

Palm Beach
Metropolitan Planning Organization
Transportation Planning for the Palm Beaches



October is Florida's Greenways and Trails Month

The State Department of Environmental Protection has recognized the month of October as Greenways and Trails Month. The Department's Office of Greenways and Trails, in addition to many efforts by local organizations, is establishing a statewide Greenways and Trails Systems for recreation, conservation and alternative transportation, such as bicycling.

Greenways and Trail Systems help to conserve native landscapes and ecosystems, link natural areas and open spaces, and offer a variety of outdoor recreational opportunities for all ages and abilities. Use of greenways and trails provides a unique opportunity to improve one's health both physical and spiritual, encourage family-based activities, appreciate the outdoors and nature, and foster community involvement.

The greater Palm Beach County area offers a variety of greenway and trail opportunities to re-discover the abundant and, many times, overlooked, natural beauty that exist close to our cities and towns. From the 118-mile Lake Okeechobee Trail, to our pristine coastal natural areas and parks, from JW Corbett Management Area to Loxahatchee Wildlife Refuge, residents are afforded a multitude of outdoor recreational gems from which to choose. Perhaps you would prefer a quiet hike that traces the history of the Seminole Indian Tribe, navigating a mountain

bike through the palmettos in Jonathan Dickinson State Park, or kayaking among the wildlife on Florida's Designated Natural and Scenic River – The Loxahatchee. Whatever your preference, an outdoor adventure awaits you.

Given the increased development that has taken place in Palm Beach County, and South Florida in general, a greater emphasis is being placed upon developing more greenway and trail facilities. The Palm Beach MPO, in cooperation with many agencies, is working hard to identify, plan and build facilities, in response to increasing demands to provide recreation and non-motorized transportation.

While October is officially designated as the official month to recognize greenways and trails, residents and visitors alike are encouraged to take advantage of our amenities throughout the year. Moreover, the timing is right to investigate and explore, as the cooler months are looming ever closer.

For more information on Greenways and Trails and related events in Palm Beach County and throughout the State, please visit the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's (DEP) website at www.dep.state.fl.us/gwt, or contact Bret Baronak, Bicycle, Pedestrian and Greenways Coordinator with MPO at (561) 684-4163.

*See Page 5 for Greenways and
Trails Public Meeting Information*

Check out our webpage: www.pbcgov.com/mpo

Transportation is Major Focus in Glades Area

The Florida Heartland Rural Economic Development Initiative (FHREDI) and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) are preparing **The Heartland Rural Mobility Plan**. The objective of the project is to improve regional economic health through the development and implementation of an overall mobility improvement process for the six counties and four cities in the Florida Heartland Region. The six counties are DeSoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, and Okeechobee. The four cities are Belle Glade, Pahokee, South Bay (Palm Beach County) and Immokalee.

Over half of the residents in Belle Glade, Pahokee and South Bay did not graduate from high school, and three-quarters of the population never attended college. Transportation to educational facilities and training centers is the key to improving the quality of life and income levels of Western Palm Beach County's residents.

Statistics in Western Palm Beach County are indicative of the need for transportation opportunities that allow access to jobs. Mobility is the crucial component that may begin to resolve this situation, as an estimated 24 percent of area residents are without cars, and over 31 percent of the area's population either uses public transit or carpools to work.

The Heartland Rural Mobility Plan is part of an overall effort to find ways to provide transportation services to those who need them in Western Palm Beach County, as well as the entire Heartland Region. Their primary message is "people come first".

To learn more about **The Heartland Rural Mobility Plan** and the goals of FHREDI and complete their survey, go to their webpage at www.fhredi.com or contact Angela Morlok in the MPO Office at 561.684.4170.



District's 1 & 4 FDOT Staff answer questions about the Heartland Rural Mobility Plan

FHREDI Staff gave presentation for state, county and municipal stakeholders



2030 Long Range Transportation Plan Update

The MPO is required to maintain a transportation plan with at least a 20-year planning horizon. This Plan must be updated every five years. The last Plan update occurred in 2004 and resulted in the 2030 Transportation System Plan (LRTP). The Plan includes both long-range and short-range strategies which are in compliance with all other state and federal requirements.

Consistent with future land use elements and goals, objectives and policies of local government comprehensive plans, the LRTP identifies transportation facilities, intermodal and/or multimodal terminals that will function as an integrated system.



Did You Know?

- The legal status of a bicycle is defined as a vehicle and falls under the Chapter 316, F.S., of the Uniform Traffic Control Law? The cyclist must follow traffic rules common to all drivers and also obey rules adopted for bicycles.
- Three feet is a minimum “safe distance” for passing a cyclist under typical urban conditions? Large vehicles, those towing trailers, or vehicles traveling at higher speeds require greater lateral clearance.
- More information about safe bicycling can be found at www.sharetheroad.org
- To save time, money and the environment, South Florida Vanpool will help your employees find a viable transportation alternative? Contact the MPO office at 561.684.4170 for information.
- Another energy-saving transportation alternative is to car-pool? South Florida Commuter Services offers valuable tips on their website www.1800234RIDE.com.
- Palm Tran route modifications were effective October 1, 2007. For route information contact Palm Tran’s Customer Service at 561.841.4287 or their website www.pbcgov.com/palmtran.

The Plan includes roads, buses, trains, bicycles and sidewalks. The projects will be identified and balanced against projected revenues from existing sources. The MPO is beginning a two-year process to extend the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan to 2035. This Plan will be based on comprehensive plans adopted by the county and the municipalities.

A Request for Proposal (RFP) is expected to be issued by the end of 2007 and the update will begin April 2008.

The Plan will be completed by December 2009.



MPO Board Approves 2009-2013 TIP Priorities

The MPO Board approved the 2009–2013 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Priorities at its September 20th meeting. The Priorities are selected and set for the TIP and the Florida Department of Transportation's Five-Year Work program by taking into consideration The Safe, Affordable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act, A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). The primary driving forces are the planning factors, the Congestion Management System and the 2030 Transportation System Plan.

The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) provides Goals and Objectives that address the eight SAFETEA-LU planning factors. These goals provide the high-level policy directives that will drive the ranking criteria. The MPO's adopted 2030 LRTP includes these goal categories: Intermodal; Alternative Modes; Highways, Economics/Finance;

Growth Relations, Environmental/Social; Safety & Security, and Regional Planning. Proposed projects go through a screening process where questions such as, 'Is the project contained in the current, adopted LRTP?' 'Would the project violate any policy constraints of the subject jurisdiction?' 'Is the project already in the Adopted Work Program coded as Construction?' Once these criteria are met, the project is considered for ranking.

In addition to these considerations, preference is given to projects already in the process of FDOT's Adopted Work Program in order to protect already existing commitments. The priorities list can be found in the approved document which includes a list of I-95, Florida's Turnpike, Mass Transit and Enhancement Projects. The approved TIP Priorities document can be found on the MPO website at www.pbcgov.com/mpo

GTAC Coordinates Glades Agencies

The Glades Technical Advisory Committee (GTAC) is an interagency task force created in 1995 by the County Administrator's Office at the request of former District 6 County Commissioner Ken Foster. The purpose of GTAC is to coordinate the various community and economic development-related activities of various non-profit and government agencies serving communities near Lake Okeechobee. Participating membership includes the Cities of Belle Glade, Pahokee and South Bay, PBC Economic Development Office, PBC Housing and community Development, the Western Communities tourism Alliance (now part of the Convention and Visitors Bureau), the MPO, Workforce Alliance, PBC School District, the EDGE Center, Glades Community Development corporation and area residents. Others participating in the endeavor include FDOT, Army Corps of Engineers and Environmental Resource Management.

GTAC meets the fourth Thursday of each month at rotating city sites. However, an alternate date is chosen in November and a December break to accommodate holiday schedules. The monthly meetings provide productive forum for the core group of members to keep track of efforts to enhance the Glades area, monitor progress being made in diversifying the economy and find creative ways to work together without duplication of efforts.

The diversity of the membership lends itself to guest speakers at the monthly meetings who address the concerns from a wide perspective of community needs and issues.

The Committee's Chair is Duane Gainer, with the PBC Office of Community Revitalization. Gainer may be reached a 561.233.5311 to answer any questions.

South Palm Beach County Greenways and Trails Public Meeting Planned

The Palm Beach MPO and the Palm Beach County Parks and Recreation Department will host a Public Meeting aimed at reviewing work developed to date for the South County Greenways and Trails Plan. The meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, November 7th, 2007, between the hours of 4:30 P.M. to 7:30 P.M., at the Okeehetee Nature Center, 7715 Forest Hill Blvd. West Palm Beach, FL.**

All citizens, elected officials, municipal representatives, stakeholders, and those having an interest in greenways, trails and recreation are encouraged to attend. Input from a variety of interests is the key to making sure the Plan best reflects the values of the community. This meeting will be a follow-up to the public workshop that was held in April.

The County is developing the Southern Palm Beach County Greenways and Trails Plan to identify non-motorized transportation and recreational trail opportunities south of Southern Boulevard (SR 80) to the Broward County line. This plan will result in a map of existing and proposed greenways and urban trails that will offer recreational opportunities, non-motorized transportation options and connectivity to regional activity centers along with an implementation strategy for future funding consideration. At a regional level, the plan will also identify connections with Broward County's Greenways Master Plan and the Northeast Everglades Natural Area (NENA) plan for Northern Palm Beach County.

In recent years, the County has placed an emphasis on creating non-motorized opportunities to serve bicyclists and pedestrians while showcasing the recreational and natural amenities that abound in the County. Providing accommodations for non-motorized transportation plays a key role in improving the quality of life in a community and enhancing the overall public health by giving opportunities for active lifestyles.

Participants will be given the opportunity to review and comment on the proposed network for greenways, pathways and blueways (water based corridors). A key component of the meeting will be a prioritization exercise that will assist in creating priorities for future implementation.

The Workshop will not have a time sensitive agenda and participants do not have to be present for the entire meeting time. Attendees may show between the allotted hours to review, comment and interact with staff.

Any questions regarding the Meeting should be directed to: Bret Baronak, Senior Planner, MPO Bicycle, Pedestrian and Greenways Coordinator, (561) 684-4163.

Refreshments will be served.





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