

**Palm Beach
Metropolitan Planning Organization**
Transportation Planning for the Palm Beaches



Veteran's Administration Hospital Celebrates its 25th Vanpool



The Veteran's Administration Hospital (VA) located in West Palm Beach celebrated its 25th vanpool in January 2008. Jose Delgado was all smiles as Patricia Cox, VPSI, Inc. Coordinator in Palm Beach County, handed over the keys to a seven-passenger van. Jose and his co-workers travel from Jupiter Farms each day to the VA Hospital on 45th Street.

South Florida Vanpool offers cost saving options for commuters. Depending on commuting distance a vanpool participant could reduce personal costs as much as three hundred dollars each month in fuel and maintenance. Other benefits of sharing the ride include Emergency Ride Home vouchers to be used when "life happens" and an employee must leave work unexpectedly; less stress; and restoring the health of earth's environment by lowering individual carbon footprints as vehicles are eliminated from Palm Beach County's roadways.

The VA Hospital offers employees an additional incentive to vanpool – such as designated parking spaces and an overall reduction in cost for each van paid by the VA and MPO subsidy. Several of the VA employees currently in the Vanpool program commented that it was the best benefit they had ever received.

More about South Florida Vanpool benefits can be found on the MPO's webpage or at www.vanride.com

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

Best Workplaces for CommutersSM

Best Workplaces for CommutersSM is an innovative program that provides qualified employers with national recognition and an elite designation for offering outstanding commuter benefits, such as free or low cost bus passes, strong telework programs, carpool matching and vanpool subsidies. Employers that meet the *National Standard of Excellence* in commuter benefits – a standard created by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – can get on the list of Best Workplaces for Commuters.

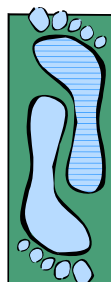
As of October 1, 2007, the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) at the University of South Florida (USF) is responsible for program management of the Best Workplaces for Commuters program. A nationally-recognized research institution and resource for policymakers, transportation professionals, the education system, and the public, CUTR is known for providing high quality, objective transportation research. They have prepared the Transit Development Plan (TDP) for Palm Tran in Palm Beach County over the past few years.

In November 2007, the VA Hospital in West Palm Beach received recognition as a Best Workplaces for Commuters employer in Palm Beach County.

The VA Hospital joins approximately 2,000 employers nationwide in receiving that honor, placing it in the one percent of millions of employers who want to improve the quality of life for their employees.

The VA Hospital is a leader in our community by providing vanpool benefits to their employees. Vanpooling not only promotes energy conservation and reduces air pollution, 190 employees leave their single occupancy vehicles at home, so they play a key role in reducing traffic congestion. The VA Hospital is committed to providing benefits to their employees that many companies have not yet thought of. The introduction of vanpooling is one major step to help those 190 participating employees to reduce their carbon footprint on the environment.

A Carbon Footprint is a measure of the impact human activities have on the environment in terms of the amount of green house gases produced which are measured in units of carbon dioxide.



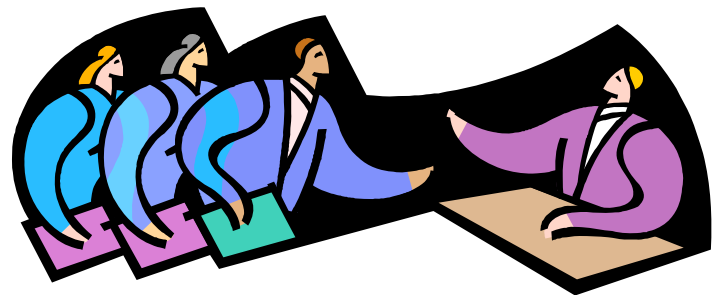
Public Involvement Plan (PIP) & Strategy Guide

The MPO is required by federal law to have a Public Involvement Plan in place. This Plan must be updated as federal rules governing Public Involvement change. The Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) regarding transportation planning and programming is 23CFR§450.316(1)(i) requires a public comment period of 45 days before the public involvement process is adopted or revised.

In order to comply with federal regulations, the MPO has placed a Revised Public Involvement Plan (PIP) and Strategy Guide on the MPO webpage. We are interested in your feedback regarding the document and request you contact us by email, snail-mail, or telephone to express your questions, concerns, or kudos. The PIP 2008 revision is currently posted on the MPO's webpage under "News". An additional element to the Revised PIP is a suggested guide (Appendix C) as to how you can address your transportation issues at MPO Board meetings.

We really do want to know your thoughts about the MPO's transportation planning process. There are opportunities throughout the year to comment on the 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan (update of the Plan to the year 2035 is just beginning); the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP); the Unified Planning Work Programs (UPWP) updated annually; and the PIP.

Staff will receive your comments on the PIP update until Monday, March 24, 2008. Send them to Patricia Masterman, Public Relations Officer at pmasterm@pbcgov.com. Please indicate in the Subject line "PIP Comments".



Did You Know?

- MPO staff participates in various public outreach events throughout Palm Beach County. A recent event was held at Palm Beach Community College. "Focus the Nation, Global Warming Solutions for America" featured panel discussions and displays designed to educate and encourage the community at large. Non-motorized solutions to the energy crisis as well as hybrid vehicles, and mass transit were represented. To learn more about the nationwide effort by universities and colleges to educate the public go to www.focusthenation.org
- 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 initiated a New Route Deviation Service in Boynton Beach on February 11 called The Lime Link. For 'Link' route information about the 6 other areas being served contact Palm Tran at 561.649.9838 or their website www.palmtran.org.

MPO News in Brief...

- MPO staff conducted a general transportation survey at the South Florida Fair. Of the 102 responses, the majority of fairgoers indicated they preferred personal vehicles for their transportation needs.
- The City of Pahokee held its first 'State of the City' address in November. Elected officials gave citizens an opportunity to hear about the progress the City has made in the past seven years.
- MPO staff in conjunction with the Workforce Alliance has reinstated the Transportation Subcommittee to determine the transportation needs of citizens living in the Glades Region. The Subcommittee consists of members from the private/public sector working together. Two major projects scheduled for the Glades area are the Everglades Restoration Project and construction of the new Belle Glade Hospital.
- FDOT and Gannett-Fleming Consultants are preparing the way for Tier II of the South Florida East Coast Corridor Transit Analysis Study. Tier I of the SFECC Study was completed the end of 2007.
- Enhancement Grant Applications are now available on the MPO webpage or by contacting Brett Baronak, BPG Coordinator at 561.684.4163. Deadline for application submittal is April 4.

Regional Transportation Updates

The South Florida MPO Public Information Officers (PIO) in Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade counties are currently developing a Public Information Plan (PIP) that would govern regional transportation projects. The Regional PIP is expected to be presented to the Southeast Florida Transportation Council (SEFTC) for approval before June 2008. The Plan will then be sent to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) for their information and approval.

Another regional endeavor the three PIOs are planning is a Title VI Training session which will be available to transportation-oriented agencies. The PIOs are the initial contact persons at the MPO office regarding any Title VI, Civil Rights Act complaints.

An annual Regional Citizens Advisory Committee is

planned for June 2008. Details will be available in our next issue of "*Transportation Matters*" newsletter and on the MPO webpage.

A meeting was held in January in Boca Raton with Palm Beach and Broward County elected officials and MPO staff members to discuss the removal of University Drive from Palm Beach County's 2030 Long Range Transportation Cost Feasible Plan. It was determined a working committee was needed to explore the many options available to the citizens of both counties. A copy of the meeting package is on the MPO's webpage under "News".

Regional transportation projects affect all the citizens in Southeast Florida. It is important for everyone to attend public meetings and visit websites to stay informed.

March is “Bicycling Month” in Southeast Florida

March 2008 has been officially designated as “Bicycling Month” by the Palm Beach MPO. The Broward and Miami-Dade MPOs have also declared March as “Bicycling Month” making it a truly regional declaration in placing importance on the bicycle. The aim of “Bicycling Month” is to bring attention and visibility to the bicycle as a viable means of transportation, an excellent form of active recreation and generally celebrate the role the bicycle plays in our culture.

Traditionally, across the country, “Bicycling Month” is recognized in May. However, citing cooler temperatures and the presence of the seasonal population March best accommodates bicycling activities and increases the chance of greater participation. In the past, Bicycling Month has been identified mostly with a Proclamation by the Board of County Commissioners and a ‘Bike-to-Work Day’ event. However, for 2008, a variety of events are planned both within the County and throughout Southeast Florida. To kickoff the month, on March 1 at 8:30 a.m., a Regional Proclamation Relay Ride will be conducted that will run from Tequesta in northern Palm Beach County and end in northern Miami-Dade County at Oleta River State Park. This ceremonial ride will consist of a passing of the Regional Bicycle Month Proclamation between the three Southeast Florida counties. Along the way, stops will be made to distribute the Proclamation to various communities, and act as an impetus for local municipalities to get on board with supporting cycling. Palm Beach MPO’s Bicycle/Pedestrian/Greenway Coordinator will actually ride his bike the

entire route. Any cyclists wishing to participate can join the ride. More information will be made available in the upcoming weeks on the Palm Beach MPO website.

In addition to the March 1 kickoff event, there will be several innovative and creative events planned throughout the month. They range from a full moon bicycle ride and bicycle mechanics classes, to bicycle film festivals and safety courses, and much, much more. South Florida Commuter Services (SFCS) will host the official “Bicycling Month” website and will house all the information regarding registration for all events at www.1800234ride.com.

Bicycling is increasing in popularity throughout the country. In Southeast Florida strong efforts are being made to ensure that bicycling through the planning and development of safe and accommodating infrastructure, as well as increased education, becomes an important element of the transportation network. Slowly but surely the general public, along with elected officials, is recognizing the health benefits from bicycling and its representation as an efficient means of transportation. Whether you are a seasoned cyclist looking for some unique riding; entertaining the idea of bicycle commuting; or just interested in blowing the dust of the bicycle and riding around the neighborhood, you are encouraged to participate in a “Bicycling Month” event.

For more information, please contact Bret Baronak, MPO Senior Planner at (561) 684-4163.



Pedestrian using new bicycle path along A1A in Jupiter



Planning for Tomorrow

We're on the Web!

Visit us at:

www.pbcgov.com/mpo

MPO Board

Jeff Koons, Chair, Commissioner, Palm Beach County BCC
Robert Friedman, Vice-Chair, Vice Mayor, Town of Jupiter

Members

Burt Aaronson, Commissioner, Palm Beach County BCC
Michael J. Arts, Council Member, City of Boca Raton
Jeff Clemens, Mayor, City of Lake Worth
Laurie Cohen, Councilwoman, Village of Wellington
Jean Enright, Commissioner, Chairperson, Port of Palm Beach
Samuel J. Ferreri, Mayor, City of Greenacres
Addie Greene, Commissioner, Palm Beach County BCC
Eric Jablin, Council Member, City of Palm Beach Gardens
Karen T. Marcus, Commissioner, Palm Beach County BCC
Woody McDuffie, Commissioner, City of Delray Beach
Bill Moss, Commissioner, City of West Palm Beach
Geraldine Muoio, Commissioner, City of West Palm Beach
Marlene Ross, Commissioner, City of Boynton Beach
Ray Sanchez, Commissioner, City of Belle Glade
Jess R. Santamaria, Commissioner, Palm Beach County BCC
Cedrick Thomas, Council Member, City of Riviera Beach
Susan Whelchel, Deputy Mayor, City of Boca Raton

MPO Staff

Randy M. Whitfield, PE, Director
Angela Morlok, Principal Planner
Bret Baronak, Senior Planner
Nellie Fernandez, Senior Planner
Vinod Sandanasamy, Senior Planner
Paul Larsen, Planner II
Patricia Masterman, Public Information Officer, Editor
Marilyn Tincher, Financial Analyst
Elizabeth Requeny, Administrative Secretary
Renee Benezra, Secretary

Palm Beach MPO
2300 N. Jog Road, 4th Floor
West Palm Beach, FL 33411-2749



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

| | |
|----------------------------------------|---|
| VA Hospital's 25 th Vanpool | 1 |
| Best Workplaces for Commuters | 2 |
| Public Involvement Plan | 3 |
| Did You Know? | 3 |
| MPO News in Brief | 4 |
| Regional Transportation Update | 4 |
| March is Bicycling Month in SE Florida | 5 |

Address Label