



The Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council

Mayor Susan Haynie
Chair

MPOAC Freight Committee Minutes from the April 6, 2017 Meeting

Committee Members

Greg Stuart, Broward MPO, Chair
Caitlin Cerame, West Florida RPC
Renee Cross, Palm Beach MPO
Mike Daniels, Ocala / Marion TPO
Bob Herrington, Charlotte County - Punta Gorda MPO
David Hutchinson, Sarasota / Manatee MPO
Charles Klug, Hillsborough MPO
Carlos Roa, Miami-Dade MPO
Greg Slay, Capital Region TPA
Nick Uhren, Palm Beach MPO
Mary Beth Washnock, West Florida RPC

Other Participants

Karen Brunelle, FHWA
Carlos Castro, FDOT – District 6
Daniel Crotty, Whitehouse Group
Rickey Fitzgerald, FDOT
Alex Gramovot, FDOT
David Henderson, Miami – Dade TPO
Brian Hunter, FDOT – District 7
Lee Ann Jacobs, FHWA
Jason Klempin, FDOT – District 5
Carl Mikyska, MPOAC
Bob O'Malley, CSX
Mark Reichert, FDOT
Justin Ryan, FDOT - District 2
Jim Wikstrom, FDOT – District 5
Michael Williamson, Cambridge Systematics

Discussion Items

1. Carl Mikyska, MPOAC Executive Director, welcomed all participants and opened the meeting with introductions.
2. Greg Stuart, Committee Chair, provided the following announcements:
 - a. Fostering Advancements in Shipping and Transportation for the Long-term Achievement of National Efficiencies (FASTLANE) grant applications are still being processed by the United States Department of Transportation (USDOT).
 - b. The West Florida Regional Planning Council (WFRPC) and the Broward MPO have been selected to participate as members in the newly assembled Florida Freight Advisory Committee (FLFAC). The inaugural meeting is scheduled for April 21, 2017.
3. Rickey Fitzgerald, FDOT Freight & Multimodal Operations Office Manager, gave a presentation highlighting the following about the Update on Statewide Freight Programs:
 - a. The *Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act* (FAST Act) repealed both the Primary Freight Network and National Freight Network from *Moving Ahead for Progress in the 21st Century Act* (MAP-21), and redirected the Federal Highways Administrator (FHWA) to establish a National Highway Freight Network (NHFN)¹ to strategically direct Federal resources and policies toward improved performance of highway portions of the U.S. freight transportation system; \$6.3 billion nationally over the next five (5) years (FL \$301 million).
 - b. The FAST Act had two (2) key requirements before it could obligate any funds:
 - i. Each state must develop a freight investment plan and are encouraged to establish freight advisory committee; and,
 - ii. USDOT and states must designate a national freight network that will be updated every five (5) years.
 - c. The FDOT Freight and Multimodal Operations Office (FMO) updated their existing state freight investment plan, known as the *Florida Freight Mobility and Trade Plan* (FMTP), for FAST Act compliance.
 - d. FMO developed a strategic framework to remove the *institutional, funding and infrastructure* bottlenecks that were identified to be interfering with Florida's multimodal freight mobility.
 - e. FMO formulated the FLFAC to:
 - i. Address the *institutional* bottlenecks as well support *funding* efforts to build *infrastructure* that improves freight mobility within the state.
 - ii. Receive input to help prioritize freight initiatives.
 - f. FMO designated the NHFN in Florida:
 - i. Primary Highway Freight Network (PHFS) – 1,656 miles

¹ For more information about the National Highway Freight Network, visit <https://ops.fhwa.dot.gov/freight/infrastructure/nfn/>

- ii. Critical Rural Freight Corridors (CRFC) – 320 miles
 - iii. Critical Urban Freight Corridors (CUFC) – 160 miles
- g. In December 2016, FMO asked the FDOT Districts to work with local stakeholders and develop a list of potential projects to be programmed as part of the NHFP.
- h. In February 2017, the FDOT Districts submitted their lists to FDOT Central Office, where the candidate projects are being screened for financial feasibility.
- i. The final list of projects will be presented before the FLFAC during their inaugural meeting on April 21, 2017. The FLFAC will be asked submit their recommendations after their review.
- j. Those interested in participating in the meeting or applying to become an FLFAC member may do so by visiting <http://freightmovesflorida.com/events/florida-freight-advisory-committee/>.
- k. The Committee held a short question and answer session following the presentation:
 - i. Rickey Fitzgerald was asked to work with the MPOs and consider projects that would serve as potential connectors to the mainline facilities outlined in the Florida NHFN for future funding years.
 - ii. It was clarified that FASTLANE state formula funds would come from a variety of qualifying state programs (e.g. SIS, NHFP, FSTEAD, Intermodal Discretionary)
 - iii. Rickey Fitzgerald was thanked and asked to continue coordination with the MPOs and the Committee when developing project priorities for the state-wide work program.
- 4. Michael Williamson, Freight Operations Manager with Cambridge Systematics, Inc., gave a presentation and facilitated a workshop about Building a Framework to Establish Freight Priorities for Florida's MPOs:
 - a. The MPOAC has been working towards preparing MPOs to be able to influence state freight priorities since its inception:
 - i. 2013-2014 – FDOT developed their FMTP Policy and Investment Elements based off MAP-21 guidance.
 - ii. 2013 – The MPOAC Freight Advisory Committee was formed.
 - iii. October 2015 – The How Should MPO's Engage in Setting Freight Priorities brochure was developed.
 - iv. December 2015 – The FAST Act was signed.
 - v. July 2016 – The Committee confirmed that it was still interested in influencing state freight priorities.
 - vi. October 2016 – The Committee developed the *MPOAC's Opportunity to Enhance the Definition of Florida's Freight Priorities* "whitepaper," which was a list of eight (8) possible recommendations on how the Committee

could take an active role in helping the MPO community identify, promote and advance freight priorities on the state level.

- b. The Setting of Priorities is important to MPOs because:
 - i. Florida's MPOs should be as competitive as possible within the state and within the country in pursuing any available funding sources for freight priorities; not just funds from the FAST Act.
 - ii. FDOT's state freight priorities address the most strategic freight needs; many of these priorities fall within urbanized areas.
 - iii. MPOs drive project development and priorities within urban areas.
 - iv. Each MPO should include freight considerations in project prioritization methodologies.
 - v. Unified input by MPOs and the MPOAC to FDOT on freight priorities will help ensure local and regional freight needs are addressed in funding decisions.
 - vi. The FLFAC appears to be a new opportunity to deliver the unified input of the MPOs and MPOAC to FDOT.
- c. The ability of an MPO to identify a freight project, establish a priority, document economic/transportation benefits, develop a proposed funding plan, and illustrate community support drives success.
- d. The Committee reviewed several options on how best to define internal consensus regarding the way it would encourage the Florida MPOs to promote freight priorities at the state and national level:
 - i. Endorse an annual list of the top freight priorities for Florida's MPOs;
 - ii. Encourage MPOs currently not engaged in freight transportation planning efforts to achieve a minimum standard; and/or
 - iii. Encourage the creation of an objective scoring process that evaluates a mix of projects equitably.
- e. The Committee reviewed the eight (8) recommendations that were previously developed within the MPOAC's Opportunity to Enhance the Definition of Florida's Freight Priorities whitepaper.
- f. The Committee reviewed a proposed list of components that could be included within the MPOAC Prioritization Framework:
 - i. Freight project definition / identification
 - ii. Project Evaluation characteristics / data
 - iii. Process for calculating priorities
 - iv. Application process for consideration in statewide list
 - v. Review / evaluation criteria
 - vi. Development of stateside list / formal dissemination
 - vii. Incorporation of priority list into statewide freight program
- g. The Committee fielded several questions throughout the presentation/workshop:

- i. **Does the MPOAC intend to have this framework finished in conjunction with FDOT project programming?** FDOT is looking to program their initial list of priorities by July 2017 and it may take the MPOAC a while to finalize the prioritization framework; however, if the prioritization framework is completed and the MPOAC can endorse projects that are “ready-to-go,” FDOT should look to those projects to fill in any gaps that may arise within their own priorities list during funding and implementation.
 - ii. **Will the MPOAC Prioritization Framework work in collaboration with or in competition with the FDOT prioritized projects list on the national level?** It is within both the MPOAC and FDOT’s best interest for the MPOAC Prioritization Framework and the efforts behind it to change the working climate to be more collaborative. Otherwise Florida may lose all chances of receiving federal funds if there are two (2) competing prioritization lists.
 - iii. **Related to Project Evaluation Characteristics: Is FDOT treating the freight program similarly to the work program (i.e. prioritizing projects based on project readiness)?** That can be determined for the benefit of the Committee.
- 5. The Committee Chair opened the meeting for Public Comments. No remarks were made.
 - 6. The Executive Director announced that the next Committee meeting will be held in Boca Raton, FL on July 19, 2017.
 - 7. Meeting Adjourned by the Chair.

Action Items

- 1. Disseminate the meeting’s presentations and the workshop proceedings to the MPOAC Freight Committee members and participants.
- 2. Post the meeting minutes on the MPOAC website.