

# CALENDAR of Events

MPO	BAC	BCCB	CIR	TCC
<b>July</b>				
Thursday 10 at 9:30 a.m. Room 422	Wednesday 9 at 7:00 p.m. Room 302	Cancelled	Tuesday 1 at 6:00 p.m. Room 430	Cancelled
<b>August</b>				
Thursday 14 at 9:30 a.m. Room 422	Wednesday 13 at 7:00 p.m. Room 302	Cancelled	Cancelled	Monday 25 at 2:00 p.m. Room 302
<b>September</b>				
Thursday 11 at 9:30 a.m. Room 422	Wednesday 10 at 7:00 p.m. Room 302	Monday 15 at 2:00 p.m. Room 422	Tuesday 2 at 6:00 p.m. Room 430	Monday 22 at 2:00 p.m. Room 302
<b>October</b>				
Thursday 9 at 9:30 a.m. Room 422	Wednesday 8 at 7:00 p.m. Room 302	Cancelled	Tuesday 7 at 6:00 p.m. Room 430	Monday 27 at 2:00 p.m. Room 302

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



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## News Bulletin

Cable subscribers currently served by Comcast of Greater Florida/Georgia, Inc. in the areas of Tamarac, Sunrise, Lauderdale, Plantation, Pompano Beach, Deerfield Beach, Wilton Manors, portions of Weston, Lighthouse Point, Lazy Lake, Hillsboro Beach and unincorporated areas near Oakland Park and Pompano Beach are now able to view MPO meetings and other County related programming on channel 80. Cable subscribers who do not reside in these areas need to call their local cable companies for availability.

For more information visit:

[www.broward.org/mpo](http://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.

**This publication can be made available in large print, tape cassette, or braille by request.**

This public document was promulgated at a cost of \$1,400.00 or \$.467, including postage, per copy to provide information about Broward County MPO services and programs.

TRANSPORTATION PLANNING DIVISION  
115 S. Andrews Avenue, Room 329H  
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301



# SHORTCUTS

VOL 10, No. 4

3rd Quarter 2003

## BROWARD COUNTY MPO RECEIVES ENVIRONMENTAL EXCELLENCE AWARD

On April 22, 2003, Federal Highway Administrator (FHWA) Mary E. Peters announced 12 winners of the Environmental Excellence. The recipients were selected from among 134 nominations received from 38 states. "These models of excellence inspire commitment to environmental stewardship," U.S. Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta said. "Each defined in a new way how we in transportation are architects of the future — visionaries for what can be achieved by working together to promote methods, processes and projects that protect and enhance the environment."

Broward County MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan won the Non-motorized Transportation Category for ensuring that the needs of county residents are identified and addressed through inter-agency coordination, public participation and consensus-building within the community. A multi-modal set of improvement projects was identified to provide county residents, businesses, and visitors with several travel choice options. A representative from FHWA was present at the June 2003 MPO meeting to make the presentation to the Board.



MPO Chair Richard J. Kaplan accepts award from FHWA's LeeAnn Jacobs.

Judges selected winners for 11 categories including: Environmental Streamlining; Cultural and Historical Resources; Ecosystems, Habitat, and Wildlife; Scenic Byways; Wetlands and Water Quality; Roadside Resource Management and Maintenance; Non-motorized Transportation; Livable Communities; Recycling; and Environmental Research. Since the program started in 1995, these awards have recognized partners, projects and processes that use FHWA funding sources to go beyond environmental compliance and achieve environmental excellence.

## GOVERNOR BUSH SIGNS RTA BILL

In June, the Governor signed legislation transforming Tri-Rail into the Regional Transportation Authority (RTA). In doing so, Broward, Palm Beach, and Miami-Dade counties will begin developing a more seamless transit network across the region.

Spearheaded by the Regional Business Alliance and backed by all three County Commissions, Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs), Chambers of Commerce and many cities, the bill does not contain the requested \$2 user fee on license plates, so the tri-counties will fund about \$2.7 million each to leverage several million more dollars from Congress to build the network.

During the coming weeks, interested parties and counties will come together in a workshop to determine the next steps to move forward. Continue to check here for periodic information about the new RTA!

### In This Issue ...

- Environmental Excellence Award
- Governor Bush Signs RTA Bill
- Transit Master Plan
- Regionalism In Process
- Taking it to the Streets
- Tri-Rail on Double Track
- Regional Commuting Solutions

## REGIONALISM ALREADY IN PROCESS!

In an unprecedented development, all four transit operators (Miami-Dade Transit, Broward County Transit, Palm Tran, and Tri-Rail) are working together to enhance transit services across the entire South Florida Region. The two efforts described below are just part of the planned regional program.

### Regional "Transit Consumer Information Network" in the Works!

The Transit Consumer Information Network (CIN) will provide a common database for transit operations in South Florida. It may be accessed through the South Florida's SunGuide Advanced Traveler Information System (ATIS) and the 511 travel information system. Transit agencies, members of South Florida's Regional Transportation Organization (RTO), have approved a Joint Participation Agreement pledging to create a regional transit database for use in Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach Counties. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) will supplement the SunGuide contract to create and maintain the regional transit database.

### Electronic Fare Payment: The Smart Card

The four transit agencies in the South Florida Region are working to jointly obtain fare collection equipment with provisions for "smart cards" that can be used to pay the fare on any bus or train. Broward County Transit, Palm Tran, Miami-Dade Transit, and Tri-Rail have finalized the technical specifications and are in the process of negotiating the scope of work. The goal of the project is to provide a Universal Automated Fare Collection System that will support a region-wide magnetic smart card system for seamless fare payment among the four transit agencies. Benefits include increased customer convenience and simplified fare collection. The card could be used at all Tri-Rail stations and on Broward County Transit, as well as on transit systems in Miami-Dade and Palm Beach Counties.



## BROWARD COUNTY TRANSIT MASTER PLAN

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

The Broward County Board of County Commissioners and MPO in their respective goals and vision are investing funds and resources in a balanced transportation system. This balanced system is placing greater reliance on public transit service and facilities for pedestrians and bicyclists. For this reason, both Boards, working in partnership with the municipalities in the County, are making their best efforts to develop a Transit Master Plan to help meet these objectives.

As you may know, Broward County Transit (BCT) is the operating agency for a "Family of [transit] Services" in Broward County. BCT encompasses the fixed route bus service, paratransit service, community bus service, the Water Bus, Tri-Rail feeder service, the Broward Urban Shuttle, the Western Express and special event service. All of these services help move people around and through the County more efficiently and effectively.

The purpose of the upcoming Transit Master Plan is to prescribe a comprehensive blue print for progressive sustained growth of Broward County Transit for the next ten years. This study will provide an assessment of

how transit services meet the needs of residents and visitors and will guide development of an integrated, multi-modal system of transportation services. It will also serve as the basis for developing programs compatible with both the MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan and Transit Development Plans. Furthermore, it will assist in identifying and prioritizing projects and potential funding for programming in the MPO Transportation Improvement Program, the document that lists projects to be funded within a five-year time frame.

This strategic plan was initiated by BCT and is required to continue the process begun in their 1996 Needs Assessment Study. The Transit Master Plan will:

- review current transit options and identify and evaluate transit services, transit infrastructure, and capital improvements
- prioritize recommendations for the future of public transit in the County
- identify cost-feasible funding options and alternatives, and
- guide the MPO and County Commission in meeting the challenges of public transit and the population growth in the next decade.

The Transit Master Plan development begins this summer and will be completed by the end of 2004. For input and questions about the Transit Master Plan, please contact MPO staff at 954-357-6608.

## TAKING IT TO THE STREETS

By participating in special events and festivals, the MPO continues to provide opportunities for the public to give input on transportation issues. At these events, the public can visit the MPO booth and share their opinions, ideas and suggestions. Staff is always on hand to answer questions and explain details about transportation projects.

Since the month of March, the MPO display booth has traveled to Pride Fest, Commuter Day, Calliope Fest, Earth Day, Transportation Choices Day, and Cinco de Mayo. MPO staff engineer, Roger Del Rio, appeared on 99.9 WKIS FM's *Gold Coast Forum* to discuss the status of transportation in Broward County. Traffic congestion, mass transit, funding, and future challenges facing Broward County and commuting solutions were discussed. Also discussed was the *Transit Bridge*, a project to improve transit service on State Road 7/441 between Broward and Miami-Dade counties.

If you feel strongly about a transportation project, get involved right at the outset! You can express yourself and impact a project's shaping from its inception. In addition to being on hand at community events, the MPO has a Community Involvement Roundtable (CIR) – a forum for citizen and business involvement in transportation decision making. The CIR advises the

MPO on transportation project proposals and transportation needs. And, the board is continuously looking for individuals or organizations interested in serving or attending regular meetings.

Just as you use a map to find your way when driving, you use the "process" to bring your "needed" transportation project to fruition. The opportunities to influence the process are abundant and rightly so – it's your money at work! To learn more about how you can participate in the transportation planning process, please contact:

**Public Education Coordinator**  
**Transportation Planning Division**  
**115 S. Andrews Avenue, Room 329 H**  
**Fort Lauderdale, FL 33301**  
**954-357-6608**

Continue to look for the MPO booth at local community events and tell us what you think – we're listening!



## TRI-RAIL ON DOUBLE TRACK



Tri-Rail is on track in 2003 to record solid ridership growth, significant double tracking construction progress, and an enhanced leadership role in the effort to develop an effective, reliable regional transportation network for South Florida. Tri-Rail ridership has increased at a far greater rate than the national average for commuter trains. Nationwide, the use of mass transit is down 1.9%, but Tri-Rail logged a 10.5% increase for the final quarter of 2002. Since October 7, 2002, Tri-Rail has carried more than 10,000 passengers a day on 13 separate occasions. On January 14, 2003 Tri-Rail carried 11,556 riders, the eighth highest passenger load since the commuter rail began service.

In January 2002, the Tri-County Commuter Rail Authority issued a notice to proceed for the largest construction project in the history of the Agency. Segment 5 of the Double Track Corridor Improvement Program is in the "final phase" of double track construction, supported by a Full Funding Grant Agreement with the Federal Government and state funds through the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). Work includes installation of approximately 45 miles of double track, upgrades to existing track, renovation of nine existing stations and construction of a new station in Boca Raton, enhancements to grade crossings, upgrades to signal safety systems, and acquisition of new cab cars and locomotives.

Once construction is completed in 2005, Tri-Rail will increase its service from the 28 trains it currently operates daily to 48 trains, which will run every 20 minutes during rush hour. The completion of the double tracking will mean enhanced, on-time performance for passengers and greater scheduling flexibility of daily commuters. Riders will enjoy more options during the midday, on the weekend and late at night. Tri-Rail estimates that these improvements will serve 27,900 average daily boardings by 2015.

### PROGRESS TO DATE

Segments 1 through 3 are completed (see map). Segment 1 added 8.14 miles of double track to the system. Segment 2 of the Program included 1.5 miles of double tracking as well as a station at Miami International Airport (MIA), which will be the cornerstone of the future Miami Intermodal Center (MIC). Segment 3, which was completed in September 2000, involved 6.97 miles of track work and associated upgrades. Segment 4, which consists of 6.89 miles, got underway in June 2001, with completion scheduled for 2003. The "Notice to Proceed" with the Design/Build process for Segment 5 was issued in January 2002, with the launch of construction in July 2002.



## REGIONAL COMMUTING SOLUTIONS

With the increasing cost of fuel, maintenance and insurance, more commuters are seeking options to make their commutes more efficient, less expensive and less stressful. South Florida Commuter Services (SFCS), the regional commuter assistance program, offers a range of programs geared to encourage use of ride sharing to ease traffic congestion on South Florida's roadways.

This program, administered by Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), provides a number of free services such as ride matching to commuters. Commuters interested in carpooling or vanpooling can sign up for inclusion into the SFCS database via mail, phone or via the web site, and will receive a letter with results from the state-of-the-art database, including a list of potential carpool matches.

One of the more effective incentives to encourage ridesharing is the kind that puts money back in the commuter's pocket. Under new Federal law, employers may provide (in the form of a subsidy or pre-tax incentive) up to \$100/employee per month for transit or vanpool costs. Both the employer and the employee save money and the community benefits.

For more information on how you or your company can save money, contact South Florida Commuter Services at 1-800-234-RIDE or visit [www.1800234RIDE.com](http://www.1800234RIDE.com).

