



# Plan For Transit



BIANNUAL NEWSLETTER OF THE FLORIDA TRANSIT PLANNING NETWORK

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## Hi-speed Rail Coming to Florida

On January 28, 2010 the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) was awarded \$1.25 billion from the federal government to initiate the development of new high speed rail service connecting Orlando and Tampa. This initial phase will involve 84 miles of new track in the median along the I-4 corridor, with stops planned at several key locations depicted in the map below. As planned, the system will reach top speeds of 168 mph with sixteen round trips per day. Travel time between Tampa and Orlando will be under one hour with annual ridership projections reaching 3 million in 2030. Completion of this phase is anticipated in 2015.

Issues related to the first high speed rail line that have yet to be resolved include: intermodal connectivity to the region's existing public transportation providers, particularly at Tampa Airport and Downtown Orlando, as well as the uncertainty of the location of the Lakeland/Polk County high speed rail station.



**Nation's first true high-speed line will serve Lakeland on its way between Tampa and Orlando.**

Significant planning studies are currently underway for the second phase of high speed rail that will link Orlando to Miami. Unlike the Orlando to Tampa route, the majority of the required right of way for this phase is not owned by the state. As a result, there is a strong preference to remain in the currently owned highway corridors to the maximum extent possible. Previous planning studies indicated the most favorable routing for this link would be along either I-95 or the Florida Turnpike. Upon completion of the environmental planning process (anticipated in 2012), an alignment involving one of these corridors (or a combination of the two) will be recommended. Ultimately, 20 round trips per day between Orlando and Miami are planned. Travel time is expected to be approximately 2 hours each way. The Orlando to Miami high speed rail line is tentatively planned for completion in 2017.

The Florida Rail Enterprise, under the authority of the FDOT, is the agency responsible for planning, constructing, maintaining, operating, and promoting Florida's high speed rail system. The Enterprise will acquire corridors, coordinate development and operations, and contract with other entities, for high speed rail and other publicly funded passenger rail systems in Florida.

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### Coming Up

#### Mark your Calendar

**2010  
FDOT/FPTA/CUTR  
Professional  
Development Workshop**

June 15-16, 2010  
CUTR/USF  
Embassy Suites  
Tampa, Florida  
(813) 977-7066

For more information, contact  
Molly Buffington at  
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## 2009 FTPN Survey Overview

In August 2009, a survey was conducted to identify opportunities to enhance the benefits and quality of the resources provided through the Florida Transit Planning Network (FTPN). There were sixty respondents to the survey. Fifty-five out of 60 (92 percent) were already familiar with the FTPN, and 35 out of 60 (58 percent) had used the FTPN website. The most important FTPN resources cited by respondents were the website (85%), workshop sessions (75 percent), and professional development (70 percent). The most important topics cited by respondents were transit and land use (62 percent), ITS (47 percent), and service planning (43 percent).

The survey also asked the respondents how useful various enhancements to the website would be. The top three recommended enhancements were a Transit Development Planning (TDP) Resource Center (70 percent), periodic email notification when new publications/reports are posted to the website (65 percent), and Transportation Disadvantaged Service Planning (TDSP) resources (53 percent).

A demographic look at the respondents revealed that 75 percent have been involved with professional transit planning related activities for over six years, 15 percent from two to five years, and only 10 percent less than two years. Forty percent of respondents worked at transit agencies, but there was also a wide mix of MPO planners, local government employees, consultants, and state agency employees who completed the survey.

The survey also included questions about attendance at the FDOT/FPTA/CUTR Professional Development Workshop (PDW) and the FPTA Annual Conference (the two main professional development opportunities available to Florida transit planners). Thirty percent of respondents replied that they often attend the PDW, 40 percent sometimes attend, and 28 percent never attend. For the FPTA Annual Conference, 15 percent often attend, 47 percent sometimes attend, and 37 percent never attend.

## 2010 Professional Development Workshop Preview

The **2010 FDOT/FPTA/CUTR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP** will take place June 15-16, 2010, at the Embassy Suites, USF in Tampa, FL. The following transit planning related topics listed will be featured at this year's workshop sessions:

- **Growth Management & Sustainability**
- **Measuring a Transit Agency's Carbon Footprint**
- **Utilizing TBEST for Service Planning**
- **The Impact of Hi-Speed Rail on Transit**
- **State Energy Initiatives**

Comments or suggestions on the above topics are welcome as well as any other ideas for topical presentations not listed here. Please forward your ideas to [Rob Gregg](#), CUTR, for consideration.

## FTIS - New Peer Selection and Performance Measurement Tool

TCRP Project G-11—A methodology for Performance Measurement and Peer Comparison in the Public Transportation Industry was published in February 2010. The report includes a variety of nationally available, standardized factors to be used in peer selection, and describes ways to incorporate policy objectives and other factors into the process.

An integral component of the project was to incorporate the methodology into a freely available, online software tool, the Integrated National Transit Database Analysis System (INTDAS) of the Florida Transit Information System (FTIS). This tool provides access to the full National Transit Database (NTD), allowing users to quickly identify a group of potential peer transit agencies, retrieve standardized performance data, and perform a variety of comparisons.

With just a few clicks of a mouse, users can obtain an initial peer grouping with FTIS, although more work is usually necessary to conduct a secondary screening to narrow the list of potential peers. Once a final peer group is selected, FTIS can be used to quickly find and export a variety of NTD-based performance measures, as well as create data tables and graphs. During the methodology testing conducted for the TCRP G-11 project, users were able to perform a peer comparison in 16 person-hours or less, including the time required to learn how to use the software.

FTIS is sponsored by the Florida Department of Transportation’s Public Transit Office and is maintained by Florida International University (FIU). FTIS is available to the public free of charge. However, it does require user registration to gain access. The main FTIS page is at [www.ftis.org](http://www.ftis.org) and INTDAS can be directly accessed at <http://www.ftis.org/INTDAS/NTDLogin.aspx>.

The screenshot shows the INTDAS (Integrated National Transit Database Analysis System) web interface. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the following elements:
 

- INTDAS INTEGRATED NATIONAL TRANSIT DATABASE ANALYSIS SYSTEM
- Navigation tabs: SELECT SYSTEMS, SELECT STATES, SELECT WITH QUERIES, SELECT PEERS, SELECT GROUPS
- Images of a train, a bus, and a light rail vehicle.
- Links: FTIS | Contact us | Help
- Logout button

The main content area contains the following search and selection options:
 

- Method selection:  TCRP G-11 Method (beta version) and  FTIS Method
- Select Target Agency: A dropdown menu currently showing "FL Florida" and a "Search" button. Below the dropdown is a list of agencies:
  - 4026 Manatee County Area Transit
  - 4027 Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority
  - 4028 Lee County Transit
  - 4029 Broward County Transportation Department
- Select Benchmarking Level:  Agency-wide and  Specific Mode: MB Motorbus
- Select Data Year: 2006
- Specify Data Source for Urban Area Population:  2006 American Community Survey (ACS) and  User-specified: [ ]
- A "Find Peers" button is located at the bottom right of the form area.

At the bottom of the page, there is a footer with the following text:
 

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## Conserve by Transit Studies I and II

The Florida Department of Transportation's Public Transportation Office has commissioned two studies (Conserve by Transit I and II) to show how public transportation in Florida affects greenhouse gas emissions.

Conserve by Transit I, completed by Florida State University, made an initial estimate of how much Florida's public transportation services reduce greenhouse gas emissions. Using 2006 data, researchers estimated that people who had shifted from driving to public transportation reduced the equivalent of nearly 200,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions. These shifts helped relieve traffic congestion, which reduced emissions by approximately 38,000 tons. The researchers estimated that almost half of the emission reductions occurred in Miami-Dade County.

Conserve by Transit II is ongoing and will estimate greenhouse gas emissions for each of Florida's transit agencies. Estimates will include electricity use for offices and lighting; fuel used for transit and office vehicles; maintenance; and loss of refrigerants from air conditioning. A research team from Florida International University and the University of North Florida, led by the University of South Florida, will contact public transit agencies throughout the state to request data. This project will also factor in steps that transit agencies are making to reduce emissions. The team expects to have results in late 2010. Agencies can then use the estimates to apply for federal funding and manage their emissions.

For access to the final report of Conserve by Transit I, please visit - <http://www.dot.state.fl.us/transit/Pages/NewTransitandtheEnvironment.shtm>. For more information about the 2nd phase of the study, please contact [Ms. Amy Datz](#), Florida DOT Public Transportation Office.

## Regional Planning Initiatives in the Treasure Coast Region

Prior to the 2000 Census, there were two urbanized areas in Martin and St. Lucie Counties; The Fort Pierce Urbanized Area and the Stuart Urbanized Area. When new urbanized areas were designated in 2002, the two former urbanized areas merged to become the Port St. Lucie Urbanized Area.

The impact of combining the two urbanized areas resulted in a population size that exceeded the threshold for the use of Section 5307 grant funds for transit operations. There was also a growing recognition that regional transportation solutions would require a regional focus and the continued cooperation and coordination of all parties. As a result, several regional transit planning initiatives were recently undertaken.

A Transit Funding and Governance Report was completed for Martin and St. Lucie Counties in 2007. The report evaluated four different service level scenarios ranging from a Transportation Disadvantaged service focus with increased efficiency, to an aggressive increase in service levels including new inter-county regional fixed routes, a Tri Rail extension, and Bus Rapid Transit.

In 2008, a Regional Transit and Specialized Efficiency Study was conducted to assess the strengths, weaknesses, and opportunities for regional transit services. The most notable weakness identified was the inefficiencies associated with the provision of transit service if the providers in the two counties continued to operate as separate entities.

A major TDP update, conducted on behalf of Martin and St. Lucie Counties (the first of its kind to promote regional transit development) was adopted by the St. Lucie Transportation Planning Organization TPO and the Martin Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) in 2009.

*Continued on page 5* ➡

## Regional Planning Initiatives in the Treasure Coast Region (cont.)

The 2010-2019 Regional TDP for the Port St. Lucie Urbanized Area presented recommendations regarding the need to continue the pursuit of a Regional Transit Authority (RTA), a single identity for transit in the region, the development of infrastructure to accommodate future network growth, focused improvements to the existing system, and the introduction of new routes over the 10 year planning horizon.

These efforts culminated in a Regional Transit Summit which was well attended by a broad base of local officials, Florida transit and government agency industry experts, business community interests, and members of the general public. A series of informative presentations and panel discussions were conducted that provided an overview of the studies that were previously completed, the vision for mobility from the perspective of economic development representatives, an overview of regional transit agency experiences, growth management implications, and strategies for moving toward the creation of an RTA.

Peter Buchwald, Executive Director of the St. Lucie Transportation Planning Organization reported "The success of the Regional Transit Summit exceeded all expectations, and the momentum it created was carried forward with the Joint TPO/MPO Board adopting the RTA Action Plan and approving the formation of a Regional Transit Organization (RTO). This success could not have been achieved without the support of our FDOT and FTA partners and the efforts of CUTR and Tindale-Oliver & Associates. Despite the uncertainties created by the economy and the delayed reauthorization, we will continue to move forward."

As envisioned, the RTO will be comprised of an eleven member board with representatives from Martin and St. Lucie Counties, the Martin County MPO, the St. Lucie County TPO, the Cities of Part St. Lucie, Fort Pierce and Stuart and FDOT District 4. Collectively, these entities will form a technical support working group to provide staff support to the RTO board, conduct research and public outreach and awareness activities, explore service and funding options, and achieve interlocal support for the future creation of a RTA.

## Transit Agencies "In the News"

### HART's Flex Service to Begin in Spring 2010

*February 2010*

Starting in early April, residents of southern Hillsborough County will be able to travel in a whole new way, as the HART Board approved implementation of a pilot flexible neighborhood service for Brandon and the Wimauma/Sun City Center areas. **HART Flex** will offer a service for people living in areas that are difficult to serve with larger transit vehicles. HART Flex vehicles will be able to navigate neighborhood streets, and flexible scheduling allows passengers to travel curb-to-curb to their destinations. HART Flex will charge a reduced fare, which is \$0.85 for a one way trip or \$1.85 for a 1-Day pass.

### Getting there on HART is easier with RouteShout

*March 2010*

Where's my bus? Hillsborough Area Regional Transit now has a simple and free way to answer that question for Hillsborough County transit riders (Simply **RouteShout** the answer). RouteShout is HART's new initiative to give riders schedule information, bus stop locations and service updates via cell phone, Android or iPhone. Passengers can text the four digit stop ID printed on the bus stop sign on their route. Within seconds, they will receive information about the next scheduled bus on their route. If riders have a GPS enabled phone, RouteShout will not only display arrival times, but nearby bus stops as well. For cell phone users with mobile browsers, simply log on to [m.routeshout.com](http://m.routeshout.com), search GoHART and *voila*. For iPhone and Android users, go to iTunes or the "Android market," search RouteShout, load the application, then search GoHART. From there, users can access bus schedule information.



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Visit us on our website at:  
<http://planfortransit.com>

Planning Resources:

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[http://delicious.com/  
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## Upcoming Training Sessions/Webinars

### Weekly Commuter Choice Webinars

All classes on Wednesday from 12:00 to 1:15 p.m. EDT (unless otherwise noted)

- May 5 - Transit Service Options: Session 1
- May 12 - Introduction to Teleworking: Session 2
- May 19 - Transit Service Options: Session 2
- May 24 - (1:30 to 3 p.m.) - Your Commuting Carbon Footprint: Session 1
- May 24 - (3:15 to 4:45 p.m.) - Effective Business Communication
- June 2 - Transit Service Options: Session 3
- June 9 - Commuter Choice Support/Smart Commute: Session 1
- June 10 - (1:30 to 3 p.m.) - Your Commuting Carbon Footprint: Session 2

For more information, contact Jennifer Iley, Training Support Specialist, at [iley@cutr.usf.edu](mailto:iley@cutr.usf.edu) or 813-974-689. For a complete schedule, go to <http://www.commuterservices.com/>

### Preparing for the FTA Triennial Review - Plus

June 28-30, 2010  
CUTR - Tampa, FL  
No registration fee (sponsored by FTA)  
For more information, contact [Molly Buffington](mailto:Molly.Buffington), (813) 974-7810

## Upcoming Events/Conferences

### 2010 Southeast TDM Symposium hosted by SEACT

May 23-25, 2010  
Lido Beach Resort - Sarasota, FL  
Member - \$125, Non-member - \$200

### 2010 FDOT/FPTA/CUTR Professional Development Workshop

June 15-16, 2010  
Embassy Suites - USF, Tampa, FL  
No registration fee

### Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged Annual Transportation Training and Technology Conference

July 12-15, 2010  
Renaissance Orlando Hotel - Orlando, FL  
Registration - \$230