



# MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #15a

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DATE: MARCH 3, 2008  
TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS  
FROM: STAFF  
SUBJECT: OVERVIEW OF FUTURE TRANSPORTATION ACTIVITIES

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## Introduction

Council staff is involved in a number of ongoing transportation planning efforts and is coordinating with the staffs of municipalities, counties, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and Districts 4 and 6 of the Florida Department of Transportation. This report is provided to bring the Council up to date on the four primary areas that it recommends the Council emphasize for the remainder of FY2008 and FY2009. These four areas are:

- **Long Range Planning:** Southeast Florida 2060 Regional Transportation Component
- **Energy Conservation:** Development and promotion of Alternative Fuels; Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions
- **Regional Corridor Transportation Planning:** Expansion of the State Road 7 / U.S. 441 Collaborative Initiative
- **Transit / Land Use Coordination:** Transit Oriented Development

## Primary Transportation Areas of Emphasis

### **1. Long Range Planning: Southeast Florida 2060 – Regional Transportation Component**

Southeast Florida 2060 will produce a concrete regional Vision and Strategic Action Plan that builds upon an existing foundation of planning and policy to create a sustainable and smarter future for the region. The Strategic Action Plan will include a coordinated set of infrastructure investments, community design approaches, economic development strategies, public services, environmental restoration, and natural hazards mitigation strategies.

The Strategic Action Plan's Regional Transportation Component will be based, in part, on data compiled from a number of data sources including, but not limited to, the U.S. Census Bureau, Regional Long Range Transportation Plans, Regional Transit Plans, and data resulting from the Hurricane Evacuation Model. Building on information received through a multi-phased Community and Public Outreach Program, regional benchmarks and indicators will be developed to support the development and track progress of the Southeast Florida 2060 Vision and Strategic Action Plan. Among other things, the Regional Transportation Component of the Plan will include clear policies, criteria and action steps for evaluating, informing, and integrating public and private transportation and transit investments into a larger regional framework.

The Regional Transportation Component will focus on the creation of a more result-oriented process; greater integration between transportation, transit, land use and regional planning; and improved multi-jurisdictional and organizational coordination. The expected outcome of this effort will be a regional transportation investment strategy which addresses, at a minimum, rail, highways, ports, coastal seaways, and airport investments and examines alternative financing options. This in turn will inform future work products such as the Long Range Regional Transportation Plan for the seven-county region.

**Funding Status:** Funding requests have been submitted to the Miami-Dade and Broward County Metropolitan Planning Organizations. These applications will go through the procedural selection process.

## **2. Energy Conservation: Development and promotion of Alternative Fuels; Reduction of Greenhouse Gas Emissions**

Florida lags behind the rest of the country in the development and use of alternative fuels, petroleum use reduction techniques, and educational awareness. The Council advances alternative fuels and new fuel efficient vehicle technologies through the Gold Coast Clean Cities Coalition program. The Clean Cities Coalition is one of 90 coalitions throughout the country that have been designated by the Department of Energy to assist in the development of alternative fuels, educational awareness, and planning activities.

Increased development and expansion of this program could bring needed resources to the region and benefit local governments, private entities, and other consumers by supporting the creation of competitive markets for cost efficient fuels, providing fleet managers with increased fuel choices, and reducing harmful environmental impacts. Currently there are only two E-85 (Ethanol 85%) fueling stations within the State of Florida, including one in South Florida.

This project is consistent with Governor Crist's Executive Orders on Greenhouse Gas Reductions and SAFETEA-LU factors:

- Support the economic vitality of the United States, the states and metropolitan areas, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency; and locally based economic development.
- Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns.

The Council will continue to:

- Seek public and private partnerships to promote the use of alternative fuels;
- Facilitate the deployment of alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs);
- Support the installation of an alternative fuel refueling infrastructure throughout Southeast Florida;
- Increase the use of fuel blends (i.e. diesel/biodiesel & ethanol/gasoline);
- Accelerate sales of hybrid electric vehicles;
- Promote informed consumer choice on fuel economy;
- Support grant activities that may provide municipalities opportunities for demonstration programs;
- Encourage the use of idle reduction technologies for heavy-duty trucks and other vehicles; and
- Support the education of students at all levels on the benefits related to reducing the region's reliance on petroleum-based fuels and increased use of alternative fuels.

**Funding Status:** Funding requests supportive of the Gold Coast Clean Cities Coalition and its activities to promote the use of alternative fuels have been submitted to the Miami-Dade and Broward County Metropolitan Planning Organizations. These applications will go through the procedural selection process. Currently the Gold Coast Clean Cities program receives \$12,500 annually funding for technical assistance from the U.S. Department of Energy. Council staff is also exploring opportunities to raise needed funds through a membership program. This is a normal, industry accepted practice that is supported by the U.S. Department of Energy.

### **3. Regional Corridor Transportation Planning: Expansion of the State Road 7 / U.S. 441 Collaborative Initiative**

Council staff has provided staff and administrative support to the State Road 7/U.S. 441 Collaborative (Collaborative) since its creation in 2001. The Collaborative is composed of the 14 local government jurisdictions that span the State Road 7/U.S. 441 corridor in Broward County, the cities of North Miami and Miami Gardens in Miami-Dade County, Broward County, and the Seminole Tribe of Florida. Ex-officio members include the Florida Departments of Transportation (FDOT District IV) and Community Affairs; the South Florida Water Management District; the Broward County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO); Broward County School Board; and the Broward County Planning Council. The Miami-Dade MPO and FDOT District VI have been invited to become members of this Collaborative.

The Collaborative recently voted to support an expansion of its membership and master planning effort northward to Glades Road in Palm Beach County and southward to NW 5th Street in Miami. The State Road 7/U.S. 441 corridor is a State Principal Arterial roadway that carries over 50,000 daily vehicle trips and 4.5 million annual transit riders. This corridor connects three counties and serves a high level of transit dependant users. It is presently designated for premium bus service. The Broward and Miami-Dade County MPOs; Broward and Miami-Dade Transit Agencies; and the FDOT have been working cooperatively to expand rapid bus service along this corridor. It is expected that the ongoing University Drive study will identify opportunities and incorporate strategies to improve mobility in portions of State Road 7/U.S. 441 in Broward and Palm Beach counties.

The State Road 7/U.S. 441 Collaborative has developed a transit-supportive land use plan and redevelopment plan for portions of the State Road 7/ U.S. 441 Corridor. The Corridor Master Plan encourages transit-supportive redevelopment and provides implementation strategies. The State Road 7 Master Plan calls for the construction of over 50,000 new residential units along this transit corridor by 2030 in Broward County. Proportionate amounts in Miami-Dade are anticipated.

Currently, Miami Dade Public Works is conducting a Project Development and Environmental study of the feasibility of implementing reversible lanes in the area between NW 5<sup>th</sup> Street and NW 119<sup>th</sup> street along NW 7<sup>th</sup> Avenue. The Collaborative is concerned that the proposed reversal lane project will have significant livability issues and diminish opportunities for economic redevelopment for the residents of Liberty City and Miami.

**Funding Status:** The Miami-Dade MPO Unified Program Work Plan includes proposed State Road 7 Corridor improvements in Miami-Dade. A funding request has been submitted to the Miami-Dade County Metropolitan Planning Organization. This application will go through the procedural selection process.

### **4. Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Outreach**

The Council will be developing transit oriented development outreach strategies to educate businesses, government agencies, and the general public of the benefits of transit oriented development along major transportation/ transit corridors. This effort will result in the creation of a Transit Oriented Development Action Plan and strategies for facilitating transit supportive development around transit stations. It will help increase community support for high quality transit oriented development; improve mobility for Tri-Rail passengers and motorists; and provide additional lifestyle choices for South Florida residents.

Goal 1: Formally identify and address barriers to transit oriented development in South Florida;  
Goal 2: Raise community awareness of the benefits of transit oriented development; and  
Goal 3: Create an information and advocacy working group that promotes rail in South Florida.

Key steps include:

- Meeting with stakeholders to identify issues affecting TOD implementation
- Creation of a Steering Committee to advise on relevant issues
- Creation of a Transit Oriented Development Action Plan
- Development of a Transit Oriented Development Informational Package and Presentation
- Preparation of a Public Information Plan for outreach efforts
- Implementation of outreach efforts

**Funding Status:** The Council is working with the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority to develop the Transit Oriented Development Action Plan and supportive strategies. Additional outreach activities will occur as part of the normal workings of the State Road 7/U.S. 441 Collaborative.

**Recommendation**

Support Council staff's recommended transportation planning initiatives.