

MPOAC Revenue Study Advisory Committee

DRAFT Meeting Minutes

September 2, 2010

Florida Transportation Builder's Association, Boardroom
1007 DeSoto Park Drive, Tallahassee, FL 32301

Attendees:

Revenue Study Advisory Committee (RASC) Members:

Michael Howe, Chair RSAC, Sarasota-Manatee MPO
Doug Callaway – Floridians for Better Transportation
Carrie Blanchard – Florida Chamber of Commerce Foundation
Sue Hann – American Public Works Association, Florida Chapter
Casey Cook – Florida League of Cities
Eric Poole – Florida Association of Counties
Sally Patrenos - Florida Transportation Commission
Richard Kaplan – MPOAC, Mayor, City of Lauderhill
Janet Bowman – The Nature Conservancy in Florida

Other Attendees:

Howard Glassman – MPOAC
Stephen Reich – Center for Urban Transportation Research, USF
Jan Davis - Center for Urban Transportation Research, USF
Jeff Kramer - Center for Urban Transportation Research, USF
Bob Romig - Center for Urban Transportation Research, USF
Mark Reichert – Florida Transportation Commission
Kathy Neill- Florida Department of Transportation
Dave Lee – Florida Department of Transportation

Chairman Michael Howe called the meeting to order at 10:30 A.M. and began the meeting with a round of introductions from those in attendance. The attendees briefed the group on their background and their respective interests in the issue of transportation revenue. Chairman Howe thanked all of those in attendance for their willingness to serve on the MPOAC Revenue Study Advisory Committee. The next agenda item was a brief review of Florida Statutes that relate to open meetings and government in the sunshine. Members were provided a handout that summarizes the provisions and informed that the MPOAC General Counsel has advised that the RSAC is subject to them. The meetings will be publicly noticed in the Florida Administrative Weekly and on the MPOAC website.

The subsequent discussion item related to the organization of the RSAC and the methods that would be used to distribute meeting information and research materials. It was noted that materials will be posted on the MPOAC website at www.mpoac.or/revenuestudy/

Review of Study Purpose/ History

Some context for the study effort was provided by the Chair. He provided some historical perspective on the evolution of the country's transportation system and its importance for quality of life and economic competitiveness. The single most important reason for the effort is to identify transportation funding sources that can be relied upon to maintain mobility. A review of the past three legislative attempts to establish a revenue commission was then presented.

Summary of Study Elements and Schedule

CUTR then presented an abbreviated version of the approved scope of work and schedule that had been provided in the meeting materials mailed to the RSAC members. The schedule calls for a 24-month effort with a legislative proposal to be available for the 2013 session of the Florida Legislature. Members suggested that the schedule be modified to provide details on what pieces of work are expected to be completed by each future RSAC meeting and that work products be provided in advance of the meetings with sufficient time for member review and comment to staff. Several members inquired as to the possibility of having interim recommendations and legislative proposals before 2013 perhaps for the 2012 session. There was consensus that if ideas emerged earlier in the study process, specific proposals would be pursued as they were developed and that all of the organizations concerned with this issues need to remain flexible enough to take advantage of any opportunities that may be presented.

The first element of the study effort is the task of preparing a "white paper" that will provide some history of transportation revenues in Florida, summarize the State's transportation needs and identify emerging trends that must be addressed in order to establish a stable and predictable source of funding. Subsequent tasks include the developing and inventory of revenue sources used in other states, identification of new sources and the evaluation of these funding methods. A set of revenue measures will be narrowed for in-depth analysis and the results will be brought to the RSAC for their consideration for recommendations to the MPOAC. After the MPOAC deliberates and decides on a set of funding recommendations, draft legislative language will be developed and final report prepared.

Presentation of White Paper Outline and RSAC Discussion

The previously distributed outline for the white paper was reviewed in detail. During the discussion of the first section Mayor Kaplan mentioned that he authored a paper that laid out the case for why the fuel tax is an unsustainable primary transportation revenue source. Staff agreed to provide a copy of the paper to the RSAC members. There was lengthy conversation surrounding the second section of the paper that deals with the identification of Florida's transportation needs. It was stated that the study effort will principally focus on surface passenger transportation, specifically public transportation and highways. Several members expressed concern that seaports, airports and rail freight should also be

considered in the conduct of the effort to more adequately identify needs and to broaden the base of potential support for any legislative initiative. It was also stated that based on the outline, many of the needs identified at the local level would not be addressed. Howard Glassman as the project manager indicated that in order to keep the costs contained and in the interest of time, “off the shelf” needs data would be used and that the MPOAC, the study sponsor, had engaged in similar discussions prior to funding the study and decided to limit its focus to surface passenger modes of transport. It was agreed that to the extent that data are available to include in the “needs” section of the paper, local and other modal information could be included without shifting the focus of the initiative. It was also mentioned that if possible, the “needs” data should be categorized into at least the two broad areas of system preservation and capacity enhancement.

Section Three of the white paper outline dealing with revenue sources for transportation in Florida was discussed next. There was extensive discussion on dealing with the economic impacts of transportation financing. Some members suggested CUTR estimate the impacts on Florida’s economy of not dealing with the issue while others advocated a case study approach. It was decided that at this time, a case study approach would be used if the economic impacts were addressed. The question was raised if other structural changes to financing would be examined, in addition to revenue sources. Staff responded that issues dealing with funding flexibility and more inclusive approaches to existing funding mechanisms would be identified through the course of their work. It was suggested that these types of recommendations might be the types of issues that will be able to be pursued earlier in the study process as opposed to some comprehensive “package” of revenue recommendations that might be produced at the conclusion.

There was lengthy conversation around the issues of public education and outreach. Several ideas were presented that could prove useful when a set of recommendations emerges but it was noted that this effort is not an advocacy initiative rather an investigative and analytical effort. It is anticipated that if consensus is reached on a new transportation funding approach, that interest groups could use the information that is developed to promote a set of recommended remedies. It was acknowledged that other interested parties not currently represented on the RSAC will need to be connected with the effort in the interest of information sharing and collaboration. Organizations such as AAA and the Florida Trucking Association were mentioned as examples of those that need to be contacted.

Next Steps and Meeting Schedule

The Chair invited input from the Committee as to the length of time that should be set aside for future RSAC meetings. The consensus was that it should be dependent on the amount of material and the agenda that needed to be covered and that Tallahassee was the preferred location. For the next meeting, staff will provide a draft of the white paper at least a week prior to the session which was set for December 10, 2010.

Public Comment - There were no comments for members of the public

Adjournment – The meeting was adjourned at 12:30 P.M.