



DRAFT

**MEETING MINUTES
BROWARD METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
Regional Transportation**

Technical Advisory Committee (RTTAC) Meeting

Wednesday, June 9, 2021 2:00 PM

100 West Cypress Creek Road

6th Floor, Suite 650

Fort Lauderdale, FL 33309-2181

Members Present

Acting Chair Bill Cross, Broward MPO

Anna Bielawska, Palm Tran

Lois Bush, Florida Department of Transportation District 4

Conor Campobasso, Palm Beach TPA

Loraine Cargill, South Florida Regional Transportation Authority

Kim Delaney, Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council

Tewari Edmonson, Miami-Dade TPO

Wilson Fernandez, Miami-Dade TPO

Ken Jeffries, Florida Department of Transportation District 6

Christina Miskis, South Florida Regional Planning Council

Andrew Uhlir, Palm Beach TPA

Broward MPO Staff

Paul Calvaresi

Paul Flavien

Peter Gies

Rebecca Schultz

Also Present

Thomas Hill, Florida Department of Transportation Central Office

REGULAR ITEMS

(All Items Open for Public Comment)

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Acting Chair (A/Chair) Cross called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m.

2. Review of Agenda

It was noted that no Action Items are scheduled for discussion at today's meeting.

3. Public Comments

None.

4. Comments from the Chair

None.

NON-ACTION ITEMS

1. SERPM 9.0 Update

Mr. Edmonson reported that the Modeling Subcommittee is working on the base network, which gathers together all roadways and roadway attributes, compiles transit data, and includes traffic counts. The team is following all dedicated timelines and making headway.

The next items to be addressed are the 2020 Census tracts and transportation analysis zones (TAZ) conflations, which have an internal deadline of June 30, 2021. All teams have received 2020 Census geographies and have been tasked with ensuring that none of the TAZ systems in the Southeast Florida Regional Planning Model (SERPM) 9.0 bisect or cross any 2020 Census tracts. A second step in this process is a full review of the TAZ system to determine which boundaries need to be changed or which TAZs must be divided.

Another next step is a platform workshop, which is tentatively scheduled for June 28, 2021. This workshop will be used to decide which platform will be used with SERPM 9. The team is currently reviewing pros and cons of each potential system. Attendees are being finalized for the workshop in order to ensure a robust discussion from agencies, consultants, and the transportation field as a whole. Mr. Edmonson concluded that all aspects of SERPM 9 are proceeding on schedule and the Committee is in a good position.

Mr. Uhlir asked if the TAZ review will require Staff to perform centroid connector updates. Mr. Edmonson replied that this is not necessary, as it will be part of the model development. If TAZs are too large, it may be necessary to split them depending upon the development in the area. The Committee is not tasked with developing centroid connectors. The model is expected to be ready by June 2023.

Thomas Hill of the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT's) Central Office asked if TAZ splits are based on production or population. Mr. Edmonson replied that it will be a combination of both. The first step in this process is to make sure that the current TAZ system conflates with the Census tracts; TAZ splits are the second step.

It was noted that the Central Office has issued a whitepaper demonstrating how to properly perform TAZ splits between the three transportation entities. This document can be used as guidance.

A/Chair Cross asked if FDOT currently has a statewide contract with a software vendor. Mr. Hill replied that there are three such vendor contracts at present, including one that is being phased out over a two-year time frame. There is also a primary vendor and a flexible alternative vendor.

2. Big Data Update

Paul Flavien of Broward MPO Staff stated that this item remains in a cone of silence until Thursday, June 10, 2021, when the MPO Board is expected to approve the agreement for acquisition of “big data.” The procurement process is complete and a vendor has been selected to provide all the data necessary for the following:

- Update the travel demand model
- Undertake other planning and performance measure activities, including economic data

Additional information is expected to be available at the next meeting.

Mr. Uhlir asked if an update is available on employment data to be provided by the state for 2019-2020. Mr. Flavien replied that this data is expected to be provided later in June 2021.

Mr. Hill explained that in 2020, FDOT purchased Dunn and Bradstreet employment data for the state of Florida; however, they were concerned with the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on employment, particularly on the service industry, and purchased two additional sets of data for 2020. The expected declines were not shown across these three data sets as expected, so FDOT worked closely with the vendor to determine why this was not reflected. Because the algorithm used to estimate the majority of employment data did not take the pandemic into account, FDOT worked with the Department of Economic Opportunity to bring in unemployment data and make adjustment factors by job classification codes.

Mr. Hill also noted that a “big data for transportation” training workshop is tentatively scheduled for October 2021. This will specifically look at how to apply this data to travel demand models, verify it, and use it within the modeling environment.

3. 2050 Funding Coordination Update

Mr. Uhlir reported that a number of RTTAC members met to discuss the scoping for funding the 2050 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP). A scope has been drafted for the RTP. He noted, however, that one potential area of difficulty may be determining the source of long-range funding forecasts, including capacity and non-capacity programs.

FDOT is not certain when these forecasts will be available. The scope includes direction for a consultant to look more deeply into these sources if all necessary information is not provided as part of the FDOT forecasts.

4. 2050 Regional Transportation Plan Update and Discussion

Mr. Campobasso provided an update on the 2050 RTP, stating that approximately six months of scoping work remain before the procurement process for RTP development begins. Key aspects of this scoping are building consensus and implementing a vision, which will build upon the 2045 RTP with some adjustments. These are expected to be achieved by increasing tools for public engagement, focusing on previous successes, moving to different paths of implementation, and reviewing the roles of stakeholders and implementation resources.

The structure of the 2045 RTP was used for the new scope. Some tasks are expected to remain the same, such as project management and data. The project team has also highlighted a number of tasks that can be improved upon, including public involvement. More interactive materials will be introduced on the RTP's website and more resources for implementation will be provided for stakeholders. Additional feedback will also be sought through the Public Participation Subcommittee as the process continues.

Regarding goals, objectives, and measures, the focus will be on reviewing and refining the 2045 policies. For financial resources and projections, the intent is to track funds from sources all the way to long-range programs with consistent funding codes and programs between the three transportation agencies. This will be done using a summary template similar to the one used for the 2045 RTP, beginning earlier in the process to provide a more concise and organized way of viewing the information.

The team is also considering what can be done to add to the three entities' Long Range/Metropolitan Transportation Plans. This starts with a summary of federal, state, and local restrictions on eligibility. Potential revenue sources and financing tools will also be reviewed. New scenarios will be considered, such as Autonomous Collected and Electric Shared (ACES) vehicles and telework/telehealth scenarios.

The scope of the 2045 RTP included an interim cost-feasible or desires run, which was intended to take place in 2035 or 2040 to see the progression. The team hopes to add value by including a desires run in the 2050 RTP. There will be significant emphasis on greenhouse gases and other climate change factors, as well as safety and accessibility, mode splits, travel times and delays, and environmental justice. Mr. Campobasso noted that environmental justice is still in the process of being defined.

The implementation of the 2050 RTP begins with building consensus, establishing roles for different stakeholders, setting up for competitive funding options, and determining the final path to construction. The costs of this RTP remain within the confines of the previous RTP, which had a \$900,000 price point for its scope. Palm Beach TPA Staff

will administer both the Southeast Florida Transportation Council (SEFTC) and RTTAC beginning in 2023, which will require RTTAC meetings to be hosted in West Palm Beach.

Mr. Campobasso concluded that the scope of the 2050 RTP is expected to be sent to the other transportation agencies by June 10, 2021. This will include an RTP share point established by the Palm Beach TPA.

Ms. Bush observed that there was no mention of performance metrics or measurements in the scope of the 2050 RTP, and noted that the document provides an opportunity for collaborative work on these measurements. She hoped that the three entities could reach an agreement on both regional and local key factors to be measured. She recalled that performance measures for the 2045 RTP forecasted values for a number of these metrics, which could also provide a good way to communicate progress to the public.

A/Chair Cross advised that the scope can be brought back to the next RTTAC meeting and discussed further if necessary. He encouraged members with comments on the scope to reach out to him or to Mr. Calvaresi to ensure they are placed on the agenda to provide comments.

Peter Gies of Broward MPO Staff stated that he was interested in reviewing the regional unified financial forecast, which is typically available toward the end of the RTP development process. He pointed out that once the Broward MPO, for example, receives their revenue forecast from FDOT, they immediately begin working on the financial forecast for the Broward MPO's Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP). As part of the scope, this work may be moved up on the schedule to ensure that this template is ready to go when the state revenue forecasts are available. Mr. Uhlir observed that this work would begin as soon as a consultant has been brought on board through the procurement process.

It was also suggested that it could add value for the regional consultant to prepare individual tech memos for financial resources for the three transportation entities, rather than having the three agencies prepare these memos individually.

A/Chair Cross recalled that concerns were raised during the public involvement aspect of the 2045 RTP with regard to confusion between the three different plans. He recommended that the team emphasize clarity within their public involvement plan. He also noted that a new federal transportation bill is anticipated prior to the 2050 RTP, and recommended reviewing this bill to identify any funding opportunities that may be included. Mr. Calvaresi noted that the scope requires the consultants to review this bill and provide a report.

A/Chair Cross continued that the word "resiliency" could be added along with the reference to climate change in the 2050 RTP. He spoke positively about the new ideas

in scenario planning, pointing out that this will not simply repeat the scenarios reviewed in 2045. He felt it could be helpful to provide a set of standards with regard to greenhouse gases and emissions, and suggested that this area could benefit from creation of a separate subcommittee in the future.

A/Chair Cross also addressed performance measures, stating that since the 2040 RTP, a set of federal performance measures have been provided. While he did not oppose adding more regional performance measures, he felt any new metrics should be added in the context of what is already being done to meet federal requirements.

Mr. Uhlir noted that information on greenhouse gas emissions has been requested from the cities, as some local efforts are underway to pass resiliency plans. He agreed that this information could add value to the RTP process. A/Chair Cross reiterated that a working group could be developed to determine how to use the results generated by the model in conjunction with other performance measures.

Ms. Bush noted that research continues toward the development of multimodal performance measures at the federal level. This multimodal system productivity measure has been tested in Southeast Florida and arose from initial research conducted by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), and is expected to be tested again. It may be added to the other federal measures once development is complete.

Ms. Bush continued that there are also new processes for identifying projects that will be included in the RTP. These may include dynamic adaptive policy pathways (DAPP), which consider short-term actions as well as long-term options that could be taken to address changes such as sea level rise. These will affect how transportation projects are identified, framed, and implemented.

A/Chair Cross advised that a number of prototypes for how to move forward in Broward were identified in the MPO's 2045 MTP. The MPO is working cooperatively with FDOT to determine the best way to manage these. He stated, however, that the identification of short-term adaptive solutions is problematic considering the seven-year funding cycles. It is better to come up with ways to identify projects further into the future.

Ms. Bush further clarified that short-term actions are being applied, for example, to a State Road (SR) A1A tidal flooding study that is underway in Hollywood. They include seawalls and collaborative pump investments that involve FDOT, County, and local government. The development of longer-term solutions is an ongoing conversation as underlying circumstances continue to change. The process by which changes are implemented may not follow a typical linear order depending upon ongoing changes in the environment.

A/Chair Cross concluded that the same budget is anticipated for fiscal year (FY) 2021-2022 as in FY 2020-2021.

5. Miami-Dade TPO Telecommute Study

Mr. Edmonson explained that he was the lead investigator for the Miami-Dade TPO Telecommute Study, which was sponsored by TPO Board member Rebeca Sosa and has been unanimously adopted by the Board. Partners in the study included FDOT, Florida International University (FIU), and South Florida Commuter Services. The goal of this study was to determine whether or not telecommuting can continue as a long-term strategy to reduce congestion in South Florida.

The study asked questions of a number of participants and received over 2300 responses to this survey effort, of which roughly 1300 came from the state and national levels. Over 900 came directly from the South Florida region. The sample population consisted of employers, employees, and students, and considered a range of industries from construction and manufacturing to entertainment and hospitality. 50% of respondents were male and 50% were female.

Workforce telecommuting trends show that pre-COVID-19, an approximate 30/70 split existed between telecommuters and non-telecommuters. This switched to a 60/40 split during the pandemic. After the pandemic is over, employers expect that 50% of the workforce will telecommute either part- or full-time. South Florida's responses are similar to the state and national responses.

Responses from students identified remote learning trends during the pandemic. 90% of classes transitioned to online learning, with the remaining 10% being cancelled. Over 50% of students indicated a desire to telecommute more than they had before the pandemic. Over three-fourths of employees indicated a desire to telecommute more than they had at pre-COVID-19 levels.

The study team also considered benefits and challenges of telecommuting. Top benefits perceived by all three respondent groups included a better work/life balance, while challenges identified by all three groups included work space, socializing, and productivity.

The top areas identified by the survey to help incentivize telecommuting as a long-term strategy include:

- Implementation of County-wide wifi for training and support
- Tax incentives, bonuses, stipends, grants, and other funding
- Discounted parking and transit fees
- Reduced development fees
- Office sharing

The study team also worked with the Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce (GMCC) to conduct a roundtable discussion with executives from multiple industries. The roundtable addressed both benefits and challenges of telecommuting.

Once the study was complete, the team determined the TPO's main policy recommendations, which include:

- Adoption of telecommuting as a long-term policy
- Designating telecommuters as a recognized commuter group for transportation and land use plans
- Plan and advance broadband infrastructure
- Create a regional telecommuting program

Mr. Edmonson noted that the second recommendation in particular would help the transportation agencies dedicate transportation funds to this specific commuter group.

The TPO is working with South Florida Commuter Services on a 12-month pilot program that hopes to attract new and additional telecommuters. This will help identify any barriers this group may be facing. The team is working to promote and define telecommuting as its own mode and identify resources that can be provided to further increase telecommuting.

Ms. Bush asked if the study indicated a reason for the dramatic increase in vehicle miles traveled (VMT), although this measure had decreased significantly at the beginning of the pandemic when telecommuting became common. Mr. Edmonson replied that this is still being explored. He noted that a large number of optional transit riders were lost during the pandemic; in addition, some transportation facilities were affected more than others. Telecommuting also depends upon the jobs that employees work: facilities that serve a working population concentrated in hospitality or retail, for example, showed less variation in telecommuting numbers.

Mr. Uhlir observed that it will be interesting to see how proposed new federal legislation may provide funding at the federal level. He cited County-wide wifi as an example, asking if the study identified steps toward implementation. Mr. Edmonson clarified that the study takes a high-level overview. The survey included a question on how the County could incentivize telecommuting as a mode of transportation.

Mr. Flavien requested additional information on what identification of telecommuting as a mode would allow the TPO and Miami-Dade County government to accomplish. Mr. Edmonson replied that several modes of transportation, including bicycle/pedestrian, transit, and micromobility, all have specific dedicated funding sources. The TPO hopes to add telecommuting as a mode in order to secure dedicated funding sources as well. The sources themselves have not yet been identified. He cited examples from the city of Atlanta, which provides employers with tax credits if a certain percentage of their employment base telecommutes. Employees may receive discounts on transit and/or stipends for in-home training and telecommuting equipment.

Mr. Edmonson continued that even a 10% decrease in VMT resulted in significantly less traffic on the highways. If VMT can eventually be metered, this will provide the working public with more options, including having employees come to the office post-rush hour.

In addition, it has been confirmed throughout the last year that telecommuting works to mitigate traffic congestion.

6. Review July 2021 Southeast Florida Transportation Council Agenda

A/Chair Cross advised that there is no business scheduled to come before SEFTC at their July 30, 2021 meeting. It was determined by consensus to cancel this meeting. The RTTAC will meet again in August 2021.

COMMITTEE REPORTS (no discussion)

None.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

1. Member Comments

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 3:12 p.m.

NEXT RTTAC MEETING: August 11, 2021
NEXT SEFTC MEETING: October 30, 2021