

2002 FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION CUSTOMER SURVEY RESULTS

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is committed to improving the quality of its services to the traveling public in Florida. One of the Department's defined strategic objectives is, "Improve External Customer Satisfaction." One of the ways that FDOT gauges its performance is through the use of surveys. In 2000, the FDOT sponsored a survey of its six customer segments: Florida residents, commercial drivers, elected/governmental officials, visitors to Florida, special needs customers, and property owners. The surveys concluded in May 2001 with encouraging results and areas for improvement. The results were published on FDOT's web site. The districts have identified areas for improvement and developed action plans. Actions have been taken statewide and in the districts to consider the customers' concerns and to meet their needs.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of this project was to conduct another round of surveys in 2002 to determine (1) the areas that have improved since the 2000 survey and (2) the areas that require more attention. In the 2002 survey, Florida residents, well elders, and government officials were targeted with regard to the following:

Florida Residents and Well Elders

1. Ability of a driver to see key signing and road markings

Florida Residents, Well Elders, and Government Officials

2. Experiences in the State Highway System (SHS) construction zones
3. Travel on the SHS within the community
4. Public transportation in the area
5. Overall satisfaction with various aspects of the SHS

Visitors to Florida were also surveyed.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

Ability to See Key Signing and Road Markings

Almost all Florida residents and elders agreed that the overall visibility of roadway signs is good. They felt that the visibility of roadway striping was good during the day but not as good for night driving.

Construction Zone Experiences on the SHS

Florida residents, elders, and government officials were generally satisfied with the following:

- results of completed projects
- construction zone markings
- signs notifying drivers of construction zones

They were less satisfied with the following:

- safety when traveling through construction zones
- notification by media when construction projects were initiated
- ease of access to local businesses during construction

Government officials tended to be more positive in their responses than did the Florida residents or elders.

Travel on the SHS

Florida residents, elders, and government officials were asked to indicate their level of agreement with items related to travel on the SHS:

- **Congestion:** Florida residents, elders, and government officials did not vary substantially. In 2002, approximately 70% were satisfied with travel time between cities and towns
- **Speed on Highways:** While respondents tended to agree that speed limits are reasonable, they did not feel that most vehicles remained within the speed limits on the SHS. This pattern was found for all the groups surveyed: Florida residents, elders, and government officials. There was little variation in response among the groups.
- **Roadside Appearance:** Government officials (58%) were least likely to think the roadsides are kept free of litter, as compared to Florida residents (83%). This pattern of responses was also found with respect to the attractiveness of roadsides on the SHS.
- **Pedestrian Crossings:** Florida residents and elders were asked whether the timing of traffic signals allowed pedestrians enough time to cross state roads. Approximately 65% of those offering an opinion agreed or strongly agreed that the timing was acceptable. Government officials were not asked this question.
- **Bikeways and Sidewalks:** Survey respondents in all three groups were asked about bikeways and sidewalk needs in their areas. Most respondents prefer bicycle trails to bike lanes on the edge of roads. The respondents, regardless of their survey group, also seemed to prefer sidewalks with grass or landscaping.

Public Transportation

In 2002, only about 10% of the few Florida residents or elders responding to the survey indicated that they had used public transportation in the last six months. About one-half of those respondents agreed that the public transportation in their area met their needs. An even larger percentage of respondents indicated that they would use public transportation if it were more convenient. Government officials mirrored these patterns when asked about the citizens' views of public transportation in the areas they served.

Government Officials: Relationships with FDOT and Funding Levels

Relationships with FDOT

FDOT is widely viewed as a cooperative agency by government officials. In all of the areas rated, a large majority of the government officials *strongly agreed* or *agreed* that

- They were able to reach FDOT personnel to find information needed (94%)
- FDOT provided advance notice before construction projects were initiated (89%)
- District officials worked with local government to minimize community disruption (82%)
- FDOT seeks local government input when establishing roadway construction project priorities (77%)
- FDOT seeks local government input when designing roadway construction projects (78%)

Funding

The level of satisfaction with funding for transit and rail has remained mixed. Government officials are more evenly divided between being satisfied and dissatisfied with funding for transit and rail in their area. Of the 272 public officials with an opinion about transit, only 59% reported they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the transit funding allocation in their area. Funding allocations for the transportation follows a similar pattern, with 55% of government officials being satisfied or very satisfied.

Visitors to Florida

Some of the questions asked in the 2000 survey were different than those asked in 2002. visitors were highly satisfied with access to airports, their airport experiences, and how Florida's airports compare to their airports at home. In most of these areas, there were larger proportions of visitors with positive responses. Visitors also felt that Florida's roads were smooth and that Florida's highway compared favorably to highways in their home states.

BENEFITS

This research effort provides FDOT with data to compare to the previous survey about customer satisfaction with Florida's SHS. Using the 2000 Customer Satisfaction Survey results, the Department identified four areas for improvement: visibility of roadway striping/markings at night; access to businesses during construction; timeliness of completing construction; and soliciting local government input during design. The district offices identified more areas for improvements. The 2002/2003 survey results will help the Department and the districts to decide what improvements have been made since the Year 2000 Customer Survey was conducted, to determine new areas for improvement, and to develop better strategies to improve customer satisfaction.

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