

# REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES

A Quarterly Publication of the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council

Summer 2005



## Focus on Transportation

### Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization: MTPO

The MTPO is composed of the seven City of Gainesville Commissioners, the five Alachua County Commissioners and non-voting representatives of the University of Florida, the Florida Department of Transportation, and one rural advisor selected by the Alachua County League of Cities. Staff services to the MTPO are provided by the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council. The MTPO administers the continuing, comprehensive and cooperative urban transportation planning program for the Gainesville Urbanized Area. This planning program is required in order to receive Federal funds for transportation projects.

### 2025 Long Range Plan in Process

North Central Florida Regional Planning Council's Transportation division is nearing the end of a two-year process for updating the Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization's (MTPO) long range transportation plan.

This process takes place every 5 years to plan the transportation needs for the next 20 years. The first step in the process was public outreach. A series of visioning sessions were held to allow participants to express their vision of the Gainesville area's future transportation system.

Participants then chose those items that made them proud of the area's transportation system as well as those items of concern (see page 2 for list of "prouds"). Then they were asked to describe their vision of how the transportation system could be in 2025. The public results were then complemented by the same process by the MTPO's Citizens Advisory Committee, Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Board and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

The next step for the first year of planning is model validation for what the transportation system looks like today with inputs such as car counts and number of bus riders.

During the second year, the validated model was used to test different future modifications. The MTPO will then decide on a list of modifications to make over the next 20 years based on a predicted amount of future revenue.

The plan is slated for adoption in November or December 2005.

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Long Range Transportation Planning Meeting

*Continued from cover*

There was a long list generated from the Visioning Forums regarding “prouds”

Most significant among these were:

- University Transit Use
- The MTPo’s leadership/public involvement
- Traffic calming
- Intact downtown Gainesville
- The 2020 Plan’s vision of premium transit service
- Regional Transit Service (RTS) and its partnership with the University
- RTS’ American with Disabilities Act (ADA) program
- “Metropolitan” is a true descriptor of the community’s thinking
- Willingness of community to accept innovative approaches
- The vision of the multimodal system

### Vision Statement

Land use developed with intensity and density that creates more balance in east-west Gainesville area growth, connects a limited number of highly developed mixed use centers, and is served by a highly efficient multimodal transportation system, which allows for mode choice. The transportation system is safely used by people of all ages and income classes, supported by a dedicated transportation funding source and provides for:

- walkable University and town centers;
- improved and affordable transit service;
- improved bikeway/trail system; and
- better road connectivity.



An improved bikeway/trail system, as proposed here, is a vision of many citizens

### North Florida Bike Facilities Maps

North Central Florida Regional Planning Council has a series of Bicycle Facilities Maps for North Central Florida. They are now being distributed at the I-75 and I-95 Visit Florida Welcome Centers. The maps are divided as follows:

- Alachua Bradford and Union Counties
- Gilchrist Dixie and Levy Counties
- Columbia Hamilton and Suwannee Counties
- Lafayette Madison and Taylor Counties

If you would like a map of your area, please send your request to:

Mike Escalante  
North Central Florida Planning Council  
2009 NW 67th Place  
Gainesville, FL 32653

### Web Pages of Interest

North Central Florida Regional Planning Council—  
<http://ncfrpc.org>

The Original Florida—<http://originalflorida.org>

The Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization—  
[Http://ncfrpc.org/mpto/index.html](http://ncfrpc.org/mpto/index.html)

Plan East Gainesville—[www.planeastgainesville.org](http://www.planeastgainesville.org)

Florida Scenic Highway—[www.scenicus441.com](http://www.scenicus441.com)

## Concept to Concrete Time Reduced with GIS

In 2004, the Planning Council recently entered into a contract with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to prepare and update Geographic Information System (GIS) layers.

The Florida Department of Transportation, District 2, requested that the Council assist in the gathering of geo-referenced socio-cultural data for the counties within the 11 county region and Levy County. This data collection included the following:

- Traffic Analysis Zones (TAZ)
- Existing land use
- Future land use
- Police and fire station locations
- Emergency response zones
- Developments of Regional Impact
- School attendance zones
- Transit routes, transportation
- Disadvantaged provider service areas
- Cemeteries
- Government buildings
- Medical facilities including eye clinics
- Historic structures
- County and local parks and playgrounds
- Boat marinas and boat ramps
- Business districts

The impetus for the project began with concern from FDOT and other federal officials over the amount of time it takes to get a project from concept to concrete. This process usually takes 8-10 years, but oftentimes a few years into the project a “fatal flaw” is found that hinders or halts the progress.

The hope is that, with the availability of better information at an earlier date in the process, planners and officials will be able to find these fatal flaws sooner. It’s called Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) and Florida is at the forefront of the nation trying to address the issue.

To obtain this updated information, Council staff verified the accuracy of the current data available at the Florida Geographic Data Library (FGDL) and created new data layers as needed.

## Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Boards

Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Boards provide advice and direction on the provision of transportation services for elderly individuals, low-income individuals, persons with disabilities and children at risk through the north central Florida region.

The Coordinating Boards, composed of government, social service agency and citizen representatives, make recommendations to the community transportation coordinator (CTC) for their respective counties. Members of these boards are appointed by the MTPO in Alachua County and the Boards of county commissioners in all other counties. If you are interested in serving on the board in your county, please contact the Lynn Godfrey at (352) 955-2200, extension 110.

## WAYS TO PARTICIPATE

The MTPO encourages you to provide written or verbal comments as often as you wish.

Send written comments to:

MTPO for the Gainesville Urbanized Area  
2009 N.W. 67th Place, Suite A  
Gainesville, Florida 32653-1603

Or call:

Marlie Sanderson  
Director of Transportation  
(352) 955-2200  
Extension 103

## NCFRPC SERVICES AVAILABLE TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND BUSINESSES

- Local comprehensive plans
- Land development regulations
- Transportation plans
- Transportation disadvantaged plans
- Disaster mitigation and recovery plans
- Emergency response plans
- Hazardous waste verification
- CDBG grant applications
- CDBG grant administration
- FRDAP grant applications
- Tourism development

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