



MIAMI-DADE
METROPOLITAN
PLANNING
ORGANIZATION

THE TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AGENCY FOR MIAMI-DADE COUNTY

2015 ANNUAL REPORT



PHOTOGRAPH BY RYAN HOLLOWAY

TRANSPORTATION MOBILITY TODAY & TOMORROW

Let's Talk Mobility

The Miami-Dade MPO Welcomes You!

Thank you for taking the time to read about the Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) programs and accomplishments. We are excited about the future and our role in establishing a better transportation system for our region. The MPO is responsible for prioritizing and allocating federal funding for transportation improvement projects in Miami-Dade County. In order to plan for the future, the MPO works with local, regional, state, and federal agencies, as well as residents, business leaders, and elected officials to advance local transportation and mobility projects that meet the needs of Miami-Dade County and the South Florida region.



As growth and development continue, the demand for innovative transportation solutions will increase. The MPO plays an important role in determining which solutions help reduce traffic congestion, as well as increase mobility options, in order to provide better access to jobs and recreational activities. This will allow our economy to continue to grow while addressing critical transportation issues in our community.

Just as a strong transportation system is the backbone of a vibrant economy, it is also an important factor affecting the quality of life of our citizens. The MPO is focused on enhancing freight mobility in order to facilitate the most efficient movement of people and goods. Another role of the MPO is to provide transportation choices for our residents and visitors. South Florida is a large and diverse community with many different preferences for getting around. As such, the MPO works to provide a wide range of mobility options. This includes working with partner agencies to develop a multimodal environment that supports transit, rail, bicyclists, pedestrians, trails, as well as roadway projects.

Finally, the MPO is an organization that works with local communities and stakeholders to identify the best solutions available to resolve our transportation issues. Through the use of citizens' advisory committees and other significant public outreach and engagement efforts, the MPO is committed to helping local communities shape the future with a locally driven transportation planning process.

We invite you to learn more about our ongoing activities described on the following pages and on our website at www.miamidademipo.org.

Aileen Bouclé, AICP
Miami-Dade MPO Executive Director



"We're working to provide communities with multiple transportation options."



Providing a Voice

The Importance of Community Engagement

One of the most critical roles of the Miami-Dade MPO is to ensure that residents, business owners, community groups, and government agencies are all involved in the transportation planning and decision-making process. The importance of public outreach, engagement, and participation cannot be overstated. These efforts provide citizens a voice in determining how their communities should change over time in response to growth, development trends, mobility needs, and public opinion.

The goal of involving the community in our planning efforts is to establish a two-way dialogue about the views, issues, and concerns of both the public and the MPO. Community engagement is a proactive process that aims to include everyone, and makes special efforts to ensure that those who have been historically excluded, or have special needs, are given a chance to participate as well. These groups may include low-income and minority communities, or individuals who are elderly, disabled, or have a limited ability to speak English. This process allows the MPO to work with local communities, regardless of race or socioeconomic status, to refine transportation improvement plans and projects that will affect their everyday lives.

Some of the tools used by the MPO to communicate with the community are more hands-on in nature. These would include presentations to schools, participating at community events, and/or speaking directly with concerned residents on the telephone. Other strategies take advantage of modern technology to help maximize the number of people that can be reached. Tools such as communicating via social media or streaming MPO Board meetings online allow for higher participation and also help the MPO stay connected with younger generations.



Miami-Dade College Kendall Campus





Reaching Out

Outreach Activities

In addition to seeking public feedback on specific projects, the Miami-Dade MPO also devotes full-time staff to outreach activities that promote awareness of critical transportation issues. These engagement activities are important, because they spread the message that people can make positive changes to their neighborhoods by participating in the MPO's transportation planning process. As a result of this outreach, the MPO has received over 3,000 comments from the public.

The MPO also periodically updates a document known as its "Public Participation Plan (PPP)", which outlines all of the goals, strategies, and federal requirements for community engagement efforts. The PPP provides details and guidelines for the many ways that citizens can be involved in the MPO process. Further, the MPO also uses four citizen advisory committees to make sure that the concerns of the public are considered in all decisions. With each having a slightly different focus, these committees are made up of volunteer citizens who meet on a regular basis to discuss planned transportation improvements and make recommendations to the Miami-Dade MPO Governing Board:

- Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)
- Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee (CTAC)
- Freight Transportation Advisory Committee (FTAC)
- Transportation Aesthetic Review Committee (TARC)



PARKing Day Event in Downtown Miami

Raising Awareness

Educational Outreach

Many of the Miami-Dade MPO's outreach efforts are aimed at distributing information about the transportation planning process, and the various programs that support it. This is important, because the first step toward involving the public in this process is raising awareness about what the MPO is and what it does on a regular basis.

Educational outreach allows people to learn that the MPO is the government agency responsible for determining what changes should be made to our transportation system based on needs, available funding, and the opinions of local residents. Once this initial level of understanding is established, individuals can then begin participating in the planning process. They can provide feedback and new ideas for how they would like their neighborhoods to look one day, or how they would prefer to commute to work.

To raise this level of awareness and get more people involved in the conversation about how to improve transportation in Miami-Dade County, MPO staff regularly attends events held by various organizations in different areas. These events include activities such as public library visits, career fairs, summits or conferences, transportation agency workshops, safety awareness days, and outreach on local college campuses.

Outreach events usually involve distributing promotional material to catch people's attention, providing handouts or pamphlets for information, answering questions, and most importantly, documenting feedback from those who provided their opinions. Documenting this feedback, collected at outreach events, allows the MPO to pass the information along to the appropriate transportation agency so that actions and changes can take place.

Examples of this could include alerting the Miami-Dade Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW) that a certain bus route does not operate late enough for people to get home from work, or informing the Miami-Dade County Parks, Recreation and Open Spaces that a specific community is requesting recreational bicycle trails connect to its parks system. Once transportation agencies are alerted of the need, they can then plan and develop the necessary improvements in coordination with other efforts so that funding can possibly be allocated to these projects in the future.





Naranja Community Action Agency

Empowering the Community

Community Action Agency Centers

One of the most effective ways for the Miami-Dade MPO to reach out to local communities is through civic groups such as Community Action Agency (CAA) centers. Operated by Miami-Dade County, CAAs are of particular importance because they are usually located in minority and low-income neighborhoods, and are established “to assure that issues of poverty are effectively presented and addressed.” They serve many purposes for communities, one being a local gathering place to discuss issues. This provides a perfect opportunity for MPO staff to provide updates on nearby transportation initiatives, and also to gather opinions and feedback.

Feedback from local CAAs are some of the most valuable information that the MPO receives, because it comes from those who live within these specific communities. They provide better knowledge of the current transportation conditions and opinions of the local residents. As a result, this is one of the best possible sources of information and their feedback helps the MPO make decisions about future transportation planning initiatives for their local neighborhoods.

Coordination with CAAs are one way the MPO is able to accomplish goals and requirements set as a result of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as well as related federal legislation that has been passed more recently. Title VI ensures that no person be excluded from participation, denied the benefits of, or be discriminated against by any government program or activity. Through regular coordination with CAAs, the MPO is able to reach out and engage all communities so that they are provided an equal opportunity to participate in the transportation planning process.



Culmer Community Action Agency

Improvement Programs

Long Range Transportation Plan

The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is the cornerstone document for any MPO. It establishes a transportation vision for the next twenty plus years following its development, and outlines the efforts needed to achieve this vision. 2015 marks the first full year since Miami-Dade County's 2040 LRTP update, "Eyes on the Future," was adopted by the Miami-Dade MPO Governing Board.

The award-winning 2040 LRTP takes into account the most recent estimates of population and employment growth, mobility patterns, and development trends that are likely to occur over the next twenty-five years. It also sets goals and objectives for improving all parts of our transportation system over that same time period. These goals are developed in coordination with residents, transportation agencies, and government officials. They collectively form a vision of what we want our transportation system to be in 2040. Finally, the LRTP prioritizes improvement projects that should be implemented to support our vision of the future based on local needs, recommendations, and funding availability.

Transportation Improvement Program

In 2015, the MPO updated the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), taken from the most recent LRTP, to allocate funding for specific projects through 2020. The TIP is a list of projects that the Miami-Dade MPO Governing Board, with input from various transportation partners, has determined to be the annual priorities for funding over the next five years. It is updated every year to include additional improvement projects for the fifth year. With each update, a combination of newly added projects and projects from previous TIP versions are programmed to receive funding in order of priority.

The MPO goes to great efforts with each update to make the current TIP more accessible and easier to understand for non-transportation professionals. This is accomplished through a Citizen's Version of the TIP and an online map tool called "IneraTIP" that allows users to sort the priority projects and see the exact locations where they are planned. Both of these products allow residents of Miami-Dade County a better opportunity to participate in the transportation planning process, and help determine the future of their communities.



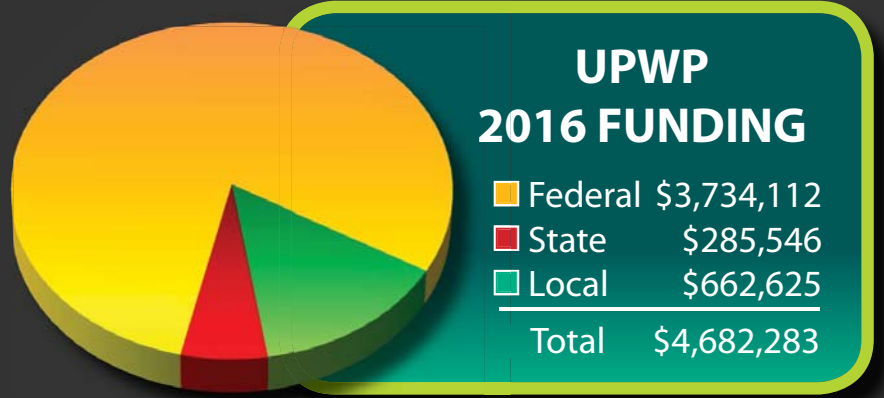
Bridge to Brickell Key

Funding a Vision

Unified Planning Work Program

The Miami-Dade MPO's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is the document that outlines all of the funding available for planning activities within a given year. Updated every two-years, and adopted by the Miami-Dade MPO Governing Board as required by the federal government, the UPWP also contains detailed descriptions of how these funds will be used and what products will be developed during this time period. Additionally, the MPO sends out a "Call for Ideas" before every update to gather input from residents, various transportation agencies, and planning professionals on transportation planning studies that should be considered for inclusion in the document.

The UPWP is broken down into different categories called "Work Elements" that contain specific planning studies, data collection efforts, and other activities that support the goals of the MPO's most recent Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The federal, state, and local funding that goes into the UPWP is used to develop potential improvement projects so that they can qualify for further design and construction efforts, and eventually become a vital part of our transportation system.



Grant Programs

Municipal Grant Program

The Municipal Grant Program (MGP) provides an opportunity for local municipalities within Miami-Dade County to apply for funding from the Miami-Dade MPO to carry out transportation planning related studies. Every two years the MPO provides \$300,000 in grants on a competitive basis. Applicants are required to submit a proposal for the requested funding and guarantee a local match of at least 20% of the total project cost. The MGP allows smaller governments, with limited funding, a chance to plan for and fully develop transportation improvements so that they can provide better conditions for their respective residents in the future.

2015 MGP Recipients:

<i>City of South Miami</i>	Intermodal Transportation Plan
<i>City of Doral</i>	Transit Mobility Plan
<i>Village of Pinecrest</i>	US-1 Bicycle/Pedestrian Mobility Plan
<i>Village of Miami Shores</i>	Multimodal Mobility Plan

Transportation Alternatives Program

The Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) is a federal program managed by the MPO that allows various local government and transportation agencies to obtain funding for improvements that promote alternative forms of transportation. Projects eligible for TAP funds include activities such as building new multi-use trails, improving conditions at transit stations, and creating walkable urban spaces. TAP projects greatly increase the quality of life where they are implemented by providing new recreational opportunities and/or safer environments for the community.

2015 TAP Priority Projects:

<i>City of Coral Gables</i>	Alhambra Circle Bicycle Lanes
<i>City of Miami Beach</i>	Beachwalk II Construction
<i>Town of Miami Lakes</i>	Miami Lakes GREEN Project
<i>Village of Miami Shores</i>	Miami Shores Multimodal Mobility Improvements
<i>Miami-Dade County Parks</i>	Black Creek Trail Segment B, Phase I
<i>City of North Miami</i>	NE 8th Avenue Green Trail
<i>Town of Cutler Bay</i>	Cutler Bay Bike/Ped Facilities Improvements
<i>City of South Miami</i>	SW 62 Avenue Bike/Ped Mobility Enhancements
<i>Miami-Dade Department of Transportation and Public Works</i>	Hobie Island, North Side, Shoreline, and Roadway Protection on the Rickenbacker Causeway



Margaret Pace Park - Baywalk



MacArthur Causeway eastbound onto Miami Beach

Completed Studies

Improving the Ride

Premium Transit Implementation Plan along Transit Corridors

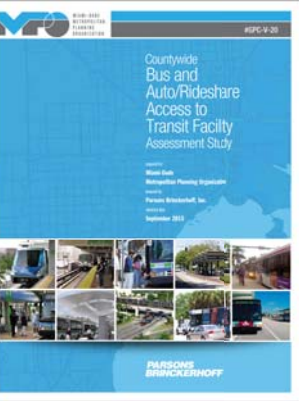
The Miami-Dade MPO developed this plan to outline a strategy for implementing rapid transit service along corridors that were identified as needing premium transit solutions. Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) service is an attractive transit solution for many congested roadways because it offers travel time savings similar to passenger rail service, yet is more flexible and cost-effective. Although each corridor is unique, rapid transit service usually provides some combination of features that allow passengers to quickly arrive at their destination. These include an exclusive lane without other vehicles, priority at traffic signals to reduce stops, and more frequent service to reduce waiting.



The four corridors evaluated were 27th Avenue, Flagler Street, Kendall Drive, and Douglas Road. The final plan included detailed recommendations for needed upgrades to establish rapid transit service and improve mobility along each of the corridors. As a result of this effort, these corridors are now being further evaluated by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Six.

Countywide Bus and Auto/Rideshare Access to Transit Facility Assessment Study

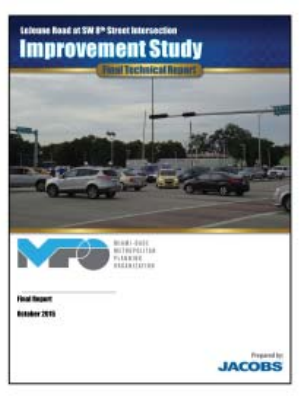
This recently completed study provides recommendations for improving several park-and-ride facilities in Miami-Dade County. Coordinating with the Miami-Dade Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW), the goal of this study was to optimize access, utilization, and connectivity for passengers who park at the facilities and use transit or carpooling to get to their destinations.



The five park-and-ride lots assessed as a part of this study are either at, or quickly approaching capacity. By identifying auto, pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and accessibility deficiencies, this study was able to develop conceptual improvement plans for each location. The final recommendations included amenities such as landscaping, canopies, lighting, bike storage, and ticket vending machines, as well as additional parking spaces. These improved park-and-ride lots will help enhance the surrounding communities by providing safe and comfortable areas for people to access transit services.

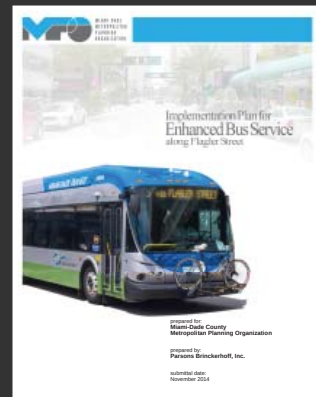
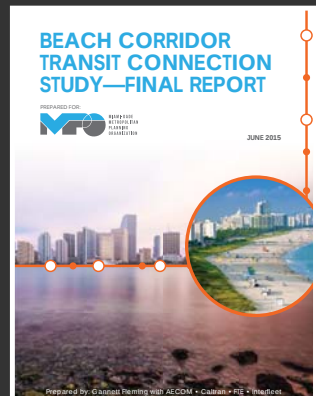
LeJeune Road at SW 8th Street Intersection Improvement Study

The MPO initiated this study to evaluate potential improvements at the intersection of LeJuene Road and SW 8th Street. This process involved assessing the intersection and immediate surrounding area for safety and operational needs. By doing so, future traffic estimates, historical crash data, and observed roadway conditions were all taken into account.



Once the safety issues and needs were identified, the study team developed multiple alternatives for improving traffic and safety conditions. These included strategies such as changing the timing of traffic signals, reassigning turn lanes, redirecting some of the traffic to side streets, and even elevating SW 8th Street over LeJeune Road. After evaluating potential impacts in several categories and construction costs, the study recommended improvements to the traffic signal timings and an additional left-turn lane in lieu of the existing right-turn lane, which provided the most cost-effective benefits to the community.

Making the Connection



Beach Corridor Transit Connection Study

Ideas for connecting Downtown Miami and Miami Beach with passenger rail service have been evolving for over two decades. Recently, the Miami-Dade MPO completed a study that evaluated and updated previously developed information and service concepts.

Known as the Beach Corridor Transit Connection Study, this effort developed preferred route locations and other recommendations that are based in both data analysis and coordination with other partner agencies. Costs estimates, available methods for funding, ideal station locations, technology options, and potential environmental impacts are just a few of the issues that were addressed by the study team. The final results also provide an implementation plan that outlines the next steps necessary for making this service a reality.

Implementation Plan for Enhanced Bus Service along Flagler Street

This study builds on previous efforts to identify busy roadway corridors in Miami-Dade County that will benefit from Enhanced Bus Service (EBS). Flagler Street from SW 107th Avenue to Downtown Miami is one such corridor. As a result, this study developed a plan for implementing EBS along Flagler Street to provide high-frequency transit service and enhanced passenger amenities.

A uniquely branded EBS along Flagler Street would connect Downtown Miami with western activity centers such as Florida International University (FIU), the Dolphin Mall, and the Mall of the Americas, as well as residential areas and future park-and-ride lots for daily commuters. Based on existing conditions along the corridor and best practices for EBS, this implementation plan includes a recommended service plan, station locations, potential costs, and a schedule for the improvements. Once implemented, this proposed EBS would improve the experience of existing transit riders, and hopefully, attract new riders.

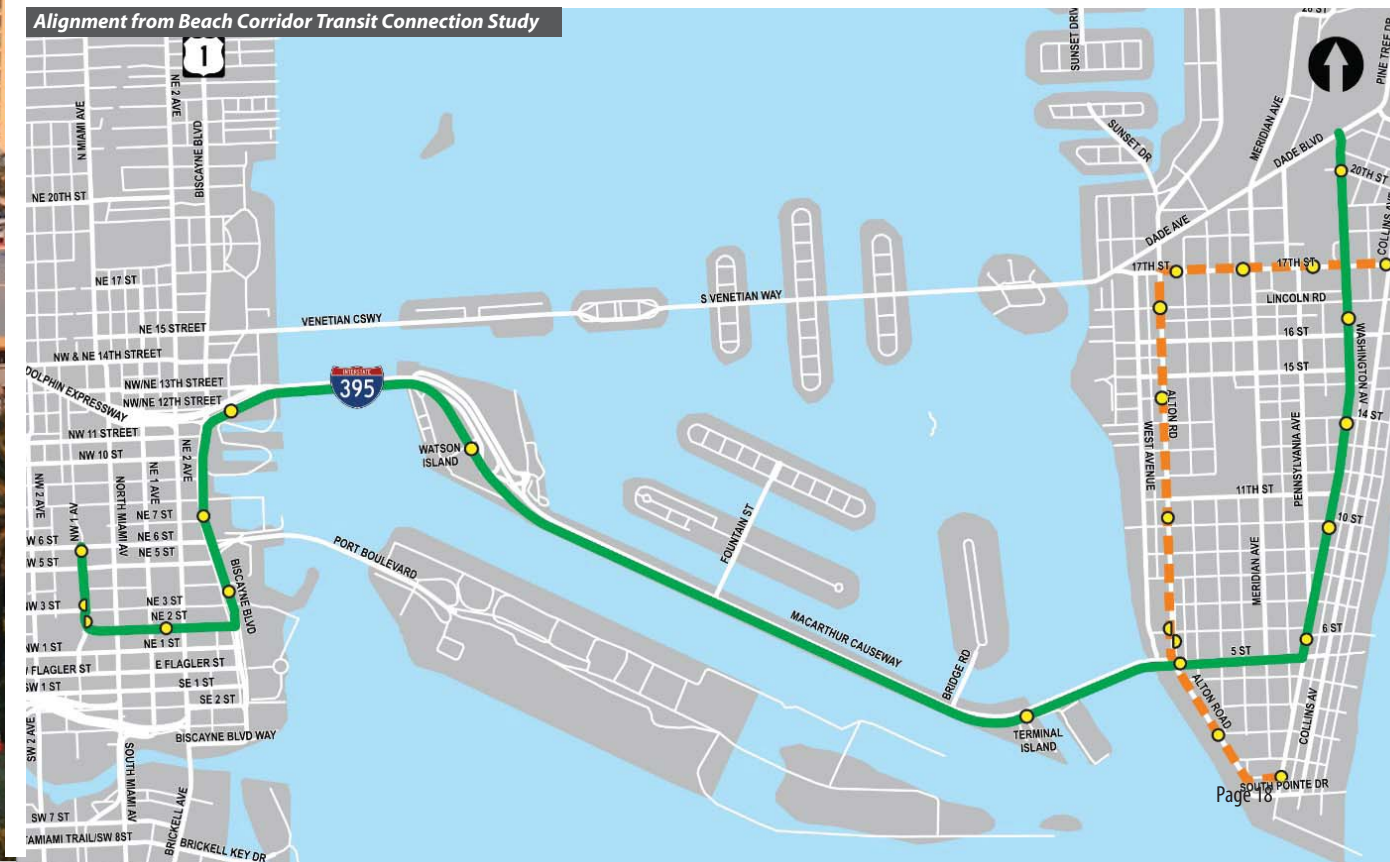
Origin-Destination Surveys for Local Bus Service (South Garage)

This data collection study consisted of a series of on-board surveys completed by Metrobus passengers. It was the fifth and final part of a broader effort, by the MPO, to gather information from passengers on the entire transit system, including Metrorail, 95 Express Bus, and Metrobus routes within Miami-Dade County. The data gathered as a part of these surveys will be incorporated into transit models, ultimately providing more accurate estimates of travel patterns for future transit planning purposes.

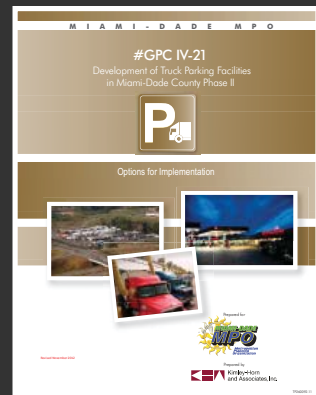
The questions from this survey effort will produce a better picture of ridership characteristics among transit passengers. They provide insight into the origin and destination of each trip, the trip purpose, and the mode of transportation used to get to or from the transit service, as well as demographic data about the passengers themselves. These types of data reveal trends in travel behavior and transit usage, which will help agencies such as the Miami-Dade Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW) provide better service to its passengers.



Rendering from Beach Corridor Transit Connection Study



Revealing the Needs



Study Update: Dolphin Park & Ride Lot and Truck Parking Facility

The Miami-Dade MPO has been working for several years to find the best possible locations in Miami-Dade County to establish parking facilities for both freight trucks and commuters who want to carpool or take transit. As a result of data evaluation efforts and preliminary planning work from multiple MPO studies completed in 2010 and 2012, one of these concepts is now one step closer to becoming a reality.

Several partnering agencies including the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Six, Miami-Dade Department of Transportation and Public Works (DTPW), and the Miami-Dade Expressway Authority (MDX) are now in the process of designing and developing the Dolphin Station. When completed, the area located at the northwest corner of SR-836 and the Homestead Extension of the Florida's Turnpike (HEFT) will be two adjacent, separate facilities. One will be a park-and-ride lot serving multiple transit routes to provide more east-west commuting options, while the other will be a dedicated truck parking facility containing much need amenities for the freight community.

Compendium of Transportation Facts and Trends

The purpose of this study was to collect a variety of transportation and economic-related information for showcasing the contributions and importance of Miami-Dade County's transportation system. This includes data ranging from freight statistics and transit ridership to tourist revenues and pedestrian "Walk Scores." The compiled information was used to show how Miami-Dade County interacts with, and compares to, other places at different scales from regional to global.

To convey this information to interested parties, a user-friendly web application and a series of short online videos were developed. The multimedia web application can be accessed through the MPO's website, and contains infographics that explain the data in a clear manner for those who are not used to looking at transportation data. This compendium tool can also be updated and expanded in the future to include more or different types of information.

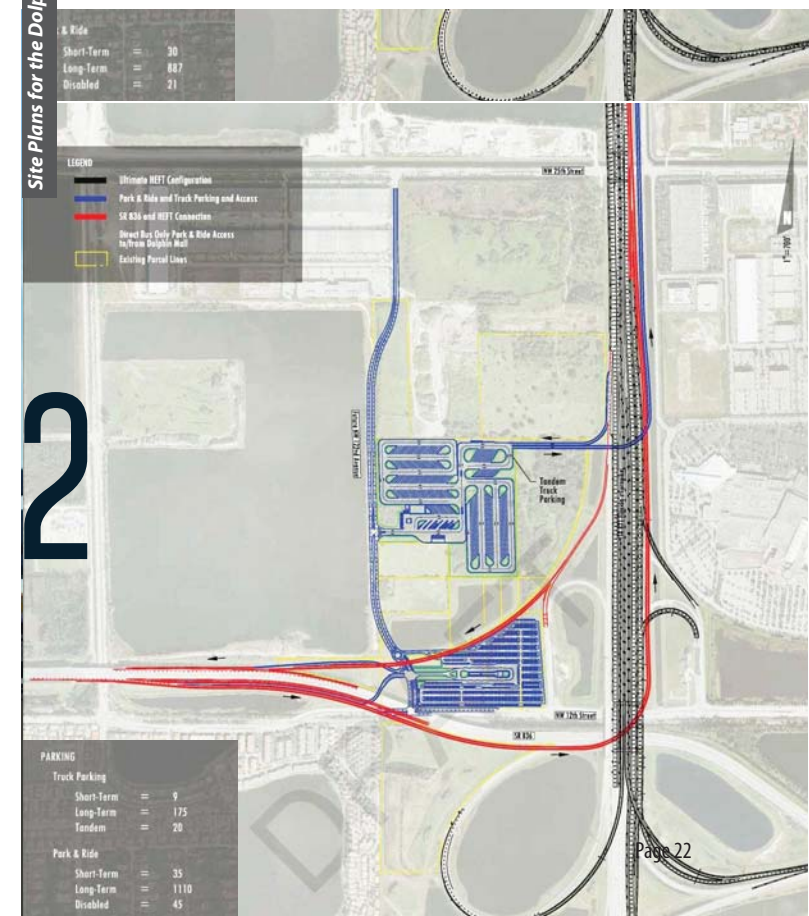
Safe Routes to School – 2014 Infrastructure Plans

The Safe Routes to School (SRTS) program helps local areas make walking and biking to school safer and more appealing to children and parents by improving the surrounding conditions. SRTS is a federally funded program that provides improvement grants under the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). In Miami-Dade County these grants are awarded based on applications submitted to FDOT District Six.

Each year, the SRTS process involves selecting the schools that are most in need of improvements based on factors such as crashes, percentage of students already walking to school, and surrounding vehicle traffic. Once the schools are selected, recommendations for improving the surrounding facilities such as signs, signals, crosswalks, sidewalks, and bicycle racks are developed. As a result of this most recent SRTS effort, the MPO has helped 10 elementary schools request grant funding for improvements totaling just over \$2 million.



Renderings from the Truck Parking Facility Study





Miami International Airport Station



Miami Intermodal Center (MIC) Main Gathering Lobby



Fort Lauderdale/Hollywood International Airport Tri-Rail Station



Boca Raton Tri-Rail Station

A Regional Vision

The Southeast Florida Transportation Council (SEFTC)

The SEFTC is a regional body formed between the Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO). The Council facilitates coordination for regional travel and helps create synergy and consistency when planning for our transportation system across our region. Travel knows no boundaries, as we are three counties, but one traveling public. The SEFTC creates the region's transportation vision by linking together the three individual MPO's transportation plans.

2040 Regional Transportation Plan

One of Miami-Dade MPO's biggest accomplishments during 2015 was leading the effort to complete the 2040 Southeast Florida Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) on behalf of the SEFTC. The 2040 RTP development process was a collaborative effort involving multiple government agencies, councils, advisory committees, businesses, and community members from Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach Counties. The final Plan takes into account growth trends and mobility patterns expected throughout the region from now until 2040. It also determines which investments will be the most important to support the anticipated growth, achieve our desired transportation system, and ensure that people and goods continue to move efficiently throughout our region. After its completion in October 2015, a "2040 RTP Rollout Event" was organized that promoted awareness of the Plan and its regional transportation vision. The celebration consisted of separate "platform events" at a Tri-Rail station in each of the three Southeast Florida counties at different times throughout the day.



PAXY musicians performing at the Miami-Dade County platform event



Cargo 2040

Regional Freight Plan

In addition to the 2040 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP), the Miami-Dade MPO has also contributed to the development of a new Southeast Florida Regional Freight Plan (SFRFP), which was finalized, adopted, and unveiled in early 2015. The new SFRFP, also referred to as “Cargo 2040,” is the first update of the region’s Freight Plan since it was first developed in 2010. Similar to the 2040 RTP, this updated Plan looks at the future of our transportation system from a regional perspective, but focuses exclusively on the needs of freight and logistics.

Freight movement is beneficial to our economy on many different levels. This is why it is critical to coordinate with our regional partners to ensure that freight can flow efficiently throughout the region. Miami-Dade County’s location and the fact that it is home to two of the largest cargo trade hubs in the United States, Miami International Airport and PortMiami, make the location, conditions, and usage of our local freight facilities even more important.

Cargo 2040 reviews and prioritizes needs for our highways, airports, seaports, and railways so that the most needed infrastructure improvements can be made as soon as possible to promote efficient freight mobility. As a result of these investments over the next 25 years, the region will be better positioned as a global logistics hub, which will in turn help stimulate the local economy throughout Southeast Florida.



Florida East Coast (FEC) freight train heading off PortMiami



At the Miami-Dade MPO our goal is to sustain and improve the county's transportation system. We are bound by excellence and vow to continue working towards providing **Mobility Options** for our community.

That is our commitment.

Miami-Dade MPO Governing Board

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Gus Pego, P.E., Secretary

Harold Desdunes, P.E.

Miami-Dade MPO

Aileen Bouclé, AICP, Executive Director

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