

# Florida Transit Planning Network

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## FTA Joint Development Proposed Guidance

It is FTA's policy to maximize the utility of FTA-funded projects and to encourage transit agencies to generate program income through joint development. The benefits of joint development include revenue generation for the transit system through "value capture" mechanisms, such as income derived from rental or lease payments, and private sector contributions to public infrastructure. Other benefits include shared costs, efficient land use, reduced distance between transportation and other activities, economic development, increased transit ridership, and improved transit connectivity.

FTA recently released a draft circular that is intended to guide interested parties through the FTA program and policy requirements that must be considered when pursuing a joint development project.

Eligible joint development activities must:

- Enhance economic development or incorporate private investment, such as commercial and residential development;
- Enhance the effectiveness of public transportation and be related physically or functionally to public transportation, or establish new or enhanced coordination between public transportation and other transportation;
- Provide a fair share of revenue that will be used for public transportation; and
- Provide that a person occupying space in a joint development facility shall pay a fair share of the costs of the facility through rental payments or other means.

The draft circular provides guidance to recipients of FTA financial assistance on the:

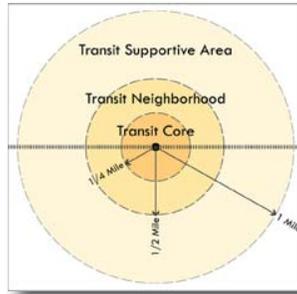
- Use of FTA funds or FTA funded real property for joint development;
- Eligibility requirements of FTA funded joint development activities;
- Legal requirements applicable to the acquisition, use and disposition of FTA funded real property; and
- Common cross cutting requirements.

The draft circular can be found at [www.fta.dot.gov/legislation\\_law/12349\\_15115.html](http://www.fta.dot.gov/legislation_law/12349_15115.html)

The comment period ended on April 5, 2013, however late-filed comments will be considered to the extent practicable. You may submit online comments to DOT Docket ID Number FTA-2013-0013. Go to [www.regulations.gov](http://www.regulations.gov) and follow the online instructions for submitting comments.

## Florida Transit-Oriented Development Guidance

The Florida Department of Transportation has developed Transit Oriented Development (TOD) strategies and guidance to promote land use policies and designs to leverage statewide investments in multimodal transportation systems. In Phase I of the TOD planning effort A Framework for Transit Oriented Development in Florida was prepared. Phase II, which was completed in early 2013, involved the development of a Guidebook containing model land use policies and land development codes in support of TOD. The Framework and



Guidebook were designed to be used in partnership with the FDOT to assist in promoting multimodal system planning and managing congestion on state roadways, especially on the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS). By focusing land use and urban design policies towards transit, local governments can help optimize future transit investments and potential transit ridership.

To access the TOD Guidebook, visit the resources section of the Florida Transit Planning Network website at [www.planfortransit.com](http://www.planfortransit.com)

## Manatee County Opens New Transfer Station

In the fall of 2012, dozens of local officials, transit employees and residents celebrated the opening of Manatee County Transit's new downtown Bradenton transfer station with a ribbon cutting ceremony.

Located just west of its longtime location near the Historic Courthouse, the transfer station offers a safer off-street facility for transit customers using five Manatee County Area Transit (MCAT). The transfer station will initially accommodate five MCAT routes. The new station includes public restrooms, an information and ticket booth and an automatic ticket vending machine. It also includes five, 25-foot-tall/10-foot wide public art display sections designed to represent the region's natural landscape.

"It is a beautiful facility and fits really well with downtown redevelopment" said William Steele,

interim director of Manatee County Area Transit.

The \$2.4 million project was largely funded by a \$1.5 million Federal Transit Administration grant. The remaining \$955,070 is being split evenly between the Florida Department of Transportation and local funding. Land for the new facility was provided by the City of Bradenton.



## Star Metro Plan Receives National Recognition

In January, the American Planning Association (APA) announced StarMetro as the recipient of the 2013 National Planning Excellence Award for Transportation Planning. StarMetro was chosen to receive this prestigious award for the successful launch of its decentralized route system in July 2011.



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## StarMetro Receives Award—cont'd from pg 2

“StarMetro’s decentralization can be held up as a standard for public participation and cooperation,” said Ann C. Bagley, chair of the APA Awards jury.

“When you change the way people move around a community, there are bound to be bumps in the road,” said Mayor John Marks. “Understanding the challenges and with customers in mind, StarMetro coordinated an extensive public participation campaign as part of the decentralization plan that will continue to benefit the community for years to come.”

The Transportation Planning award recognizes efforts to increase transportation choices for all populations, while reducing dependence on private automobiles, helping ease congestion and reducing climate change impacts.

The newly, decentralized route system has successfully achieved the goals set forth by the City Commission, including:

- Reducing transfers at the downtown terminal by 30 percent;
- Decreasing total transfers system-wide by 14 percent;
- Decreasing the number of routes that share at least one mile of service from 21 to 6;
- Increasing bus frequency from an average of 51 minutes to 34 minutes;
- Installing more than 50 bus shelters and benches; and
- Increasing ridership by 2.5 percent from July 2011 to June 2012 when compared to the average ridership of the three prior years under the old, hub-and-spoke system.

The National Planning Excellence Award for Transportation Planning will be presented to StarMetro at a special awards luncheon held during APA’s National Planning Conference in Chicago on Tuesday, April 16.

## Central Florida’s SunRail Poised to Move Commuters and the Orlando Economy

In February, Federal Transit Administrator Peter Rogoff viewed the progress at the Florida Hospital station, the first of 12 stations planned for SunRail’s initial phase and announced that FTA is releasing more than 87 million in promised funding to continue this important project.

Already, SunRail has put about 800 people to work and has spurred a \$250 million investment in a 176-acre Health Village at Florida Hospital that will allow thousands of medical researchers, hospital employees, patients and their families to take transit to work or when seeking medical care.

And across the entire rail line, more than two dozen retail, office, government, and residential development projects within a 10-minute walk of new transit stations are planned or under way—representing about \$1.6 billion in public and private investments.

The SunRail commuter line makes it clear that investing in transportation projects is a great way to keep our local economies growing.

As Administrator Rogoff said, “The SunRail com-

muter line will help grow our economy from the middle class outward and reduce our reliance on foreign oil by connecting residents from DeBary to Sand Lake Road with the jobs and services they need, while opening doors to new opportunities across Central Florida.”



At the Florida Hospital station work site, with signs of the Orlando region’s expanding biomedical industries all around, it’s easy to see the ripple effect that this investment has created: More jobs, better access to vital services like medical care, and critical infrastructure for a growing, thriving industry.

This project is exactly what President Obama is talking about when he calls on us to invest in our nation’s infrastructure—because projects like this strengthen our communities, attract business and provide opportunities for millions of working families.

## Transit Plan Earns National Honors!

One of the Tampa Bay Area's most lauded transportation projects has yet another honor to add to its trophy collection today. The advanced transportation plan, known as the Pinellas County Alternatives Analysis (AA), has been named as one of the country's top 50 transportation projects by the Sierra Club. In its report, "Smart Choices, Less Traffic: 50 Best and Worst Transportation Projects in the United States," only three projects from the Sunshine State earned the honor of being among America's top 50: the Pinellas AA, Sunrail in Orlando, and the Everglades Skyway.

The Pinellas AA (detailed at the website [www.pinellasontrack.com](http://www.pinellasontrack.com)) is the result of a groundbreaking partnership between PSTA, the Pinellas MPO, FDOT, and TBARTA. The project has been recognized and used as an example of outstanding multi-agency partnership by transportation officials nationwide. The AA studied the developing transportation needs in Pinellas County and with the help of massive public input, developed a plan to meet the growing demand for improved transportation and public transit both in Pinellas County and the Tampa Bay region. The Pinellas AA features significant increases in bus service throughout the county as part of a solid foundation for a light rail project from St. Petersburg to the Gateway/Carillon area and Downtown Clearwater.

Phil Compton, the Sierra Club's Regional Representative for the Florida Healthy Air Campaign says that the Pinellas AA will "finally provide residents with the kind of transportation choices

that most Americans take for granted. Expanding bus service throughout Pinellas, connecting our urban centers of Clearwater and St. Petersburg by light rail, and making the entire county a safer place to walk and ride a bike will remove serious barriers to our economic growth, while also cleaning up our heavily polluted air."

The Sierra Club report states that "Americans can and should expect the dollars we spend on transportation to contribute to solving environment and economic problems. Smart transportation investments are already providing Americans with transportation options that reduce our dependence on oil, improve our air, water and public health and keep more money in local economies."

Projects were reviewed on the basis of their impact on the following five areas:

- Oil use
- The environment
- Public health
- The economy
- Land use

The Pinellas AA has also won outstanding project honors from the American Planning Association, Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council, and the Florida American Planning Association. In conjunction with the Pinellas AA, PSTA is now conducting an extensive analysis to find new ways to streamline, or realign, current bus service in the effort to provide more frequent and efficient service with existing resources. If you'd like to participate in the new Pinellas Community Bus Plan and help shape the future of transportation in Pinellas County, you are invited to complete a survey at [www.busplan.psta.net](http://www.busplan.psta.net).



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**Professional Development Workshop—June 2013**

**T**he 2013 FDOT/FPTA/CUTR Professional Development Workshop will be June 18-19, 2013 at the Embassy Suites-USF. The state-wide workshop offers a unique professional development opportunity for Florida's public transportation supervisors, front-line employees, and other key staff in operations, maintenance, marketing, planning and administration. This one-stop-workshop offers excellent opportunities to learn from industry experts, attend professional development training, and gather information about innovative industry research, and network with peers.



The agenda and registration will be available in mid-April.

**CUTR Webcast Series**

Visit [www.cutr.usf.edu/outreach/webcast/](http://www.cutr.usf.edu/outreach/webcast/) for instructions on how to connect to the webcasts as well as view previously completed webcasts.

**Thursday, April 18 12:00–1:00pm**

Web-based Trip Planner Options for Transit Agencies

Presented by: Justin Begley and Sean Barbeau, CUTR

This webinar will discuss the various options for web-based transit trip planning tools. CUTR recently completed a technical assistance project for a startup local service provider that aimed at developing ridership markets via an online trip planner. Options discussed will include self-hosted vendor products, third party 'lifestyle' applications powered via open GTFS data, and new open-source software systems. Beyond Google Transit, what can transit agencies provide to their riders and those considering public transportation, to allow more control and a richer set of options for journey planning? The webinar will conclude with presentation of a step by step action plan for implementing these web-based tools that local service providers or regional transportation authorities can adopt.

FDOT is interested in your ideas about resources it can provide in support of your transit planning initiatives and professional development. Please contact Diane Quigley with your suggestions for future training topics or guidance and technical assistance needs.