



Economic Stimulus Transportation Project Priorities Approved

At the MPO's March 19 meeting, a spirited discussion between MPO Staff, Florida Department of Transportation Staff and MPO members occurred. Determining how and where the \$27M from the *American Recovery and Reinvestment Act* funding would be spent was the focus of the meeting. After approximately two hours of discussion, the Board approved a list of projects and funding. Palm Beach County's allocation for transportation project priorities was broken down in the following manner:

Ranking	Agency	Project	Funding Requested
1	FDOT/Broward Co. Broward County Line to 18 th Street Bridge Reconstruction	Dixie Hwy (joint venture)	\$4,484,687
2	Palm Beach County Clint Moore Rd to Lake Worth Rd - Resurfacing, ADA Ramps, Guardrail upgrade	Military Trail	\$7,000,000
3	Belle Glade MLK Blvd to SE Ave G - Reconstruct with Stormwater Utilities, Curb and Gutter, Sidewalks	SE 3rd Street	\$2,200,000
4	Village of Wellington Southern Blvd to Florida's Turnpike - Sidewalks, Lighting, Drainage, Landscaping, Street Furniture, Signage	Forest Hill Blvd	\$3,000,000
5	Riviera Beach US 1 to South of Burnt Bridge - Resurfacing, Sidewalks, Lighting, Drainage, Landscaping (Existing FDOT Funding Commitment of \$9.7M)	Blue Heron Blvd/SR A1A	\$3,500,000
6	Tequesta Bridge Replacement - Replace Bridge and Roadway/Utility Improvements	Tequesta Drive	\$3,000,000
7	Royal Palm Beach Okeechobee Blvd to 40 th Street - Convert to Urban Section with Drainage, Bike Lanes, Bike/Pedestrian Paths	Royal Palm Beach Blvd	\$2,000,000
8	Boynton Beach MLK Blvd to Federal to Seacrest - Seacrest Blvd to Boynton Beach to North of C16 Canal - Lighting Improvements, Crosswalks, Sidewalk Improvements, Pavers and Traffic Circles	Seacrest and MLK, Jr. Blvd.	\$1,998,838

The project priorities were submitted to FDOT at the MPO meeting. FDOT will review and finalize the projects for inclusion in the final package submitted to the Federal Highway Administration for distribution of Stimulus Package funding.

MPO Hosts First Human Service Transportation Summit

You may be wondering what “Human Service Transportation” means to the citizens of Palm Beach County. The answer is found by gathering together public/private agencies who work daily with special needs communities, to identify transportation gaps and gain insights into ways to improve the existing transportation system. The Palm Beach MPO, in concert with the National Resource Center for Human Service Transportation Coordination, United We Ride, Community Transportation Association of America, Palm Tran/Palm Tran CONNECTION and Citizens for Improved Transit (a private/non-profit grassroots organization), held the first Human Service Transportation Summit on March 23, 2009.

This collaborative effort resulted in participation by 82 representatives from various social service agencies, county and state government, and citizen advocates. Speakers included Palm Beach County Commission Chair, Jeff Koons; District IV Florida Department of Transportation Secretary, Jim Wolfe; and Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged Chairperson, Dr. J. R. Harding. Other speakers represented local human service agencies: Palm Tran Assistant Director, Lorraine Szyns; Palm Tran CONNECTION Director, Ron Jones; Area Agency on Aging Interim CEO, Jamie Estremera-Fitzgerald; Workforce Alliance Program Manager, Maryann Macdonald Garrett; Palm Beach MPO Director, Randy Whitfield; and transit advocates, David Evans and Roberta Van Sickle. Jo Ann Hutchinson, United We Ride Ambassador, was the Summit facilitator.

The afternoon session featured breakout groups in three Federal Transit Administration (FTA) funding categories: Elderly and Persons with Disabilities Program, New Freedom Program and Job Access & Reverse Commute Programs. The breakout sessions were focused on three specific areas: 1. Successful Transit Services being provided; 2. Where Can Transit be Improved; and 3. Consensus on Transit Priorities. Each Breakout session concluded with the selection of the top three priorities in each of these areas. All three breakout groups brought their reports to the full group where the primary gaps were prioritized. A Human Service Transportation Action Plan was developed from input received from those who attended this very productive Summit. The Action Plan is available on the MPO’s webpage at www.pbcgov.org/mpo



Dr. J. R. Harding

Breakout Working Session



Final Priorities Posted by Full Group

Did You Know?

- Safe bicycling information can be found at www.sharetheroad.org.
 - An energy-saving transportation alternative is to car-pool. South Florida Commuter Services offers valuable tips on their website www.1800234RIDE.com.
 - A SunPass Mini-Sticker transponder can be purchased at Publix, CVS, Navarro and Sedano's for \$4.99. The Palm Beach County Clerk's Office also has transponders for sale! SunPass users may pay 25 cents less at toll plazas and exits than cash customers.
 - MPO, TAC, CAC and BGPAC agendas can be downloaded each month from the MPO's web page: www.pbcgov.org/mpo.
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Saying Goodbye...

The MPO staff bids Paul Larsen a *'Happy Retirement'* as he closes out more than 30 years of service on June 30, 2009. Paul has done all the modeling for the MPO over the years projecting 25-year forecasts in population, housing needs, traffic patterns, and land development for the Long Range Transportation Plan updates every four to five years, as well as providing MPO staff with statistical data and maps for special projects. He has worked with the County's Engineering Department and District IV FDOT staffs during this time. Paul is a West Palm Beach native and brings special knowledge of Palm Beach County to the work he does. Although, we will miss his technical expertise, we will miss most of all his keen wit, humor and compassion.

New Intermodal Transit Center Opens

Palm Tran's new, passenger-friendly public transportation transfer station is now open in downtown West Palm Beach. A ceremonial ribbon-cutting event was held to mark the occasion May 8, 2009. More than 100 community leaders, transit professionals and public transportation advocates attended the event.

The intermodal center was built adjacent to the Tri-Rail station in downtown West Palm Beach to improve connectivity between public buses and trains. Not only will the intermodal center improve transfers from Palm Tran to Tri-Rail, it will connect commuters with Amtrak Trains, Greyhound Buses and the free Trolley service operated by the City of West Palm Beach. Other features of the intermodal center include: eighteen bus bays; commuter restroom facilities and water fountains; seven covered bus shelters with benches and lighting; an Art in Public Places project; and a "Kiss & Ride" passenger drop-off area.

The completion of this center represents the beginning of the development of a "Transit Village" in West Palm Beach. The majority of the funding for the \$9 million intermodal project, including the cost of construction, land, engineering and design, was provided by the Florida Department of Transportation and the Federal Transit Administration. The first bus rolled into the intermodal on Sunday, May 10. (Source: *Palm Tran Media Release May 13, 2009*)

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