

- 2 Polk County Sales Tax on Nov 4 Ballot
- 3 Funding for TIA and OIA
- 4 Two FL Projects in President's Budget
- 5 FDOT's New STRIDE Program
- 6 Transit Stations to Serve SunRail
- 7 Planning Sessions at PDW in Tampa
- FDOT Interactive Transit Map
- 8 Broward County Implements New CAD and AVL System
- Bus Facility Design Handbook Training
- 9 Training & Professional Development



New Trolley Takes Visitors to Everglades and Biscayne National Parks for Free

The lack of public transportation to Biscayne and Everglades National Parks is now a thing of the past. The City of Homestead, recently designated as the "Gateway to Everglades and Biscayne National Parks", has created a pioneer program to offer free public transportation and free admission to Everglades and Biscayne National Parks by expanding its already successful local trolley service. This ground breaking project is the first of its kind nationally to offer public transportation to two national parks.



The City of Homestead trolleys transport local families, students, tourists and other groups from the City of Homestead Downtown Historic District to both national parks. The service kicked off this winter season and makes five round trips each Saturday and Sunday during the parks' high season months of the fall and winter, from approximately November to May. While riding the trolley, passengers enjoy an educational guided tour where they will learn about the history and ecosystems of the national park and how these relate to the history of Homestead and Miami-Dade County.

"Everglades National Park is thrilled to be part of this innovative free trolley program" said Everglades Superintendent Dan Kimball. "We are working closely with city staff, the National Parks Conservation Association, and Biscayne National Park to make this an outstanding example of partnering with national park gateway communities."

The program was first proposed by Councilman Stephen R. Shelly who developed the idea with the National Park Conservation Association and Everglades and Biscayne National Parks. "We are one of the only cities in America located between two national parks, and as a result, we have an exciting opportunity to capitalize on the eco-tourism dollars generated by our location to such unique ecosystems by bringing visitors and tourists to our city and to our majestic national parks."

According to the National Park Service, recreational and eco-tourism activities related to Everglades and Biscayne National Parks contribute millions of dollars each year to the local economy. Every year, close to a million people visit Everglades National Park and spend more than \$146 million, supporting nearly 2,000 local jobs in South Florida. Biscayne National Park, the largest marine park in the national park system, is also a global destination which welcomes half a

continued on p.2

million national and international visitors annually who spend more than \$34 million supporting more than 400 local jobs in South Florida.

“We applaud the Homestead City Council and especially Councilman Shelley for their leadership that will enhance Homestead’s successful trolley service to include a recreational trolley route that will provide the only public transportation to Everglades and Biscayne National Parks,” said Senior Program Coordinator for the National Parks

Conservation Association Jacqueline Crucet. “Not only will this recreational trolley route provide the local community access to the national parks in their own back yard, it will also draw visitors and tourists from the larger urban areas of Miami to our national treasures. National parks are economic generators for gateway communities. The City of Homestead understands this and their investment in our national parks is an investment in their city as well.”

Sales Tax for Polk Transit Going on Nov. 4 Ballot—The Ledger

County commissioners recently voted unanimously to approve an ordinance that puts a proposed sales tax increase on the Nov. 4 ballot and outlines how the tax proceeds would be levied and spent.

The proposal, titled My Ride/My Road Initiative, would use a 1-cent per dollar sales tax increase to finance an expansion of transit service countywide and to fund road and bridge improvements.

If Polk County voters approve the sales tax increase, existing property taxes in the Lakeland-Mulberry area supporting transit and a countywide property tax imposed in 2005 to support road projects would be eliminated.

Transit and road projects would each receive \$30 million a year from the tax. The current transit tax yields about \$3.5 million a year and the current road tax yields \$23 million a year.

Under the ordinance, the sales tax would be imposed for 14 years, expiring in 2028. If it is approved, it would be brought back to the voters in 2026.

Tom Phillips, executive director of the Polk County Transit Authority, said the proposal is based on feedback from more than 10,000 Polk County residents who participated in a series of public meetings around the county.

“We did this instead of coming up with a plan in a back room,” he said.

He said this system is tailored to the specific transit needs of each community.

He said the expanded transit service will provide non-stop trips to Tampa International and Orlando International Airports and will provide subsidized taxi service for people on second and third shifts, explaining that’s more cost-effective than expanding bus service during those hours.

During the discussion following the public hearing, Commissioner George Lindsey said the reduction in the property tax rate that has been promised if the sales tax referendum is successful will help businesses by reducing their operating expenses.

Lindsey had proposed a 2028 expiration date for the tax rather than the 2034 date proposed in the original ordinance, saying that will give voters enough time to evaluate whether the money is being spent properly.

The ordinance requires the appointment of a five-member citizen’s oversight committee to review the expenditures and to report their findings annually to the County Commission.

Commissioners said they expect further debate on the issue in the coming months.

Although Phillips and his staff will provide information materials on the proposal, there are also plans to launch a private political action committee that will be able to do the advocacy work that government officials are not allowed to do under state law.



Governor Rick Scott Announces Funding for Orlando and Tampa International Airports

Governor Rick Scott recently announced that state funding will be made available for two projects that are key elements of the state's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS). The Tampa Gateway Center at Tampa International will receive \$194 million that will help create the Tampa Gateway Center at Tampa International Airport (TIA). The Gateway Center will expand the capacity of TIA by creating a 2.3 million square foot rental car center with a transit stop and constructing a 1.3 mile Automated People Mover (APM) which will connect the parking garage and rental car center to the terminal.

Governor Scott said, "This critical investment of \$194 million in TIA not only helps make it one of the world's premier airports, but it also increases the passenger capacity and creates jobs for Florida's families. Construction of the APM and Gateway Center will generate approximately 7,141 jobs. Once operational, 1,112 permanent jobs are projected (277 immediate and 835 shortly after completion of Phase 1).

The Governor's investments and commitments for Tampa International Airport include,

- \$18.7 million for construction is in the FY 2014-2015 budget
- \$175.3 million for future construction will be included in the department's requested Work Program

Orlando International Airport will also receive \$213.5 million for the development of the South Airport People Mover Complex and Intermodal Transportation Facility to serve aviation, rental car, rail, private automobile, taxi, bus, and shuttle transportation. "Our \$213.5 million commitment to Orlando International Airport is vital for growing our economy, and bringing tourists, trade and business travelers to Florida every day. This project in Orlando, as well as others statewide makes Florida's airports among the best in the nation; keeping Florida competitive, and creating jobs and opportunities for future generations" said Governor Scott

The proposed South Airport People Mover Complex along with an Intermodal Transit Facility will serve aviation, rental car, rail, private automobile, taxi, bus, and shuttle transportation. The projects will not

only extend the useful life of existing infrastructure, but provide critical steps to ultimately increase capacity and aid future development at the airport. Construction will generate approximately 1,900 jobs, and once operational, 380 permanent jobs are projected along with an annual direct, indirect and induced impact of \$42 million per year.

The SIS is a statewide network of high-priority transportation facilities, including the State's largest and most significant airports, spaceports, deepwater seaports, freight rail terminals, passenger rail and intercity bus terminals, rail corridors, waterways and highways. Florida's SIS was established to enhance economic competitiveness and mobility by focusing limited state resources on those transportation facilities that are critical to Florida's economy and quality of life. The SIS supports Florida by:

- Improving economic growth and competitiveness by reducing business costs for transportation and logistics and enhancing access to domestic and global markets;
- Emphasizing the types of transportation services required by trade, technology and other targeted industries; and
- Improving accessibility to all of Florida's regions, including both urban and rural areas.



Gov. Rick Scott announced that he is setting aside \$215 million in his budget to pay for a new station at Orlando International Airport that could house several trains, including a privately financed one that would Central and South Florida. (George Skene, Orlando Sentinel)

Two Florida Projects Included in President's Proposed 2015 Budget

SunRail Project (Phase 2) — Orlando Sentinel

SunRail got good news Tuesday: President Barack Obama tucked \$63 million into his proposed 2015 budget to extend the commuter-rail system south into Osceola County.



That money — \$20 million shy of what supporters had sought — should keep the project on track to run from south Orange County to Poinciana in Osceola County, possibly by late 2016.

The initial phase of SunRail, from DeBary in Volusia County through downtown Orlando to south Orange County, is supposed to carry its first paying customer on May 1.

U.S. Rep. John Mica, R-Winter Park, called the allocation “a significant step in moving the next phase of this project forward in Central Florida.”

Supporters wanted \$83 million for SunRail, but they said the amount of money put aside is not as important as simply being included in the president’s \$3.9 trillion spending plan. That development keeps the project on the federal books and eligible for grants now and in the future.

“I’m very comfortable with the \$63 million,” said Osceola County Commissioner Frank Attkisson, the past chairman of the commission overseeing SunRail’s development.

In total, SunRail still needs about \$236 million from the federal government to enlarge the system an additional 29 miles. If all the funding becomes available, the train would run 17.5 extra miles south into Poinciana in Osceola and 12 miles north to DeLand in Volusia.

But SunRail officials have not asked for all the money they need to complete the network because they cannot spend it during the coming year.

The state, which is in charge of SunRail, previously asked the federal government for \$30 million for the DeLand extension, but that request does not have to go through Obama’s budget.

SunRail supporters were worried about not getting any money at all because of the so-called sequester agreed to by Congress and the administration last year that reduced federal spending.

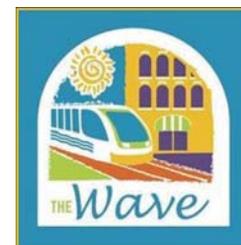
Area leaders, including Orange Mayor Teresa Jacobs, Orlando Mayor Buddy Dyer and Attkisson, lobbied transportation officials in Washington in October. They also hosted federal Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx earlier this year.

“The cooperation among local, state and federal leaders for this project has been nothing short of incredible,” Jacobs said.

Being in the Obama budget, Mica said, virtually ensures additional money, even if the president’s plan is not adopted by Congress, as is likely.

Wave Streetcar Project

U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx recently announced that President Obama’s Fiscal Year 2015 Budget includes a recommendation to provide approximately \$50 million for Fort Lauderdale’s Wave Streetcar project.



The project is being managed by the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA), in partnership with the City of Fort Lauderdale, the Downtown Development Authority of Fort Lauderdale (DDA), Broward County, Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization (Broward MPO), and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). The proposed funding, provided through the Federal Transit Administration’s Capital Investment Grant program, is in addition to an \$18 million TIGER grant announced in June 2012, and will provide the remaining federal funds needed to design and construct the 2.7-mile streetcar project in downtown Fort Lauderdale.

“The Wave Streetcar is a vital part of Fort Lauderdale’s Citywide Vision and Strategic Plan and it aligns with our Complete Streets policy, which recently ranked #1 in Florida and #3 in the nation,” said Fort Lauderdale Mayor John P. “Jack” Seiler.

continued on p.5

"The City is extremely grateful to be recommended for the Small Starts grant and the opportunity presented to spur economic growth through a viable, sustainable transportation option such as The Wave. The Wave will increase mobility for everyone, and a federal investment of this magnitude recognizes the community's support and desire for transportation choices that improve our quality of life. We would like to thank The Wave Streetcar Partnership team for their tireless efforts in securing a total of \$68 million in federal funding for this project."

The project was approved by the County Commission in March 2013, as part of then-Mayor Kristin Jacobs' "Year of the Neighbor." A longtime advocate for progressive public transportation, Commissioner Jacobs called The Wave "a gigantic step in public transportation for Broward County. When it comes to rail, it's not only ridership that is important, but also the long-term economic develop-

ment that occurs along the corridor."

"We welcome this federal investment and believe that The Wave transportation system will result in increased economic development, provide commuters with additional transportation choices, and eventually expand to include broader areas of Broward County," said Broward Mayor and District 8 Commissioner Barbara Sharief.

The Wave Streetcar project was initiated in 2002 to facilitate long-term economic growth and development, improve mobility, stimulate community connectivity, enhance local transit service, and present permanent, environmentally friendly, sustainable transportation alternatives that reduce carbon emissions, save energy, and reduce roadway congestion.

Statewide Transit Resources and Innovative Development Exchange (STRIDE)

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Transit Office has created a new forum to share regulatory and technical information related to the development of major transit projects. The Statewide Transit Resources and Innovative Development Exchange (STRIDE) was formed to promote coordination and peer sharing among all FDOT District Offices and regional transit groups regarding transit issues and initiatives within the state. Comprised of District Transit Office representatives, the STRIDE group meets quarterly, featuring presentations of major transit projects in each district and discussions of statewide studies and research, in addition to developing Departmental policy and guidance related to major public transportation projects and operational strategies.

The first STRIDE meeting kicked off with a discussion of the recent Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) changes to the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) New Starts and Small Starts program. The presentation identified integration of these changes in pre-Project Development



and Project Development applications in Florida. Other topics include research and studies regarding exclusive transit lane designation processes, implementation of operational improvements to enhance transit service delivery,

development of a feasibility study scope to simplify the New Starts application process and revisions to the Department's Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) Manual, Chapter 14 which addresses transit projects.

The Transit Office is facilitating the group with the goal of improving coordination between regional transit groups and fostering information sharing regarding development of these major projects to enhance the overall delivery of transit projects on a statewide basis. These improvements will assist the FDOT in providing timely technical and financial assistance to our partner transit agencies in the delivery of transit projects throughout Florida. For more information regarding the STRIDE meeting presentations and featured transit projects, please contact Diane Quigley, diane.quigley@dot.state.fl.us.

Grand Opening of Transit Stations that will Serve SunRail Phase 1 and Phase 2

Winter Park Rail Station—wesh.com

For more than 100 years, people have been coming to Winter Park by train. Winter Park had a train station even before it was a city. On Monday, March 3, Winter Park proudly opened its new combination train station to serve both Amtrak and SunRail.



Leaders were happy to announce their station opened on time and under budget. They say when SunRail starts rolling May 1, they expect immediate enthusiasm. It was a very proud ribbon-cutting for a facility that many say is long overdue. "The only thing missing from Winter Park was that. That was the only thing missing," said Orange County Mayor Teresa Jacobs.

Winter Park Mayor Ken Bradley expects many will come to work and shop in his city 24/7 on SunRail. "Something that will bring jobs to our community, something that will allow our own citizens to seek jobs in other parts of our region," said Bradley.

SunRail will not just move people from point A to point B, it will provide locations for specific types of development.

"This is where the cities began, and now they're going to have a revitalization, in each one of those areas, with town centers and commerce, as well as homes," said Seminole County Commissioner Lee Constantine.

Rep. John Mica has been pushing commuter rail for years, and he believes SunRail Phase One will start big-time momentum for other proposed projects.

"Will everyone use it? No, but it will make a big difference in quality of life in Central Florida and our future, I believe," Mica said. Mica said people will use it as long as it's convenient, and he's convinced as they iron out the schedules and get connectivity in and out of the cities and counties, that people will use it.

Currently, Amtrak is still using the old train station, but it will make the move to the newly finished facility very soon.

LYNX Intermodal Facility

On Thursday, February 27th federal, state and local officials celebrated the grand opening of the LYNX Kissimmee Intermodal Station. On Jan. 12 LYNX



Photo Credit: aroundosceola.com

moved eight routes to the facility located next to the historic Kissimmee Amtrak station. This eight bay transfer facility now serves as the hub for all transit services in Osceola County. The multi-modal uses of this facility have had an immediate impact as passengers can now connect with Amtrak, Greyhound and on-street transfer opportunities. Additional connections will occur once Phase II of SunRail is extended to the adjacent train station. During peak service at least 17 LYNX buses have been utilizing the facility per hour. The multimodal center was developed to house five 40-foot buses and three 60-foot articulated buses. Additional amenities include closed circuit television, 14 solar-lit bus shelters and drought tolerant plants. www.youtube.com/watch?v=y5llt6IKSm4

The \$1.3 million project was funded through an FTA Livability Grant.

Registration is Open

June 2 - 4, 2014

**FPTA/FDOT CUTR Professional
Development Workshop and Transit
Safety Summit**

**USF Embassy Suites
Tampa, FL**

Upcoming 2014 Professional Development Workshop Planning Network Sessions

The 2014 FPTA/FDOT/CUTR Professional Development Workshop and Transit Safety Summit will be June 2-4, 2014 at the Embassy Suites-USF. The statewide 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 Florida Transit Planning Network will sponsor the following sessions:

Best Practice in Transit Performance Measures (Tuesday, June 3)

This session will present the results of a nationwide study for the most effective transit performance measures. Implementation of the results-driven Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act (MAP-21) encourages the adoption of performance-based programs that forward the achievement of national transportation goals. To provide guidance to Florida transit agencies in keeping performance analysis and reporting simple and manageable, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Transit Office is currently conducting a study that explores the most effective performance measures that can be applied in performance-based planning.

The study includes a summary of literature on performance measurement, national and Florida case studies encompassing different sized agencies' performance-based programs, and an overview of MAP-21 changes relevant to transit performance

measures reporting. The report, upon conclusion, will recommend a tool box of the most useful performance measures based on the case studies and a survey of 29 Florida urban fixed-route agencies. The purpose for developing the performance measures toolbox is to guide transit agencies with similar characteristics in selecting the most effective measures to report and use in evaluating operational and financial service performance. This session will present the findings from the national literature reviews, case studies and survey results in addition to identifying the recommended performance measures.

Overview of the Federal Transit Administration's Simplified Trips-on-Project (STOPS) Software (Wednesday, June 4)

This session will provide a general review of the Federal Transit Administration's (FTA) Simplified Trips-on-Project Software (STOPS). STOPS is a stand-alone software package which is used to predict detailed transit travel patterns for No-build and Build scenarios, quantify the trips-on-project measure for all travelers and for transit dependents, and compute the change in automobile vehicle miles of travel (VMT) based on the change in overall transit ridership between the two scenarios. This software was developed to assist transit agencies in forecasting trips for alternatives analysis as part of the Small Starts/New Starts projects. The course will also provide detailed information on how STOPS was used in the evaluation and implementation of a Florida transit project.

To register for the conference, visit: www.cutr.usf.edu/fpta.

FDOT Creates New Interactive Transit Map

The interactive transit map pins the locations of the 29 urban (blue bus icons) and 3 rural (red bus icons) fixed-route systems in Florida. Users simply click on a bus icon to view the system's contact information, resource links, and transit statistics from the 2010 to 2012 National Transit Database. The interactive transit map can be accessed at www.dot.state.fl.us/transit/TransitMap/default.htm.



Broward County Transit Receives Commission Approval to Implement New Computer-Aided Dispatch/Automatic Vehicle Locator System

On January 28, the Broward County Commission voted to move forward with implementation of a Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) and Automatic Vehicle Locator (AVL) system for Broward County Transit (BCT).

The new CAD/AVL system will allow operations dispatchers to better manage fixed-route and community buses and the planned "WAVE" modern streetcar system. It will also provide "real-time" bus arrival and departure information through passenger advisory signs, websites, text messaging and mobile phone applications.

"This is a highly-anticipated project," said Tim Garling, director of the Broward County Transit Division. "Our passengers and BCT staff look forward to the implementation of the CAD/AVL

system. This technology will enhance our entire operations by improving the riding experience for our passengers as well as the internal business process of public transportation."

In addition to several other features and functions, the CAD/AVL system will enhance communications between the operations dispatchers and bus drivers when addressing issues that arise during day-to-day operations.

BCT will now begin work on the first of seven phases to prepare for a full-system rollout, which is tentatively scheduled for spring-summer 2015. The \$12.5 million dollar project is federally-funded from various Federal Transit Administration (FTA) grants, including \$2.2 million dollars in American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funds.

Accessing Transit: Bus Facility Design Handbook Training—May 28, 2014

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Transit Office is sponsoring a training opportunity for state and local staff who approve, permit, design, and/or place transit facilities within roadway rights-of-way. This course is built around the updated Accessing Transit: Design Handbook for Florida Bus Passenger Facilities, Version III, 2013.

If your responsibilities impact State rights-of-way through designing, operating, building, or maintaining bus stops, stations, and facilities, you are invited to attend this free training session the Transit Office is conducting in Orlando.

This session is scheduled at the FDOT District Five Urban Offices, 133 South Semoran Boulevard, Orlando, Florida, Apopka Conference Rooms A and B; from 8:30am to 4:30pm on Wednesday May 28, 2014.

Registration for this training session can be completed on-line at <http://accessingtransittraining.eventbrite.com>

Course materials will be provided via email to those registered approximately one week before the training session, however, the Accessing Transit

handbook is available for download from the FDOT Transit Office website.

For Professional Engineers, application for PDH credits will be submitted. CM credits for AICP will also be submitted for this training session.

Please assist us by forwarding this invitation to any local/state agency staff that you believe would benefit from such training.

Additional Information: The course is based on the FDOT Transit Office's Accessing Transit: Design Handbook for Florida Bus Passenger Facilities, Version III, 2013. and is an updated version of the course offered in 2011 featuring the previous version of the handbook.

As public transit continues to be enhanced, FDOT departments and local agencies need to become better informed of the Federal and State laws, rules, design standards, and guidelines that impact their areas of responsibility. This course will include materials and information that are relevant to FDOT planning, design, and operations offices, local government engineering and permitting agencies,

continued on p.9

Florida Department of Transportation

605 Suwannee Street MS 26
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

Program Manager: Diane Quigley

Phone: (850) 414-4520

Fax: (850) 414-4508

Email: diane.quigley@dot.state.fl.us

Florida Public Transportation Association

P.O. Box 10168
Tallahassee, FL 32302

Executive Director: Lisa Bacot

Phone: (850) 878-0855

Fax: (850) 878-0725

Email: LisaBacot@floridatransit.org

Visit our Website

planfortransit.com

Please send your planning related articles to:

Mark Mistretta
mistretta@cutr.usf.edu

Ann Joslin
joslin@cutr.usf.edu

Accessing Transit: Bus Facility Design Handbook—cont'd from pg 8

as well as local transit operators. Included will be access requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), design criteria along state roadways, guidance for reviewing design plans, and improving pedestrian safety at bus stops. User-friendly reference and resource materials will supplement the instruction and be available prior to the training.

For questions, please contact: Gabrielle Matthews, FDOT Project Manager at (850) 414-4239 or email gabrielle.matthews@dot.state.fl.us.

Training & Professional Development

Professional Development:

Save the Date: June 2 - 4, 2014

2014 FPTA/FDOT/CUTR Professional Development Workshop and Transit Safety Summit in Tampa, Florida

Transit Boardings Estimation Simulation Tool (TBEST) 4.1 Training Workshop:

The Public Transit Office (PTO) of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) will be providing free training sessions for the new version of the Transit Boardings Estimation and Simulation Tool (TBEST) 4.1. Two upcoming sessions include: Jacksonville (4/9 to 4/10), and Ft. Lauderdale (4/17 to 4/18). These trainings will cover methods for the successful implementation, usage, and management of the new version TBEST. The workshops will include hands-on training in the classroom to ensure transit staff will be able to correctly apply TBEST in strategic and service planning activities, as well as market analysis and Title VI reporting. The training sessions are designed for those persons who perform or provide support for transit service planning including transit planners and GIS analysts. Previous knowledge of TBEST and/or GIS is desired but not a requirement.

There is no registration fee. Visit the following two website links for more information on the sessions and requirements, locations, and how to register.

Training Announcement and Registration: http://planfortransit.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/TBEST_Training_Announcement.pdf

Course Agenda: http://planfortransit.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/04/TBEST_Workshop_Agenda.pdf

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.