



## **Meeting Summary**

Transportation and Land Use Task Force

June 17, 2009

Bert Harris, Jr. Agricultural Center

### ***Summary***

*The initial meeting of the Heartland 2060 Transportation and Land Use (TLU) Task Force convened June 17<sup>th</sup> in Sebring, Florida.*

The Chair of this group has been identified as Tom Deardorff, Director of Growth Management for Polk County and longtime Heartland resident. This working group is one of four issue area Task Forces working collectively to advance the Heartland 2060 visioning process. The Transportation and Land Use Task Force will identify key regional issues, develop goals and objectives, and recommend policies and strategies to approach land use and transportation planning issues from a regional, long-term perspective.

The meeting was convened by Pat Steed of the Central Florida Regional Planning Council and included several presentations on topics of regional significance, which was followed by small group discussions. Pat Steed welcomed the group and reiterated the importance of the Task Force in shaping the future of transportation and land use in the region within this visioning process. Ms. Steed gave a brief introduction of significant land use and transportation conditions and trends within the region.

### ***Meeting Presenters***

Meeting speakers focused on economic diversification and the region's future economy in this December meeting.

*Stan Cann, Secretary of Florida Department of Transportation District One* presented on the topic of long-range transportation trends in Florida and the region. This overview included a discussion of the pressures future population and economic growth trends will place on land use in developing areas, as well as the capacity of existing transportation infrastructure to sustain growth. Future financing mechanisms, the Heartland Rural Mobility Plan, and the District's current work to update regional long-range land use, socio-economic data, and transportation system modeling to the year 2060. This effort will be coordinated with Heartland 2060's modeling efforts.

*John Kaliski, Principal, Cambridge Systematics* followed by presenting the topic of statewide transportation planning efforts under the 2010 Strategic Plan update to the Strategic Intermodal System that is currently underway. Evan Enarson-Hering, also of Cambridge Systematics, presented baseline information on the conditions and trends of the region's transportation

system extent, infrastructure strengths, and travel characteristics of residents within the region. This discussion closed by posing high-level questions to meeting participants, including: how the region may coordinate the location of transportation and other future infrastructure capacity needs; how to link airports and intermodal freight terminals with regional economic development efforts, how to plan for alternatives to personal vehicle travel; and, how land use and transportation planning may be better linked.

*Pat Steed, Executive Director, CFRPC*, followed with a presentation illustrating existing county land uses, and projections of future land use trends in the Heartland. Director Steed raised similar broad questions for the audience, including: how can land use and transportation be linked to conservation, economic, and community development efforts; how can better land use planning support sustainable communities within the Heartland; and, how existing County and City planning efforts are developed.

The information and broad questions raised in these presentations set up the small group discussions with Task Force participants.

### ***Key Issues Moving Forward***

Previously, the Leadership Team identified 5 significant transportation and land use issues within the Heartland.

1. *Interregional Connectivity*
2. *Integration of Transportation and Land Use Planning with Natural Resource Planning*
3. *Creation of a Multimodal Transportation System to Move Goods and People*
4. *Combining Transportation and Land Use Planning in Support of Economic Development*
5. *Creation of Existing and New Sustainable Communities*

Task Force members, using these issues as a starting point, were asked to discuss primary considerations, topics of interest to future meetings, and significant regional issues, as well as identifying the 4 key issues that the Task Force should address moving forward. During a discussion period, the general consensus of meeting participants was that inter-regional and intra-regional connectivity should be addressed as a sub-theme within each of the 4 key issues selected. Those issues are as noted:

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|---|---|
| <b>1) Enhancing Sustainable Communities</b> | <b>2) Coordinating with Natural Resource Planning</b> |
| <b>3) Supporting Economic Development</b>   | <b>4) Ensuring Multimodal Connectivity</b>            |

### ***Issues Raised within Group Discussions***

Meeting participants broke into small groups to discuss each of these key points and the multitude of interrelated issues within each. The results of these discussions are presented below.

### ***1) Interregional Connectivity***

#### **Issues to be Considered**

- How can we consider making existing transportation systems and corridors more efficient?
- How can we ensure that local and county roads are included in planning and visioning efforts?
- What roles can, and should, government (federal, state, local) and the private sector fill in addressing future transportation needs?

### ***2) Integration of Transportation and Land Use Planning with Natural Resource Planning***

#### **Issues to be Considered**

- How can we balance conflicts between growing urban areas and planned conservation areas?
- How does agriculture, and the future of agriculture in the region, fit into these discussions?
- How are property rights issues, fiscal needs, and issues of balancing land preservation goals with transportation system goals addressed?
- How can large and small landowners be brought into these discussions?
- How can we plan transportation systems to promote natural stewardship and prevent fragmentation of natural systems.

### ***3) Creation of a Multimodal Transportation System to Move Goods and People***

#### **Issues to be Considered**

- How can we plan for multimodal future corridors?
- How does public transit, high-speed rail, and other alternatives to vehicle travel fit into our future vision for the region?
- How do we address future freight movements and the impacts of developments such as the inland port concept?
- How can we improve existing, and create new multi-modal, inter and intra-regional transportation systems – while being green and providing for future generations?

#### ***4) Combining Transportation and Land Use Planning in Support of Economic Development***

##### **Issues to be Considered**

- How can we work toward a future vision that understands and accounts for the regional impacts of major planned projects (e.g. inland port concept?)
- How does the vision address financial constraints? This issue should form a reality check on each of the 4 issues selected.
- How do other forms of infrastructure (telecommunications, natural gas) fit into transportation planning, and as related to economic development projects?

#### ***5) Creation of Existing and New Sustainable Communities***

##### **Issues to be Considered**

- How can transportation system improvements serve the needs of new communities?
- How can the TLU TF address issues such as housing affordability and preserving a sense of place within established communities in the region?
- How can we promote energy efficient land use patterns?
- How can transportation investments and land use planning support re-development efforts within existing urbanized areas?

#### ***Additional Information and Meeting Participants to be Included***

Rail operators (CSX), regional airports (Sebring Airport Authority), FL Dept of Agriculture, energy providers (Progress Energy, Florida Power and Light, Glades Electric Cooperative, Tampa Electrical Company), Private landowners, Highlands County Long-range Transportation Committee, regional tourism bureaus (Visit Florida, County V&CB).

#### ***TLU Task Force Next Steps***

All materials presented at this Task Force meeting are available through the CFRPC at <http://www.cfrpc.org/Heartland2060.com/>.

The next meeting of the TLU Task Force is scheduled for August 19<sup>th</sup>, 2009 at the Sebring Civic Center. The focus of this meeting will include discussion by regional experts and participants on one of the key transportation issues selected during this June meeting.