Adopting the Year 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan

The Year 2035 Livable Community Reinvestment Plan was adopted on October 27, 2010, by the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization (MTPO) for the Gainesville Urbanized Area, the agency responsible for the continuing, comprehensive and cooperative urban transportation planning program for the Gainesville Metropolitan Area. This planning program enables the area to receive federal and state funding for transportation projects and provides a forum for cooperative decision-making concerning regional and local transportation and development issues.

The MTPO’s voting members include the Mayor of the City of Gainesville, the six City of Gainesville Commissioners and the five Alachua County Commissioners. The membership composition is established by the Governor. Non-voting (ex-officio) advisory members of the MTPO include the University of Florida, District Two of the Florida Department of Transportation and a rural advisory member representing the communities in Alachua County located outside of the urbanized area boundary.

Peak Oil

Each update of the Gainesville Urbanized Area Long Range Transportation Plan typically introduces something innovative to the transportation planning process. For the Year 2035 update, the unique angle is the incorporation of peak oil scenarios into the alternatives, and identification of land use and transportation strategies to mitigate those effects. Under peak oil, rapidly rising worldwide demand for fossil fuels and increasingly limited supplies introduce extreme price volatility and scarcity of resources. This can have profound implications on how people live, in addition to how they access their destinations and how goods reach market. An accessibility analysis revealed which areas of the community would be most affected negatively from natural resources or renewable. The availability of energy that is human powered, manufactured from natural resources or renewable. The availability of energy that is human powered, manufactured from natural resources or renewable. The availability of access and mobility: foundation for a livable community...
Developing the Year 2035 Plan

Creating the Year 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan involved both technical analysis and broad-based input from the public. The technical analysis entailed evaluation of future growth in Alachua County by geographic area, and how that growth is projected to affect future traffic patterns, levels of congestion, and mobility and accessibility. Although the economic downturn of 2008-2010 affected Alachua County in many ways, the presence of the University of Florida and the health care and government sectors mitigated the effects somewhat. Alachua County is projected to add nearly 70,000 people and 50,000 jobs by the year 2035. This projection is based on the land development capacity and growth areas defined through adopted city and county comprehensive plans. This is expected to result in about 250,000 people and 250,000 jobs in Alachua County in 2035. The analysis examined the relative accessibility of households and employment throughout the county based on their ability to connect to destinations by a variety of travel choices.

Public participation also influenced development of the plan. The MTP held meetings to gain insights on transportation needs and priorities from a diverse range of interests and perspectives to shape the plan. A series of workshops and community forums enabled people to identify their safety, access and mobility issues, and derive solutions for consideration in funding transportation projects.

The Year 2035 Transportation Plan was closely developed with the development of the University of Florida's 2010-2020 Campus Master Plan Transportation Element. Both plans share analysis for transportation projects and strategies integrated broader regional needs with campus-related accessibility and mobility considerations. A key outcome was identification of park and ride lot opportunities for commuters to the UF campus from surrounding areas to transfer to transit.

Needs Plan

A key part of a Long Range Transportation Plan is having a vision for how transportation can effectively serve a community's many needs. The MTP's Livable Community Reinvestment Plan defines a strategic vision for multimodal transportation that improves accessibility, safety and mobility, while strengthening the Gainesville Urbanized Area's economic position. This vision is captured in the Year 2035 Needs Plan, which identifies the transportation projects and services needed to meet the area's future mobility needs. The Needs Plan is not constrained by cost or available revenue; rather it provides a regional strategy and a desired set of transportation projects for key travel corridors. The plan is multimodal, meaning it addresses needs for freight and automobile drivers, public transportation users, bicyclists and pedestrians, and explores ways to ensure these different travel modes are well connected and supports future growth and redevelopment. The Needs Plan provides a basis for the MTP, and its state and local government partners, to seek funding for transportation projects and to develop plans in a well-coordinated manner.

Cost Feasible Plan

Fiscal constraints make it necessary to set priorities for available state and federal funding, which primarily comes from gas taxes, and show how those priorities support development of the Gainesville Urbanized Area's transportation system into the future. The Long Range Transportation Plan must be financially feasible, meaning that project cost estimates must match projected revenues coming from a variety of federal, state and local sources through 2035. With inflation increasing over time, given those constraints, the MTP can only fund a portion of the projects included in the Needs Plan, which total some $900 million in estimated project costs by 2035. When the MTP adopted the Cost Feasible Plan in October 2010, it allocated nearly $200 million in projected revenues toward transportation projects of various types. The plan advances mobility and accessibility through projects that add capacity and direct connectivity, improve traffic operations along key congested roadways, expand transit service, and create a network of multi-use trails for walking and bicycling. Among the plan's major features is the creation of a Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) network providing premium transit service to link key activity centers and destinations. The adopted Long Range Transportation Plan provides a basis for the MTP to submit a list of project priorities each year to the Florida Department of Transportation for funding, and to seek grants from other agencies to complete needed transportation projects.