, best practices, and appropriate language.
- Transportation safety – projects, programming, and best practices.
- Several respondents mentioned they were new in their roles. Perhaps point them to available resources and important contacts.
- Multiple mentions of amendment thresholds, but unclear what the need is.

### What topics would you like to explore in the April FMPP?

Economic benefits of trails, details of funding opportunities for future needs

Planning consistency - SIS-TIP/WP-LRTP. How to establish planning consistency, working through the coordination process with the districts. The Broward MPO is happy to share what we do, but there are some challenges with timing, amend/mod thresholds, etc.

More conversations on how state and fed funds work in the background

Rail plans. Follow up on legislation/results

Earmarks and funding

Closeouts, set asides, best practices

I cannot attend.

I would appreciate a deep dive into the development of the UPWP. Another topic could be best strategies for obtaining local government agreement to implement local assessments. Maybe an FAQ on the do's and don'ts of how funds can be utilized.

What are we doing wrong with land use? How can we improve? MPOs seem to express concerns about the 2 year UPWP and accounting from Year 1 to Year 2.

Member projects and work program

Air mobility - overview/updates. Follow up on legislation - April or July. Discretionary vs formula. MPO best practices/ best practices ped and bike safety.

Different jobs the Liaisons do. Different process or responsibilities. As a new employee it would be helpful. I've worked for DOT for 18 years but it is my first as a Liaison.

UPWP language updates, funding changes, presentation where all districts discuss with MPOs which processes are different and how to do better

Work program to discuss the SU discussion we had. Along with State Transportation Trust Fund vs General Fund.

DBE requirement or lack-of, List of planning words to eliminate or need for that

Invoicing requirement and procedures, joint certification process

Discussion on UPWP development, a virtual option

Work program development

Transportation safety - projects, programming, case studies, etc. Funding and partnership building.

Thresholds for amendments to LRTP. LRTP best practices. Good to mix up districts, not seated with same group.

Funding codes, Work Program deep dive/creative funding opportunities.

More hands-on activities like today. Video clips may be interesting - best practices.

Work program - understanding how projects can be dynamically funded.






## Appendix B: Sign-In Sheets

## Florida Metropolitan Planning Partnership (FMPP)

Location: Florida Hotel and Conference Center, 1500 Sand Lake Road, Orlando, FL 32089, Legends 1

Date: Thursday, January 29, 2026



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