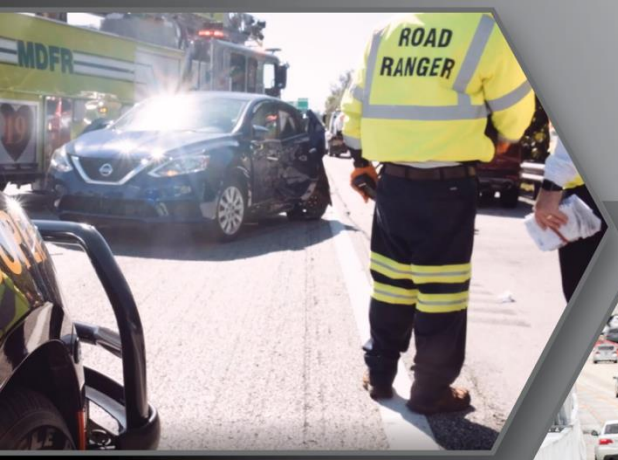
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Traffic Incident Management

2026 STRATEGIC PLAN



FDOT

Executive Summary

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) 2026 Traffic Incident Management (TIM) Strategic Plan is developed under the leadership of the State Traffic Engineering and Operations Office (STEOO), Traffic Incident Management/Commercial Vehicle Operations (CVO) Program Division. District-level TIM Managers and support personnel also contributed significantly with input, guidance, and representation of stakeholder interests.

The state of Florida enjoys a mature traffic incident management (TIM) program. Examples of the more than three decades of investment and successes that set the stage for envisioning a future include:

Technology – Regional or Satellite Traffic Management Centers (RTMCs/STMCs) integrate data from Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) field devices, state law enforcement computer-aided dispatch (CAD), and other sources to detect and verify incidents, coordinate response activities, and provide information to responders and motorists. Advanced warning alert on navigation applications to motorists using automated vehicle location data or third-party alert service providers is already mainstreamed by several FDOT Districts. Incorporating technology to enhance safety for motorists and FDOT's service patrols is identified as one of the TIM priorities.

Resources – FDOT's service patrol program, known as the Road Rangers, patrols more than 2,100 centerline miles of freeways proactively identifying incidents, clearing roadways, and assisting motorists. The Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC) incentive-based, heavy-duty, wrecker program and Safe Tow value-added, towing program are available in several districts to support quick clearance of major incidents.

Institutional – FDOT is a leader nationally in providing a well-established structure to support TIM. This structure includes a full-time, statewide TIM Program Manager in FDOT's Central Office, TIM Program Managers in each district, a statewide TIM Working Group to facilitate continued collaboration amongst TIM partner disciplines, and multiagency, multidiscipline stakeholder representation in twenty-two (22) active local TIM Teams in all seven FDOT Districts and Florida's Turnpike.

Safety – FDOT prioritizes safety not only for motorists but also for Road Rangers. FDOT tracks and analyzes all crash incidents while Road Rangers are involved in any TIM activities. Safety strategies have been developed that initiate the use of advanced technology and equipment along with Road Ranger specific training to ensure safe and quick road clearance.

These examples and FDOT's recognition and reinforcement of TIM as a critical Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSM&O) Program element have positioned the state for continued and future success. However, even with existing investments and innovations in TIM, much work remains to enhance TIM in Florida. An agency-wide strategic plan, at its core, is designed to set priorities, focus energy and resources, strengthen operations, and ensure that stakeholders are working toward common goals.

Note: This document serves as a concise executive summary, designed to maintain document length within manageable limits. A comprehensive record for monitoring individual action items is maintained separately for detailed tracking purposes.

TIM STRATEGIC PLAN ORGANIZATION AND TOPICS

For the last 20 years, the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) has utilized the TIM Capability Maturity Self-Assessment (TIM CMSA) as a tool to evaluate the state of practice in traffic incident management across the country. The TIM CMSA provides a systematic and structured approach for assessing and benchmarking existing TIM capabilities, and, upon completion each year, provides an Action Plan with tangible actions for increasing capability and sophistication levels. Florida has been a longstanding participant in the TIM CMSA since it was initiated in 2003. As such and given FDOT's and its partner stakeholders' familiarity with the CMSA content, the Florida TIM Strategic Plan is purposely structured according to the following primary TIM program areas. Under each TIM program area are the numbered subsections of the strategic plan that address specific topics.

Strategic

Programmatic activities of TIM cover formal policies, partnerships, and understandings among agencies, measuring and evaluating TIM performance.

Section Topic

- Formal TIM Programs
- TIM Training
- After-Action Reviews
- TIM Performance Measures

Tactical

The on-scene activities address responder and motorist safety, response, traffic control, and clearance.

Section Topic

- TIM Law Outreach and Public Education
- Policies and Procedures for Incident Response and Clearance
- Responder and Motorist Safety

Support

Effective TIM enabling activities such as interagency communications, data sharing, ITS, and traveler information.

Section Topic

- Data Collection/Integration/Sharing

Additionally, to emphasize the importance of TIM in the context of other stand-alone TSM&O strategies, the Strategic Plan also includes sections on the priority focus areas of Integrated Corridor Management and Arterial TIM; TIM for Express Lanes; and TIM Supplement for Transportation Management Plans.

In each section, subsections are presented as strategies. For each strategy, the State of the Practice and Strategic Direction are described followed by "Steps to Get There" and a timeline for implementation. This Strategic Plan is an updated version of TIM Strategic Plan 2019. In total and as summarized in Table ES-1, 23 strategies, and 65 corresponding action items have been identified to advance Florida's TIM Program. These action items are identified separately in a detailed Strategic Plan document for the task tracking purposes.

Table ES-1 2026 FDOT TIM Strategic Plan Summary

ID	Action Item	Timeline
2	**Formal TIM Programs**	
2.1	**Statewide TIM Working Group** Strategic Direction: Maintain as a permanent entity for providing guidance to FDOT, its partners, and other stakeholders on policy matters and issues impacting TIM needs in the state of Florida.	
2.2	**TIM Teams** Strategic Direction: Provide value to stakeholders while continuously improving TIM in their respective areas.	
2.3	**TIM Program Support** Strategic Direction: Establish organizational mechanisms to facilitate staff transitions and ensure knowledge transfer. Consider developing a standard set of duties and responsibilities that can be utilized by FDOT TIM Program Managers to establish consistent practices within the program itself as well as facilitate continuity with future successors. Implement mechanisms that facilitate timely information sharing between the districts.	

ID	Action Item	Timeline
3	**TIM Training**	
3.1	**SHRP2 National TIM Responder Training Program** Strategic Direction: As a top stakeholder identified focus is, to continue promoting and conducting TIM training via the Florida version of the FHWA SHRP2 National TIM Responder training curriculum.	

ID	Action Item	Timeline
4	**After-Action Reviews**	
4.1	**After-Action Reviews (AARs)** Strategic Direction: Continued recognition of AARs as central to the overall, ongoing TIM enhancement process. Establish formats for conducting AARs and sharing lessons learned and best practices.	

ID	Action Item	Timeline
5	**TIM Performance Measures**	
5.1	**TIM Performance Measures** Strategic Direction: TIM data collection and performance monitoring and measuring are critical to improving TIM, demonstrating program effectiveness, and justifying future planning and investments.	

ID	Action Item	Timeline
6	**TIM Law Outreach and Public Education**	
6.1	TIM Law Outreach and Public Education Strategic Direction: As a top stakeholder-identified focus area, seek TIM law outreach and education opportunities such as participation in the annual National Traffic Incident Response Week, advertisements, partnerships, and use of dynamic message signs (DMS).	

ID	Action Item	Timeline
7	**Policies and Procedures for Incident Response and Clearance**	
7.1	**Road Ranger Service Patrol Program** Strategic Direction: Address program identity issues related to branding, sponsorships, and public perception of the services being provided as a "courtesy." Emphasize Road Rangers' importance as an FDOT-backed TIM/safety program. Address operational concerns, such as uniforms and emergency vehicle lighting.	
7.2	**Severe Incident Response Vehicle (SIRV)** Strategic Direction: Recognize as a valuable link between FDOT and other responder disciplines including asset maintenance contractors. Identify elements and activities to standardize the program statewide.	
7.3	**Rapid Incident Scene Clearance (RISC) Program** Strategic Direction: Conduct routine training of FHP and FDOT personnel and clarify coordination requirements through a joint operating statement. Maintain procedural boilerplate to accommodate industry needs and program cost changes.	
7.4	**Instant Dispatch Tow** Strategic Direction: FHP may seek to have F.S. 321.051(4) changed to lane-blocking events, since delaying requests for towing and recovering services further delays incident clearance and increases the exposure of responders and motorists to hazards. FHP may also consider making administrative rule changes that support implementing a plan where they simultaneously dispatch a trooper and tow truck when RTMC cameras or other on-scene responders provide information that a tow is required. Such a system would expedite lane clearance and promote safety.	
7.5	**Staged Towing Vehicles** Strategic Direction: FDOT should consider including staged tow trucks in major roadway work zones where there are extended lane restrictions or limited to no shoulders. Stage towing arrangements should be considered in Transportation Management Plans (TMPs) required under the Federal Work Zone Safety and Mobility Rule for all major projects.	
7.6	**Safe Tow** Strategic Direction: FDOT should consider the implementation of the strategy beyond District 2 as a means to alleviate the problems created by the FHP "owner request" requirement and facilitate timely dispatch and removal of vehicles to the shoulder or other safe locations away from travel lanes.	
7.7	**Florida Guidelines for the Mitigation of Accidental Discharges of Motor Vehicle Fluids** (Non-Cargo) Direction: FDOT should continue to market the guidelines as a resource for incident responders in Florida, focusing attention on the reportable quantities' component of the guideline. Reinforcement of the guidelines should also be made during statewide responder training.	
7.8	**Crash Investigations** Strategic Direction: FDOT has purchased photogrammetry, total station, and other types of technology to assist FHP in expediting crash scene processing. To keep pace with rapid advancements in these and other emerging technologies it will be important to maintain awareness of how they may apply to crash reconstruction and to articulate benefits.	
7.9	**Tagging of Abandoned Vehicles** Strategic Direction: Safety is advanced by removing disabled vehicles that are stopped on freeways or in the "clear zone". FHP should review their procedures to more aggressively check and subsequently tow abandoned vehicles left on the shoulder since they present a potential safety hazard. FHP should also enlist the help and support of Road Rangers in this important practice by allowing them to "Red Tag" vehicles in all troops.	

ID	Action Item	Timeline
7.10	**Designated Incident Response Coordinator (IRC)** Strategic Direction: Establishing a designated Incident Response Coordinator (IRC) will help ensure that FDOT is properly represented at traffic incident scenes under the Incident Command System (ICS). This position would be filled by a manager from an AM contractor, RTMC operations contractor, FDOT on-call supervisor, or FDOT District TSM&O Office.	

ID	Action Item	Timeline
8	**Responder and Motorist Safety**	
8.1	**TIM Response Procedures/Guidelines** Strategic Direction: Model policies or procedures consistent with the FHWA SHRP2 National TIM Responder Training Program are needed for: High-Visibility Safety Apparel Use; Emergency-Vehicle Lighting Use at Incident Scenes; Vehicle Positioning at Incident Scenes; and Traffic Control at Incident Scenes.	

ID	Action Item	Timeline
9	**Data Collection/Integration/Sharing**	
9.1	**Regional Traffic Management Centers** Strategic Direction: Consideration should be made by FDOT and FHP to move beyond simple RTMC operator and FHP dispatcher co-location and more formally integrate the operations of key personnel. Reintroducing an FHP uniformed supervisor in urban communications centers during peak periods may serve to strengthen operations between field units and the RTMC.	
9.2	**Data Sharing** Strategic Direction: Given the importance of real-time data and information to traffic incident response, a statewide consistent policy and approach to sharing this data, including RTMC video, with TIM partners are needed. This will ensure that the investment in video infrastructure is maximized.	

ID	Action Item	Timeline
10	**TIM Actions for Priority Focus Areas**	
10.1	**Integrated Corridor Management and Arterial TIM** Strategic Direction: The objective for arterial TIM and an integrated corridor approach seeks to promote safe, efficient travel on both arterials and freeways. Many stakeholder organizations, such as local agency police, fire, and EMS that do not routinely provide freeway traffic incident response, need to be familiarized with TIM on arterials, notably for responder safety and safe quick clearance of incidents.	
10.2	**TIM for Express Lanes** Strategic Direction: A scalable, dedicated TIM approach for facilities utilizing express lanes is needed to balance the needs of a “premium” service with operating revenue constraints. The approach would prioritize resources, based on available funding, to maximize investments.	
10.3	**TIM Plan Supplement for Transportation Management Plans (TMPs)** Strategic Direction: TIM is a critical operational strategy to mitigate many of the negative impacts of roadway construction projects. Accordingly, there needs to be a better general awareness of the FDOT TMP requirements with a specific emphasis on TIM and operations. In addition, process enhancements are needed to ensure that TIM is considered and integrated both early in the project development process and throughout the design and construction life cycle.	

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