

ENTRANCE

PALM BEACH METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

TRANSPORTATION MATTERS

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Transportation Planning for the Palm Beaches

Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) were mandated by the Federal Highway Act of 1973 to provide a cooperative, comprehensive, and continuing transportation planning and decision-making process. The process encompasses all modes and covers both short-range and long-range transportation planning. The Florida Statutes also have language addressing Metropolitan Planning Organizations. The Palm Beach MPO consists of the MPO Board, the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), and the Bicycle-Greenways-Pedestrian Advisory Committee. The MPO Board is composed of five County Commissioners, 13 elected officials from 11 cities, and one elected official from the Port of Palm Beach.

Managing Traffic With Technology

In recent years, the Palm Beach Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) has consistently ranked Palm Beach County's Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Traffic Management Center as one of its top funding priorities in the struggle to relieve traffic congestion.

The ITS Traffic Management Center relies on roadway cameras linked by miles of fiber optic cable to centralized computers where managers can adjust the timing of traffic signals, update messages on overhead LED informational signs, and receive and disseminate real-time travel information through the state's 511 telephone messaging service. ITS technology enables improved manage-

ment of daily traffic patterns, and allows managers to respond quickly to relieve traffic congestion due to accidents, construction projects, or weather related events.

The roadway network throughout Palm Beach County is relatively built out, meaning there are few remaining missing links of planned roads yet to be constructed. Because the most congested roadway corridors have little if any remaining right-of-way available to add more traffic lanes, transportation planners must use additional tools to better manage increasing traffic demands.

Palm Beach County's ITS is the most feasible and cost-effective (Continued on page 2)



The MPO Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) tours Palm Beach County's Traffic Management Center. Traffic Division Director Dan Weisberg (second from right) and engineer Steve Shreve (center) explain how Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) are being used to fight traffic congestion. CAC members present, L-R: Tomas Boiton (seated), Glen Harvie, Jayne King, Roberta (Rusty) Van Sickle, Myron Uman (far right.)

MPO Board

Robert Friedman, MPO Chair, Councilor, Town of Jupiter ■ **Susan Haynie, MPO Vice-Chair**, Deputy Mayor, Boca Raton

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Page 2

Managing Traffic With Technology (continued from Page 1)

program for combating traffic congestion for residents, visitors, commuters, transit, and emergency vehicles. The center is a combined operational facility with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to monitor I-95 and potentially to serve FDOT as a back-up facility.

Constructed in 2007 at the Vista Center in West Palm Beach, Palm Beach County's Traffic Management Center currently utilizes 215 cameras. Currently, 672 traffic signals are connected to the ITS Center by more than 390 miles of fiber optic communications

cable. By the end of 2012, a contract funded by state/federal transportation grants will increase the number of connected traffic signals to more than 730, and 51 more closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras and 61 more miles of fiber optic cable will be added to the network.

ITS centers manage traffic on I-95, Florida's Turnpike, county roads, and local municipal streets. Increasingly, technology - rather than construction - is being used to improve traffic flow.

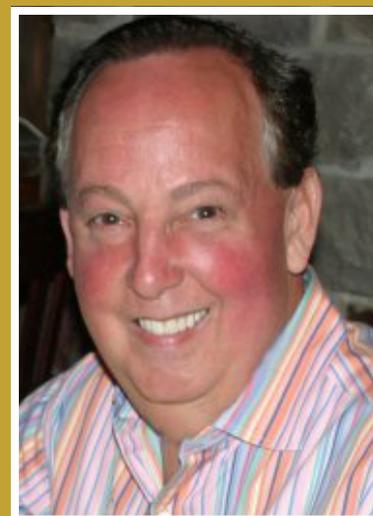


Palm Beach County's Intelligent Transportation Center (ITS)

- Monitors live traffic conditions via CCTV system, instantaneously adjusts traffic signals as needed
- Monitors routine traffic signal operations
- Coordinates with FDOT to handle emergencies, road closures, traffic accidents, traffic diversions
- Coordinates with local law enforcement agencies to handle accident related congestion problems
- Provides and maintains live traffic video feeds to local television stations and the Palm Beach County Emergency Operations Center

In Memoriam - Remembering Bill Moss

It is with great sadness that the MPO recognizes the loss of colleague and friend, West Palm Beach Commissioner William "Bill" Moss. Two days after his reelection to a 7th term, Bill participated in the March 15, 2012 MPO Board meeting as one of his last official duties. Bill had been an active member of the MPO Board for twelve years. As such, he contributed to transportation improvements that benefitted residents throughout Palm Beach County.



MPO In The Community

Right: Expo Center booths at the 100th anniversary of the South Florida Fair remind visitors of the many changes Palm Beach County has experienced through the years, none more so than in transportation. MPO Senior Planner Vinod Sandanasamy, left, speaks with a fair visitor about new transportation planning tools and opportunities for public involvement in transportation planning.



Left: MPO Senior Planner Bret Baronak conducts a “bike rodeo” during a sustainability summit along Flagler Drive in West Palm Beach where young cyclists practice bicycle safety exercises and cyclists of all ages receive free, properly fitted bike helmets.



As part of a West Palm Beach sustainability summit, Bret Baronak conducts a bike safety presentation (above) and demonstrates the ease of loading a bicycle on a Palm Tran bus (left).

Bicycle Safety in the Classroom

Palm Beach Public School



Palm Beach Public elementary students learn about bicycle maintenance and safety including the proper fitting of bike helmets from MPO Senior Planner Bret Baronak.

MPO Invites Public Involvement

The public is encouraged to participate in the transportation planning process in Palm Beach County. In addition to the MPO Board meetings, the MPO’s following three committees each provide opportunities for public observation and comment:

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

Bicycle-Greenways-Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BGPAC)

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

Meeting dates, times, locations, agendas, and minutes of previous meetings for the MPO Board and its committees are available at www.PalmBeachMPO.org.

For complaints, questions or concerns about civil rights or nondiscrimination policy issues, for special requests under the Americans with Disabilities Act, or for language translation assistance for public meetings, please contact:

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www.PalmBeachMPO.org

Juno Dunes Natural Area

**Water taxi docks
funded through the
MPO are a highlight of
new Palm Beach
County public use
facilities now open in
Juno Beach**

Public use docks adjacent to the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, - including those intended for future water taxi service - are accessible by foot along a 3/4 mile long, natural surface hiking trail from the parking lot on the west side of U.S. 1, a half-mile north of Donald Ross Road. Facilities include day-use docks with five boat slips, an informational kiosk, a boardwalk, an observation tower and two picnic tables. Restroom facilities and drinking water are available on the east side of U.S. 1 in Loggerhead Park.

