

Membership

Lake County
Sumter County
Town of Astatula
City of Clermont
City of Eustis
City of Fruitland Park
City of Groveland
Town of Howey-in-the-Hills
Town of Lady Lake
City of Leesburg
City of Mascotte
City of Minneola
Town of Montverde
City of Mount Dora
City of Tavares
City of Umatilla
City of Wildwood
Florida Central Railroad

Prop share now an option to fund projects

At the conclusion of the 2005 legislative session, the Florida Legislature made some major amendments to the growth management statutes of the state. One major change was a requirement for all local governments to adopt an ordinance on how proportionate share will be administered.

Proportionate share is a method by which a public-private partnership is created to meet a capacity need for public facilities. For transportation, proportionate share is the fair share a developer would pay to create sufficient capacity to meet concurrency.

Concurrency is the state law that mandates public facilities to be in place within three years of a development approval. For transportation, it can mean that adequate road capacity must be in place when a development is approved.

For development proposals that do not have sufficient road capacity in place when asking for approval, the first question becomes, "Is the project funded for construction within the next three fiscal years?"

This can mean funded by the local government, funded in the county's road construction program, or funded in the Florida

Department of Transportation (FDOT) Work Program. If the needed road project is not funded and the project cannot meet transportation concurrency, local governments have three primary options.

A local government could deny approval of the development on the basis that it does not meet concurrency. A local government could lower its standards by adopting a lower Level of Service (LOS) for the roadway, which means accepting a higher level of congestion.

The new option is that a local government can now make a fair share agreement with the developer. This means that the developer pays their percentage of the cost of the new capacity. In turn, the local government agrees to put the road project into their plan with the expectation of fully funding it within the designated time period.

The result could be new private dollars beyond those collected as impact fees. However, proportionate share dollars can only be collected when a development proposal first does not meet concurrency. The local government will then have to decide if the proposed fair share amount is sufficient enough to justify the project's approval.

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Lake County providing transit via Lakexpress

Is Lake County ready for transit? The answer has resoundingly been "yes" as the Lake-Sumter MPO and Lake County have engaged in a lengthy public involvement campaign to determine if the timing is right for transit.

From The Villages to Mount Dora, residents indicated that transit is a need along US 441. For some, transit will be an important option due to economics. For others, the automobile is no longer the ideal choice.

Said MPO Chairman Jim Yatsuk on transit, "Our region has focused almost solely on the automobile as the only transportation option. Local governments must work together to provide more than one option for our residents."

The new Lake County fixed-route service, named Lakexpress, is to begin in February, connecting Lady Lake to Eustis via a spine route through north Lake County. Leesburg will see a local circulator begin in February,

while Mount Dora will see a circulator begin in July. Both circulators will have connection to the spine route.

Services will be available 6 a.m. to 7:45 p.m., Monday through Friday. The frequency of service will be hourly in each direction on US 441 and hourly for the two circulators.

The MPO is now planning connections for Lakexpress with LYNX in Orange County and with the Sumter County system in The Villages.

Message from the Director

We are certainly witnessing the dawning of a new era in Florida. With growth issues paramount in the minds of residents and elected officials, the importance of the Lake~Sumter MPO is becoming increasingly clear.



The power of the MPO is its inclusion of all the local governments of the area. Lake and Sumter counties total more than 350,000 residents. The MPO serves both counties, as well as all 14 municipalities of Lake County and The Villages and the City of Wildwood in Sumter County.

There is great strength in unity. As Ben Franklin said, "We must all hang together, or assuredly we shall all hang separately."

2007 will see many changes in the manner by which transportation is handled at the local level. Transportation concurrency is receiving a renewed focus statewide and the only way to really make it work is to handle transportation planning regionally.

The MPO enjoyed success in assisting the local governments this fall in adopting the required Proportionate Share Ordinances. We hope to carry that momentum forward as we work collectively toward better managing transportation and concurrency.

Wildwood, Florida Central Railroad—the newest members of the MPO

The Lake~Sumter MPO welcomed two new ex-officio (non-voting) members in 2006. Recognizing their growth potential and the likelihood that they will become an official member of the MPO after the 2010 Census results are tabulated, the MPO in May invited representatives from the City of Wildwood to participate on the MPO Board and on the various MPO committees.

In September, due to the

significance of rail freight and with an eye toward bringing commuter rail to Lake County, the Florida Central Railroad was invited to participate, as well.

The MPO feels strongly that bringing all key stakeholders to the table, earlier rather than later, will be key to creating a truly regional transportation system that benefits all residents in the Lake~Sumter Region.

See the next five years of FDOT funding

Dec. 13, following the meeting of the MPO board, FDOT will hold a public hearing on the FDOT District 5 Tentative Work Program.

The work program is the state agency's proposal for the funding of projects through fiscal year 2012.

Currently, state projects like the widening of segments of US 441, US 301 and SR 50 are included in the work program.

Each December, FDOT proposes what can be funded through the next five years based on revenues and costs.

This particular year will likely see no new projects funded due to dramatic cost increases in planned projects.

The FDOT Tentative Work Program is available for public review at:

www.LakeSumterMPO.com

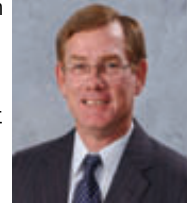
Message from the Chairman

It has been a year of great advances for the Lake~Sumter MPO. It has been an honor to chair this relatively new organization as the MPO continues to build partnerships among local governments and other stakeholders.

Some of the key accomplishments of which I am particularly proud include actions that strengthened the MPO.

For example, the MPO Board saw the wisdom in creating an Executive Committee that established leadership positions on the board. Now the new committee is formulating recommendations to the full MPO Board on issues such as legislative positions and policy.

The MPO continues to emphasize a multi-modal



approach to transportation, and it is quite exciting that 2006 was the year the MPO Board and the Lake County Commission approved the first-ever Transit Operations Plan for fixed-route transit services along the US 441 corridor.

Another mode of particular importance to me is trails and pedestrian facilities. I am proud that the MPO, FDOT and Lake County have partnered on a Trails Master Plan for all the local governments of the MPO area.

In closing, I want to note my pride in seeing the MPO become increasingly effective in governmental coordination. There is no other entity that regularly convenes two counties and 15 municipalities to solve community issues.

Thank you to the MPO Board for the support this year. Here is to even greater success in 2007.

December/January/February

2006

- **December 13, MPO Executive Committee, 1 p.m.**
Administration Building, County Mgr. Conference Rm.
- **December 13, MPO Board, 2 p.m.**
Administration Building, Room 233, Tavares
- **December 13, FDOT Public Hearing, 5:30 p.m.**
Administration Building, Room 233, Tavares

2007

- **January 9 — Sumter County TDCB, 2 p.m.**
Historic Courthouse, Bushnell
- **January 17 — TAC/CAC, 2 p.m./4 p.m.**
Lake Sumter MPO, Leesburg
- **January 18 — BPAC, 3 p.m.**
(On Road Cycling Sub-committee, 2 p.m.)
Lake Sumter MPO, Leesburg
- **January 24 — MPO Board, 2 p.m.**
Administration Building, Room 233, Tavares
- **February 21 — TAC/CAC, 2 p.m./4p.m.**
Lake~Sumter MPO, Leesburg
- **February 22 — BPAC, 3 p.m.**
(On Road Cycling Sub-committee, 2 p.m.)
Lake~Sumter MPO, Leesburg
- **February 26 — Lake County TDCB, 2 p.m.**
Administration Building, Room 233, Tavares
- **February 28 — MPO Board, 2 p.m.**
Administration Building, Room 233, Tavares

UPCOMING MEETINGS

TAC – An innovative and unified approach to growth management

Thinking outside the box and focused on regional cooperation, representatives from the Lake~Sumter MPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) worked together this year to develop a unified approach to managing the transportation impacts of growth within the Lake~Sumter region. The TAC includes planning and engineering staff from Lake and Sumter governments, the 14 municipalities of Lake, and the City of Wildwood.

The TAC created a special work group to address issues regarding Transportation Concurrency and the new requirements involving Proportionate Share. The first order of business for this technical work group was to meet the state requirement to adopt a Proportionate Share Ordinance by Dec. 1.

The Growth Management Act of 2005 (Senate Bill 360), passed by the Florida Legislature in 2005, requires local governments to provide a mechanism for developers to proceed despite a concurrency failure. A formula is required to be adopted into local code by which



developers would pay their “fair share” if they exceed capacity on a roadway. This is only if the local government places the road project, or other capacity improvement, into the Capital Improvement Element of the local Comprehensive Plan.

The TAC work group took on the task of developing a model proportionate fair share ordinance for use by Lake County and all 14 municipalities. The model was then reviewed by local government administrators and attorneys and utilized in the development of individual ordinances. The TAC assisted in Sumter County’s efforts as consultants prepared an ordinance intended for the county and its five municipalities.

The TAC and the special work group will now move on to the next issue, which is a coordinated system of Transportation Concurrency Management. The coordinated effort of this group is quickly being recognized as a model for the State of Florida for local government coordination and cooperation.

CAC – Citizen involvement in Lake & Sumter Counties: strength in diversity

The importance of public input in the regional transportation planning process is not something that is lost on the Lake~Sumter MPO.

Knowing when and how to reach the citizenry to gather feedback and commentary can make the difference between a successful planning effort and a failure.

The MPO’s Citizens’ Advisory Committee (CAC) is one of many public involvement tools used to keep a grassroots-level perspective

on transportation projects in Lake and Sumter counties.

Representing the two counties and 15 municipalities, CAC members offer a wide variety of backgrounds. The CAC boasts members who currently work in, or are retired from, the business community, engineering consulting, community redevelopment, the auto industry, health care administration, and the world of high finance.

In addition, the committee members

range in age, with several just recently starting their careers, as well as a handful of retirees.

They say variety is the spice of life. In the case of the Lake~Sumter MPO Citizens’ Advisory Committee, variety is what makes their input into the regional transportation planning process such a value. The volunteer efforts of the CAC are much appreciated. For more information on the CAC, go to www.LakeSumterMPO.com.

Walkable communities the right fit for an aging Lake-Sumter population

The number of Americans 65 and older will double through the next 25 years. Americans 85 and older comprise the fastest growing segment of the population. It is crucial that our senior population sustain their mobility as they age. Walking is a crucial part in maintaining that mobility.

Walking is the oldest form of transportation, and sidewalks are the fundamental building blocks of a pedestrian network. Unfortunately, in too many of our communities, the transportation system has been built for the automobile and little consideration has been given to the needs and desires of pedestrians.

There are certainly some areas of the community that need to be centered around a major traffic corridor. However, neighborhoods require a human scale, which means they are built around the pedestrian. Seniors will have the ability to be more active, and therefore, more healthy, as well as more likely to make human connections with neighbors when they feel secure to walk.

This focus on the automobile, combined with lack of funds, has resulted in a lack of sidewalks. When sidewalks have been constructed, many were placed too close to the road and some lack connectivity to the areas people want to walk.

There are plenty of reasons why; traffic conflicts, difficulty in

crossing streets, lack of personal security, poor roadway designs, lack of maintenance, and lack of connectivity that keeps people from doing what they do naturally, walk.

Building a walkable environment for everyone ensures that our most vulnerable segments of the population will remain healthy, safe and active, which means they will contribute to the community. It is in everyone’s best interest that our communities provide options for our transportation needs.

This information was obtained from the AARP Livable Communities: An Evaluation Guide. For more information on creating walkable communities please go to the AARP website <http://www.aarp.org> and type in Livable Communities.



HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM ALL OF US!



ONE OF THE REAL JOYS OF THE HOLIDAY SEASON IS THE
OPPORTUNITY TO SAY THANK YOU
AND TO WISH YOU THE VERY BEST FOR THE NEW YEAR

Sid *Mike* *Nancy* *Sue* *Tom*



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**“Building a Path to Efficient
Transportation”**

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