MPOAC **The Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council**

Commissioner Mayra Uribe
*Chair*

April 24, 2025

Jared W. Perdue, P.E., Secretary
Florida Department of Transportation
605 Suwannee Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

Dear Secretary Perdue:

On behalf of the Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC), we are pleased to transmit our *2025 Passenger Rail Priorities Program* project list to FDOT for your consideration. In its first year, this program provides Florida's MPOs with the opportunity to identify and promote intercity passenger rail priority projects throughout the state that facilitate the mobility of residents and visitors, promote economic growth, and support the Florida State Rail Plan (SRP) goals.

This list represents construction-ready intercity passenger rail priority projects throughout the state unless otherwise noted for a planning study. The MPOAC reviewed and evaluated each project to ensure consistency and relevance. The MPOAC's Freight & Rail Committee, the Staff Directors' Advisory Committee, and the Governing Board have approved the project list.

With our approval process complete, the MPOAC respectively submits the attached list of 6 projects (representing 12 MPOs and five (5) FDOT Districts) to FDOT. We request that the Department review and consider these priorities as it seeks to develop intercity passenger rail corridors across all relevant funding programs (e.g., Corridor ID, Fed-State Partnership for Intercity Passenger Rail, Florida Rail Enterprise, SIS, District Discretionary). The list is organized by FDOT District and then alphabetized by MPO name. In addition, a summary sheet is attached to share program highlights for this year's submissions.

We intend to reach out to your staff over the next few months to identify any priority projects the Department was able to advance and discuss ways we can improve the list for 2026.

If you have any questions about the program or the process, please do not hesitate to contact Dana Reiding, and please reach out directly to your MPO partners to discuss specific projects.

Thank you for your continued support!

Mayra Uribe

Commissioner Mayra Uribe, Chair
MPOAC

Attachments: 2025 Passenger Rail Priorities Project List and Program Summary

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# The Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council

## 2025 Passenger Rail Priorities Program

## Program Overview

The Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC) Freight & Rail Committee developed the *Passenger Rail Priorities Program* (PRPP) to identify and promote high-priority intercity passenger rail projects and studies within the planning boundaries of Florida's Metropolitan Planning Organizations[1] for consideration in FDOT's intercity passenger rail planning efforts as the designated State Rail Transportation Authority (SRTA) for Florida and other potential funding sources. The PRPP's objective is to collaboratively develop a comprehensive list of projects representing the unified input of the MPOAC. The MPOAC updates and endorses the PRPP's project list annually.

## Project Selection Overview

The PRPP Project List contains all project submissions that passed the agreed-upon requirements set by the Freight & Rail Committee. Eligible projects include intercity passenger rail projects as defined by 49 U.S. Code § 24102 that seek to enhance existing services, restore former services, or develop new services. MPOs submit project applications through an online application portal. The application review process vets each project for program eligibility to ensure whether it was identified in a prior plan or study, connects at least two major metropolitan areas, has support from railroad owners and operators, includes the total project cost and funding, and identifies financial support for operations and maintenance. Requests to fund a planning study is an eligible activity. The 2025 Program's critical activities included:

1. A training webinar was conducted virtually on November 14th, 2024. The training sessions covered project eligibility and application submission demonstrations through the online portal.
2. The project submission period began on October 24th, 2024, and remained open until December 12th.
3. Project submissions were reviewed for completeness through the online system. Requests for additional information were submitted to each MPO, and they were able to make updates to their applications. One-on-one technical assistance was also available to answer specific questions.
4. Projects that met all the program's eligibility requirements were included in the 2025 PRPP Project List. The MPOAC's Freight & Rail Committee, Staff Directors' Advisory Committee, and Governing Board reviewed and approved the final list on April 24th, 2025.

## Summary of 2025 PRPP Project List

- 6 of Florida's 27 MPOs submitted 6 projects representing 5 of the 7 FDOT Districts.
- Two projects seeking funds for planning studies resulted from joint coordination between multiple MPOs to enhance service between Orlando and Tampa and new service between Tampa and Naples.
- Four projects seek funds to construct stations and intermodal facilities supporting existing service between Miami and Orlando and restoring service between Jacksonville and New Orleans.
- Funding advancements and requests totaled over $61.2 million across 6 projects, with projects supporting nearly all the State Rail Plan goals.

[1] "Metropolitan Planning Organizations" is not an exclusive term. It also encompasses Transportation Planning Organizations (TPO) and Transportation Planning Agencies (TPA).

# 2025 Project Priority List

PASSENGER RAIL PRIORITIES PROGRAM
powered by the Hillsborough TPO

| Project ID | Project Name | Action | FDOT Districts | Project Type | State Rail Plan Corridor | Funding Request |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Florida-Alabama TPO** | | | | | | |
| FLAL-24-001 | Restore Amtrak service in the Florida-Alabama TPO area | New Station/Restore Former Station | District 3 | Restore Former Services | Tier II (Jacksonville – New Orleans) | $760,000 |
| **Hillsborough TPO (in partnership with MetroPlan Orlando and Polk TPO)** | | | | | | |
| HILL-24-001 | Orlando to Tampa Intercity Passenger Rail | Passenger Rail Corridor Feasibility Study | District 7, District 1, District 5 | Enhance Existing Services | Tier I (Orlando – Tampa) | $500,000 |
| **Lee County MPO (in partnership with Sarasota-Manatee MPO, Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO, and Collier MPO)** | | | | | | |
| LEEC-24-001 | Southwest Florida Rail Feasibility Study | Passenger Rail Corridor Feasibility Study | District 1, District 7 | Develop New Services | Tier III (Miami – Naples - Tampa) | $1,750,000 |
| **Okaloosa-Walton TPO** | | | | | | |
| OKAL-24-001 | Restore Amtrak service in the Okaloosa-Walton TPO area | New Station | District 3 | Develop New Services | Tier II (Jacksonville – New Orleans) | $760,000 |
| **Space Coast TPO** | | | | | | |
| SPAC-24-001 | Cocoa Multimodal Station and Rail Project | New Station | District 5 | Develop New Services | Tier I (Orlando – Miami) | $47,460,000 |
| **St Lucie TPO** | | | | | | |
| STLU-24-001 | Treasure Coast Regional Passenger Rail Station | New Station | District 4 | Develop New Services | Tier I (Orlando – Miami) | $10,000,000 |

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FREIGHT & RAIL COMMITTEE