BROWARD COUNTY MPO HOSTS 2006 AMPO ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Broward County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) hosted the 2006 Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) conference at the Fort Lauderdale Grande Hotel & Yacht Club from October 31-November 3, 2006. The conference programs and fieldtrips were coordinated to showcase mobility, making the most of inter-governmental relationships, and the importance of regional planning initiatives, a hot topic in South Florida.

The AMPO conference also provided an opportunity to improve organizational effectiveness and meet the growing transportation challenges that take place in communities across the country.

The conference workshop agenda offered many facets of the metropolitan planning process, such as new planning requirements, tools, and implementation strategies. These program elements showcased mobility, making the most of inter-governmental relationships, and the importance of regional planning initiatives, a hot topic in South Florida.

Over 250 participants attended the conference, coming from all parts of the United States from as far as Alaska. Attendance figures exceeded the 2005 event attendance by more than 50 people. Participants were able to choose to follow educational tracks (sessions that built upon each other on a specific topic) or to simply attend the conference.

Tuesday, October 31st
AMPO attendees began the conference with a field trip that included a tour of Port Everglades and the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport. The conference attendees then divided into two groups, one to West Palm Beach and the other for a tour of the Port of Miami. Both groups traveled by Tri-Rail to get tours of the respective cities.

For more information visit: www.broward.org/mpo

All meetings are at the Governmental Center, 115 S. Andrews Avenue, Fort Lauderdale and are open to the public.

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For more information visit: www.broward.org/mpo

For information on how to become a member of the Technical Coordinating Committee or Community Involvement Roundtable, call 954-357-6608.

For more information visit: www.broward.org/mpo
SPOTTING TRANSPORTATION PLANNING WITH NATIONAL CONFERENCE

Richard J. Kaplan, MPO Chair, Mayor, City of Lauderhill

It was our distinct pleasure to host the annual AMPO conference here in Broward County from October 31 to November 3, 2006. AMPO is a nonprofit, membership organization that serves the needs and interests of metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs) nationwide. Federal highway and transit statutes require, as a condition for spending federal highway or transit funds in urbanized areas, MPO agencies, to direct urban transportation planning and the allocation of federal and state funds.

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) identifies in a single document the annual transportation planning activities that are to be undertaken in the Broward County Metropolitan Area conducted by the Broward County Metropolitan Planning Organization (BCMPO) staff and its professional consultants over the course of one year. Through the efforts of its UPWP, the BCMPO makes specific recommendations that seek to improve the transportation network throughout the Broward Metropolitan Area. The process to develop the UPWP starts in January by soliciting input from the public, transportation implementing agencies, and the BCMPO board and its advisory committees. The process ends in May by submitting the final UPWP to the State and Federal agencies for funding consideration.

Please e-mail your comments and suggestions to Tracy Mitchell at tmitchell@broward.org no later than March 2, 2007. You may also visit our website at www.broward.org/mpo/upwp.pdf.

BROWARD COUNTY MPO HOSTS 2006 AMPO ANNUAL CONFERENCE

Wednesday, November 1st

The conference kicked off with registration followed by policy and technical meetings that morning. Congressman Mario Diaz-Balart served as the keynote speaker at the AMPO Welcome Luncheon. Congressman Diaz-Balart is Florida’s 25th District U.S. Congressman and he also serves on the Transportation and Infrastructure Subcommittee of the US House of Representatives.

After the lunch break, three conference tracks were offered to attendees that focused on organizational strategies and the larger picture of transportation planning. The opening night reception was held at The River House in downtown Fort Lauderdale.

Thursday, November 2nd

On this date, the conference sessions focused on a three-part series on SAFETEA-LU, which stands for Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU). SAFETEA-LU authorizes the Federal surface transportation programs for highways, highway safety, and transit for the 5-year period 2005-2009.

Friday, November 3rd

On the final day of the annual conference, sessions on Sustainable Transportation Planning were the hottest topic. This track included a three-part series on incorporating the natural and human environment into transportation planning, along with new federal requirements. All event participants were invited to a backyard barbecue on the pool patio and the event concluded earlier that day to allow out of town attendees to fulfill their travel obligations.

The Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC) Statewide Association also hosted their quarterly meeting on this date and it was open to all conference attendees, not just those from Florida. During the annual AMPO Awards Luncheon, local Broward County MPO Chair and Mayor of Lauderhill, Richard J. Kaplan, received an award for Outstanding Achievements in Metropolitan Transportation Planning as an Elected Official.

SAFE ROUTES TO SCHOOL (SR2S)

Do you remember walking to and from school with friends? Or perhaps a bicycle was your preferred choice. Presently in Broward County, most parents drive their children to school. According to the Marin County Congestion Management Agency (California), 20 to 25% of morning traffic is parents driving their children to school.

As part of Florida’s first Safe Routes to School (SR2S) pilot project, the Broward County MPO is working to turn walking and bicycling to school safe, simple, and an everyday activity again. The SR2S surveyed nine elementary schools throughout Broward County: Tropical Elementary, Plantation, Silver Ridge Elementary, Davie Tradewinds Elementary, Coconut Creek; Harborbale Elementary, Fort Lauderdale; Flamingo Elementary, Davie Plantation Elementary, Deerfield Beach Elementary, Deerfield Beach; Cooper City Elementary, Cooper City; and Charles Drew Elementary, Pompano Beach.

These nine schools were selected from the Broward County School Board Hazardous Walking Condition Report, the survey asked students and teachers to identify their mode choice and what barriers they felt were keeping them from walking to their schools. Desired outcomes of the SR2S include: more children walking and bicycling to and from school, increased bicycle, pedestrian, and traffic safety, and reduced fuel consumption among others.

For more information about SR2S, contact Mr. John Ramos at (954) 357-6657.

10TH ANNUAL FLORIDA NEIGHBORHOODS CONFERENCE

On October 5-7, 2006, the Broward County MPO, along with over 50 exhibitors, some from as far as St. Petersburg and Sarasota, participated in the 10th Annual Florida Neighborhoods Conference, held at the Broward County Convention Center in Fort Lauderdale.

The annual conference seeks to empower residents to become more effective in leading their own communities. The conference included informative workshops such as effective neighborhood associations, hurricane communication, neighborhood project management, and inspiring volunteers. Conference attendees had the opportunity to tour historic neighborhoods, The Downtown Development Authority (DDA), and Port Everglades among other sites.

With the information presented at the conference, neighborhood leaders and residents can take that knowledge and start the process of building better communities, one neighborhood at a time.

SPECIAL GUESTS: Members of the Broward County MPO staff will be presenting at the Families and Neighborhoods Conference at Broward Community College on February 20-21. For more information visit: broward.org/conference.