

DATES TO REMEMBER

Meeting dates for Tampa Bay
Applications Group
Year 2007

February 22

May 17

August 23

November 1

“FROM THE CHAIR”

By: Michael Dorweiler, AICP

2007 Chairman for the Tampa Bay Applications Group

An exciting Year 2007 program for the Tampa Bay Applications Group (TBAG) is already underway. The first major topic for Year 2007 is **Sharing Information – Multimodal Projects in Other Districts**. We are fortunate to have speakers traveling from the Florida Department of Transportation, Districts 4, 5 and 6 to present on major transit projects. I would like to thank our speakers in advance for supporting TBAG. All are welcome to the meetings and I hope to see a full house on February 22, 2007.



As you know, we closed out Year 2006 with a year-end meeting at Landry's. I want to give a special thank you to our Keynote Speaker, **Mr. Edward Mierzejewski**, Center for Urban Transportation Research. Mr. Mierzejewski presented on the current status of Concurrency in Florida and projects underway at CUTR. The presentation was very informative and our users' group continues to be successful through the support of agencies such as CUTR and our planning and engineering community.

The year-end dinner also provides TBAG and its members with an opportunity to recognize our many volunteer speakers and authors. With the sponsorship of firms from our transportation planning community, we were able to present our volunteers with a professional recognition award, and of course, a Little Debbie Cake of their choice.

Highlights from the 2006 TBAG Banquet are shown on page 6, with a few new faces . . . or is that just a bad rug? This was our last year to celebrate at Landry's (converting to condos) and the TBAG group recognized our many contributors with a flash back to the 1970's. Yes, FSUTMS has been around longer than some of our modelers. Thank you again to our sponsors for a successful year and all of the members who continue to support TBAG.



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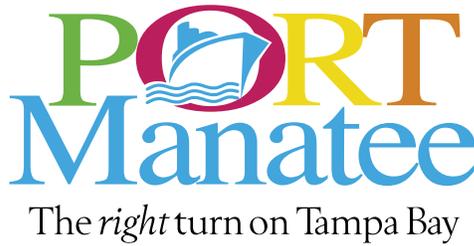
Port Manatee Corridor Feasibility Study

By: Michael Dorweiler, AICP, PBS&J, Inc.

Background

Port Manatee has steadily grown over the past 30 years and currently ranks fifth in total waterborne trade tonnage among Florida's 14 deepwater seaports, according to The Florida Ports Council: Statistics. This growth has been attributed to its geographic proximity to global markets, as well as Florida's increasing population and expanding economy. Florida has grown steadily throughout the past several decades to become the fourth most populated state. Forecasts show that the state is expected to reach a population of 24,420,700 residents by 2030, an increase of approximately 46 percent from 2000.

By the year 2020, Florida's seaports will have significant capacity concerns, especially as the size of container ships continues to increase. For many seaports, the greatest constraint will be on the flow of goods to and from the marketplace. The highway network surrounding Port Manatee must provide efficient mobility and operation for its users, eliminate bottlenecks and unnecessary delay, and maintain travel time reliability.



Overview of Study

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) commissioned the Port Manatee Corridor Feasibility Study on behalf of the Manatee County Port Authority. The intent of the study was to identify the transportation system needs to accommodate future expansion at Port Manatee, including the feasibility of a new corridor connecting Port Manatee to Interstate 75 (I-75). Viable corridors identified through this study could then be carried forward to a potential Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study of this connection.

The new corridor, currently called the Port Manatee Connector, would provide a new roadway or make upgrades to existing roadways to better connect Port Manatee to I-75. The study area for the Port Manatee Corridor Feasibility Study is located in northern Manatee County and southern Hillsborough County. It is roughly bounded from north of Interstate 275 (I-275) to south of State Road 674 (SR 674) and from the Tampa Bay coast line to east of I-75.

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COMING SOON! February 22, 2007 Central Florida Commuter Rail Project

By: Marianne Gurnee, Public Liaison to the Central Florida Commuter Rail Project

On August 2, 2006, Gov. Jeb Bush announced an agreement in principle between the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and CSX Transportation for the state to purchase 61.5 miles of CSXT right-of-way through the urban heart of Central Florida. If ratified by local officials in Orange, Osceola, Volusia and Seminole counties, as well as the federal government, the agreement would establish a commuter rail system that would serve all four counties. The first phase of passenger rail service would begin in December 2009. The agreement also would enhance Tri-Rail service in South Florida, improve freight mobility throughout the state, and mitigate traffic caused by additional freight traffic that would be rerouted from Central Florida through the Ocala area to Winter Haven. The FDOT, District 5 is currently working with local and federal officials to negotiate agreements that will provide Central Floridians with a long-planned rail transit alternative to congested roadways.

Study Purpose

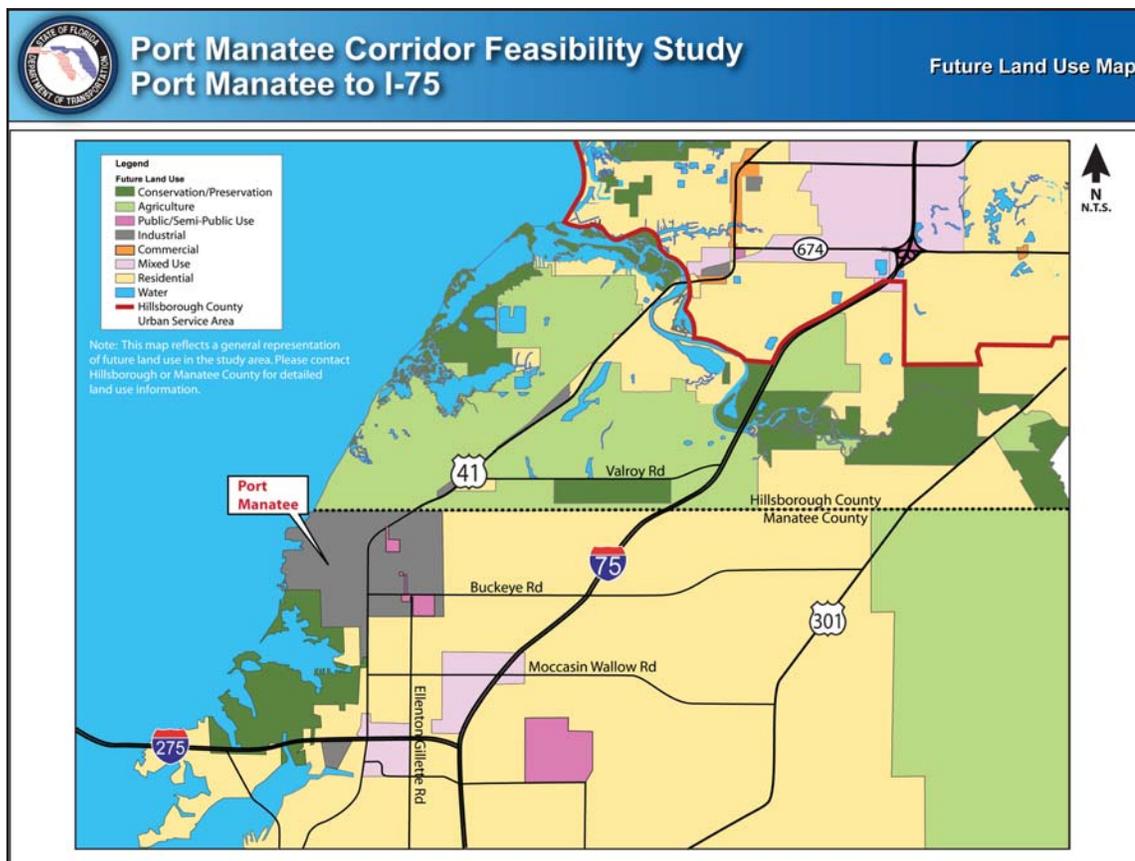
The purpose of this study was to develop viable corridor alternatives that will improve goods movement and traffic flow between I-75 and Port Manatee, both key facilities designated on the Florida Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) plan. The viable corridor alternatives to be recommended may include a new limited-access facility or improvements to existing roadways that currently serve Port Manatee.

The primary goal of this study was to determine if the No Build scenario would be adequate to handle future travel demand in the study area and, if not, to identify viable corridor alternatives for a new or improved connection between Port Manatee and I-75. Additional goals for this study included:

- Conducting a current travel demand analysis of the study area.
- Analyzing corridor alternatives and discarding any that have fatal flaws or are not viable due to environmental, socio-economic, or traffic considerations.
- Conducting a future travel demand analysis of the study area.
- Coordinating with other planning agencies and stakeholders to insure that future plans for the area are not in conflict with each other.

Coordination Efforts

The Port Manatee Corridor Feasibility Study was a planning level study that required considerable coordination with staff and officials with FDOT, Port Manatee, the Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), local governments, and other public and private stakeholders and interested parties.



Continued on page 5



TAMPA BAY APPLICATIONS GROUP MEETING TOPICS

February 22, 2007

FDOT District Seven Office from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. (Auditorium Opens at 11:30 a.m.)

SHARING INFORMATION - MULTIMODAL PROJECTS IN OTHER DISTRICTS

Making Tracks with the Central Florida Commuter Rail Project

Marianne Gurnee, Public Liaison to the Central Florida Commuter Rail Project

The FDOT, District 5, in cooperation with CSX Transportation is working to implement the Central Florida Commuter Rail project; a proposed commuter rail system serving Orange, Osceola, Volusia and Seminole Counties. The final Environmental Assessment (EA), which includes ridership estimates, was presented at public hearings held in January 2007 and has been submitted to the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Upon approval by FTA, the project will move into the design and engineering phases. Negotiations of interlocal agreements are underway, as well as coordination to secure the required 25 percent local funding commitments. This presentation will provide an overview of the project and future implementation plans.

Miami Intermodal Center

Adolfo Fassrainer, FDOT, District 6, MIC Work Program Administrator

The FDOT, District 6, in partnership with several government agencies, is developing the Miami Intermodal Center (MIC), a massive transportation hub located across from the Miami International Airport (MIA). As Miami-Dade County's first transportation center, the MIC will provide "connectivity" by linking for the first time the various transportation systems in the South Florida region and providing options to traveling on the congested streets in and around the busy airport. The \$1.3 billion MIC Program includes the Rental Car Center, Miami Central Station, MIA Mover, reconstructed access roads and major highway improvements, with a scheduled completion in Year 2011. This presentation will provide an overview of the MIC facility and highlights of the planning and engineering processes underway.

Moving Forward with the South Florida East Coast Corridor (SFECC) Study

Scott Seeburger, FDOT, District 4, Planning and Environmental Management

The single-most important influence to the development of Florida's east coast is Henry Flagler and his Florida East Coast (FEC) Railway. The FEC Railway is now being sought to influence the redevelopment of Southeast Florida through the South Florida East Coast Corridor (SFECC) Study. The FDOT, District 4, is managing this Study, which is looking at the eighty-five mile industrial railroad corridor in Palm Beach, Broward, and Miami-Dade Counties for implementing fixed-guideway transit services. Due to its complexity, the Study is a Tiered Alternatives Analysis/Environmental Impact Statement project involving two major tiers. Tier 1 is nearly complete having addressed regional decisions through submission of a Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. Tier 2 will begin shortly to develop one or more Locally Preferred Alternatives. This presentation will address the unique challenges of conducting the region's most-significant transit initiative in an environment without regional consensus or local funding.

In addition, consideration was given to several on-going studies of potential new roadways near Port Manatee, which could impact the Port Manatee Connector. These studies include the following:

- The Florida Turnpike Enterprise Heartland Coast-to-Coast Planning Feasibility Study
- The FDOT District Seven West Central Florida Outer Beltway Corridor Study
- The Tampa - Hillsborough Expressway Authority Inner Beltway Study

The project team also held individual meetings with each of the interested government entities to get its input and also invited them to attend the ongoing Stakeholder coordination meetings. These coordination efforts provided necessary project-related information relative to known developments, development conditions, current public studies, and proposed government actions within the study area, including the inclusion of a potential new corridor in the Sarasota/Manatee MPO 2030 Financially Feasible Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

In addition to coordination with state and local governments, meetings were also held at the request of Port Manatee and Manatee County with private individuals and organizations with interests in the study area. This private interest coordination provided useful information related to development plans in the study area and updates on coordination with local governments in the plan approval process.

Alternatives

A No Build scenario and six corridor alternatives were developed as possible options for the Port Manatee Connector. Alternatives 1 through 3 involve improvements to existing roadways. Alternatives 4 through 6 consist of new, limited-access roadways as well as improvements to some existing roadways. These alternatives and the viability of each are noted below.

ALTERNATIVE	ROUTE	STATUS
No Build	Sarasota/Manatee MPO 2030 Financially Feasible LRTP Roadway Network	Viable
Alternative 1	US 41 North to SR 674 East to I-75	Not Viable
Alternative 2	US 41 South to Moccasin Wallow Road East to I-75	Not Viable
Alternative 3	US 41 South to I-275 East to I-75	Viable
Alternative 4	New Roadway from US 41 South to Moccasin Wallow Road East to I-75	Not Viable
Alternative 5	New Roadway from US 41 East to I-75	Viable
Alternative 6	New Roadway from US 41 Northeast to Valroy Road East to I-75	Viable

Each of the viable alternatives, the No Build and three build alternatives, could be carried forward for a potential Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study. Each of the three new corridor alternatives improves goods movement and traffic flow between I-75 and Port Manatee. These alternatives were developed with the intention of minimizing impacts to environmentally sensitive lands, existing development, and planned development as much as possible. Whether the Port Manatee Connector should be built, which of the corridor alternatives is preferred, and the design of the roadway typical section will be determined as part of a potential PD&E study.

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Thank You for a Wonderful Time!

TBAC Banquet 2006

