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Florida Department of Transportation's Traffic Engineering and Operations Newsletter



I-595 Express Lanes Open!

By Dong Chen, FDOT District Four

After five years of construction, the renovation of I-595 in Broward County has come to an end and the I-595 reversible express lanes opened on Wednesday, March 26. The project improvements were implemented through a public-private-partnership (P3) agreement between the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and I-595 Express, LLC, to serve as the concessionaire to design, build, finance, operate, and maintain the I-595 corridor improvements project for a long-term commitment of 35 years. The \$1.2-billion design-build project is Florida's first P3, and the country's first availability-payment transportation project, which are monthly fees given if the facility meets state performance requirements.



I-595 eastbound to express lanes.

The express lanes will typically be open on weekdays to eastbound traffic between 4 a.m. and 1 p.m. and for westbound drivers between 2 p.m. and 2 a.m. The express lanes will normally be closed between 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. and between 2 a.m. and 4 a.m. for routine maintenance. On weekends, the express lanes will normally be open in the eastbound direction only.



District Four transportation management center.

I-595 Express, LLC will maintain and operate the facility, but the state will own it and collect the tolls. FDOT began collecting tolls electronically on the 595 Express Lanes on April 9 at 4 a.m. All motor vehicles, including trucks, are allowed to use the express lanes. Toll collection is done electronically using SunPass®. Tolls are based on a system known as congestion

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Ribbon cutting for the I-595 reversible express lanes

pricing. The amount of the toll varies depending on traffic volumes and tolls are displayed on electronic signs prior to the entry points to the express lanes.

FDOT held a ribbon cutting on Friday, March 28th to celebrate the opening of the I-595 reversible express lanes. Governor Rick Scott, FDOT Secretary Ananth Prasad, and dignitaries from the county and neighboring municipalities were in attendance. FDOT Secretary Ananth Prasad said, “595 Express is an exceptional example of how cooperation with the private sector has enabled the Department to accelerate delivery of a much needed transportation project. By working together we were able to make this outstanding project a reality. Particularly noteworthy is that a project of this magnitude was delivered on-time and on-budget.”

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TSM&O Workshop Update: Spring 2014

By Ingrid Birenbaum, Atkins

Florida's Transportation Systems Management and Operations (TSM&O) Program continues to advance strategic actions since its original inception in 2010. TSM&O offers ways to capitalize on limited transportation funding in order to maximize transportation system efficiency and effectiveness. As defined in the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) *TSM&O Strategic Plan* (Version 2, December 2013), the program is based on the following:

- Performance measurement,
- Active management of the multi-modal transportation network,
- Positive safety and mobility outcome delivery to Florida's travelling public, and
- Delivery of cost-effective solutions through benefit/cost ratio analyses.

The TSM&O vision and mission statements are defined as follows:

Vision: To operate our transportation system at the highest level of cost-effective performance.

Mission: To deploy a customer-driven TSM&O Program focused on mobility outcomes through real-time and effective management of the existing transportation system toward its maximum efficiency.

Additionally, the TSM&O vision has been expanded for arterial and freeway operations:

To operate our transportation system at the highest level of cost effective performance, resulting in reduced excess delay on arterials AND freeways, real-time management and traveller information for all modes, and seamless coordination with ALL operating agencies.

In 2012, the FDOT Central Office ITS Program facilitated an initial series of TSM&O workshops in each of the local FDOT Districts. Topics included District TSM&O implementation opportunities, given their unique characteristics and different local needs. Participants came from all offices within FDOT as well as external participants, such as metropolitan planning organizations, county/city planning/engineering staff, and representatives from airports, seaports, and transit. A biennial cycle was selected for future TSM&O workshops.



The first 2014 workshop was held in at the Central Office in March 2014. Discussions began with an overview of TSM&O actions at the national, statewide, and local District levels. The remainder of the workshop was spent doing a self assessment to determine processes and institutional capabilities critical to program effectiveness using the Capability Maturity Model (CMM) dimensions of business processes, systems and technology, performance measurement, culture, organization/workforce, and collaboration. The dimensions were also compared to focus areas defined in the *TSM&O Strategic Plan*. Participants identified strengths and weaknesses for each dimension and then selected a current capability level. They then determined what was needed to bring the program to the next level. The next step will be to assign responsibilities and timeframes to accomplish these actions and strategies and document their progress in updates to the *TSM&O Functional Plan*.

District workshops began in April. Each workshop is tailored to the needs of the particular District. The workshops open with a national and statewide overview including availability of strategic and functional plan documents, policies and procedures, and focus area guidance. Afterward the content varies. Some Districts elected to hold a CMM self assessment similar to what was held in Central Office. Others will describe their District's TSM&O efforts to an audience of FDOT and other agency participants. Workshop objectives are:

- Help participants better understand TSM&O,
- Foster an understanding that all functional areas have a role in planning for and implementing TSM&O,
- Identify and build upon District focus areas for implementation,
- Develop strategic action items to continue the local program, and
- Introduce supportive TSM&O documents and tools.

The transportation industry is shifting to outcome-oriented thinking in order to address worsening urban congestion, decreasing travel time reliability, and an increasing population that outpaces increases to roadway miles. This change is occurring in part because of reduced funding levels for traditional capacity projects, but also from the realization that

implementing TSM&O strategies that make the most of existing infrastructure can result in significant improvements in safety, congestion mitigation, and system reliability.

FDOT has made the following commitments:

- Organizational changes/evolution to operations and management of all surface transportation systems/networks in real-time, and
- Using TSM&O as a performance-driven approach for solving congestion problems using technology tools and management and operational strategies to identify and respond to the causes of congestion in real-time.

These on-going workshops support FDOT's significant steps to integrate planning and operations; develop high levels of coordination and communication with local traffic, transit, freight, and other modal entities; maximize the efficiency of existing infrastructure; and make use of tools and data for mobility and safety outcomes.

For information, please contact Ms. Elizabeth Birriel at (850) 410-5606 or email to Elizabeth.Birriel@dot.state.fl.us.

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511 Charrette

By Gene Glotzbach, FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations

What is a *charrette*?

There is no definition of charrette in the English dictionary so we won't get any information there. Charrette is a French word, and we would have to look it up in the French dictionary to get information on what it means. In doing so, we would find out that the word charrette would be defined as meaning "cart" or "chariot." In Paris in the 19th century, a cart would be pushed around to collect architectural student's work that was due at the end of their allotted time to complete the work. Students would work furiously up until their deadline and even after their work was placed on the cart where they were said to be working en charrette, or on the cart. Over time the term charrette morphed into the current design-related usage of working right up until deadline.



Today the charrette is an intensive planning session where a team of experts get together to discuss a particular topic and to develop a vision regarding that topic. The charrette provides a forum where all involved can come together to provide input to develop a path to reach a particular goal.

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) held a charrette to help determine the vision for the future of the FL511 advanced traveler information system. The existing FL511 system was designed seven years ago and incorporated technology that was current at the time. As technology has moved forward, FDOT has made efforts to incorporate new technology into the system to improve the user's experience. Due to the advancement of technology and enhancements available in system capabilities, Florida is reconsidering its traveler information system investments that provide real-time information to people, giving them the opportunity to make better modal and route choices when they travel.

The charrette was held in Orlando, Florida on April 17th and 18th. It was facilitated by the Intelligent Transportation Society of America. This charrette brought together experts from both the public and private sectors. Participation in the charrette included representatives of state agencies that have deployed 511 systems as well as information service providers. This charrette will help FDOT to define a path to move forward with providing traveler information to the public. The charrette will look at comparative frameworks in both the public and private sector; identify institutional, technological, and policy barriers to reaching an end state; describe the service requirements for Florida's traveler information system; and determine options for building, buying, or partnering with external entities to achieve the objective.

FDOT is looking at several potential options for the future of its FL511 system. Some of the options would be:

- To continue with the current system's architecture where information would be distributed through an interactive voice response system (511 IVR), web site, mobile apps, personalization features, and Twitter feeds.



- Eliminate/modify the architecture of the 511 IVR and rely on the web site and mobile apps as the primary means of disseminating information.
- Look at turning the operations of the 511 system over to private industry and rely on their ability to get information to the public through their products and applications.

ITS America is in the process of processing the information presented at the charrette along with the information gleaned from various discussions from the charrette to develop recommendations regarding the direction FDOT should take in providing traveler information to the public. With the increases of access to traveler information becoming more available from private industry, state agencies are struggling to determine how to best utilize this resource in providing information to the public. This charrette was developed to help determine the balance between the use of privately and publicly collected information and how/who should be disseminating that information to the public.

ITS America hopes to provide a final report within the next two months after processing all the information collected at the charrette. The report will outline the results of the charrette and provide some recommendations on the approach FDOT should take to provide information to the public.

For information, please contact Mr. Glotzbach at (850) 410-5616 or e-mail to Gene.Glotzbach@dot.state.fl.us.

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District Six: Customer Service – A Factor in the Success of 95 Express!

By Javier Rodriguez, FDOT District Six

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Six Office recently commemorated the five-year anniversary of the 95 Express project in Miami-Dade County. The project has proven successful in achieving its congestion management goals and continues to be a viable travel option for commuters in the region.

The success of 95 Express has been a result of FDOT's dedicated effort. The District Six Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Office has run the project's operations since it launched in December 2008. Operational duties for the facility have included incident management, traveler information, software development, and traffic monitoring. It has also included managing the project's customer service component – and with 65,000 trips serviced every day and more than 92 million since launch, it has been no easy task.

With concerns ranging from toll and signage complaints, refund requests, hybrid registration decals, and transit inquiries, the 95 Express customer service effort has supported every aspect of the project's multi-modal operations. This daily interaction with customers has been pivotal to the project's success and has served as the main line of communication with the public since 95 Express opened. Ensuring it provides customers with timely and satisfactory responses has been a responsibility FDOT has not taken lightly and is an effort it continues to improve upon each day.



95 Express in Miami-Dade County

The District Six ITS Public Information staff created the customer service plan for Phase 1 of the 95 Express project. The plan was created with the goal to streamline the response process and provide customers with the best experience possible. However, with a multi-modal project that provides several travel options along the same corridor, such as high-occupancy toll lanes, bus rapid transit, and a high-occupancy vehicle program, each customer inquiry presented different needs and sometimes even had different combinations of each. To properly address these inquiries, the District first coordinated with partner agencies to designate a representative for each project category, such as District Four and South Florida Commuter Service as well as Broward County Transit and Miami-Dade Transit. After establishing an interagency response plan, they redesigned the project web site with specific filters to route comments (based on customer category selection) to corresponding representatives for response. They also created a library of approved responses for the more common inquiries to reduce response times and established protocols for each agency to follow. These guidelines have been documented as standard operating procedures that outlined FDOT and partner agency responsibilities, inquiry flow charts, and response deadline information. These procedures have been shared among the partners and have been used for ongoing training purposes.

In managing this effort, the District also identified the need to create an application to electronically track and manage the customer service efforts for 95 Express. As a result, it created software named 'TMC Connect.' The software automated manual tasks and enhanced procedures. It also improved interagency coordination because it allows agencies to transfer customer inquiries to one another and allows managers to run reports and plot trends in comments received. Spotting these trends is critical when it comes to identifying opportunities for traffic improvements.

These tools and relationships are vital in laying the foundation for an express lane public outreach effort that treats motorists as customers choosing to take the lanes. It has helped educate the public on how these lanes and ITS play an important role in the lives of motorists in South Florida.

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ITS Florida: Anne Brewer Scholarship Program

By Sandra Beck on behalf of ITS Florida

One of the Intelligent Transportation Society of Florida's (ITS Florida) goals is to increase the number of professionals looking for a career in the public transportation field in order to sustain growth and improvement throughout the industry. The ITS Florida Scholarship Program provides scholarships to deserving students—the future leaders of transportation in Florida. An Academic Scholarship opportunity is available to undergraduate and graduate students attending an ITS Florida member institution. Principal course work shall include transportation and intelligent transportation systems (ITS), transportation engineering, planning, public policy, and public administration.

In 2013, an additional goal was added to expand the scholarship program to include a separate scholarship for ITS Florida members for training and certification. The Training and Certification Scholarship is available to public and private sector nominees in which their respective organizations are members of ITS Florida. The scholarship assists those seeking to advance their skill set through additional training and certification courses to better serve their organizations and the ITS industry in Florida.

ITS Florida awards cash scholarships to deserving applicants enabling them to take advantage of opportunities that can be achieved through education, training, and certification programs. Scholarship recipients may have an opportunity to give a presentation at an ITS Florida event.

Detailed guidelines for the 2014 Anne Brewer Scholarship Program, including program deadlines, will be posted on the ITS Florida web site in the near future.

Anyone interested in information about the ITS Florida scholarship program and sponsorship opportunities may contact Sandy Beck at ITSFlorida@ITSFlorida.org. Sponsorships are also available at <http://itsflorida.org/sponsorship/>.

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Editorial Corner: Sometimes Change is Good

By Paul Clark, FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations Office

Looking back over the last several years I have been with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), I can tell you a couple of things are true—need causes change and change is inevitable. I recently had the opportunity to travel around the state and meet with all the Road Ranger and Traffic Incident Management (TIM) program managers for FDOT, and realized things are changing and we need to ensure that we, Central Office, keep up with them.

One example of change that I observed was the varying vehicle types that are now being utilized around the state for our Road Ranger Program. I realized that several Districts have been extremely proactive and innovative in order to meet the day-to-day demands of the program. Our Road Ranger procedure only addresses the use of a ¾-ton, full-size pickup truck, with the understanding that other vehicles can be utilized if approved. While pickup trucks are being utilized in several Districts, we are also seeing a trend where Districts are using flatbed wreckers for quick clearance in areas where high occupancy toll lanes are utilized; standard wreckers are being utilized in areas with limited right-of-way or barrier wall; and there is even a dedicated class “C” heavy-duty wrecker in Miami that is utilized to move disabled commercial vehicles that block travel lanes. Each of the above vehicles address a specific need and in each case the District was proactive and innovative in finding a solution that promotes TIM and quick clearance.

Another area where I saw change is in our TIM teams around the state. Presently, Florida has 22 active TIM teams that cover 40 counties. Sitting down and discussing TIM with the District program managers, I saw some great practices that have been put into place to promote and foster TIM. In one area, the local TIM team has been combined with the local Community Traffic Safety team. In the past, these two teams had separate meetings and, in general, it was the same participants at both meetings. This combination of the two teams has resulted in better participation by partner agencies at the meetings. I also noticed that in some areas the Florida Forest Service (FFS) was added to the local TIM team. This addition to the team helps coordination with team members during fire season and also when prescribed burns are occurring. Having the FFS as part of the team definitely has been beneficial in these areas.

While I was able to identify several positive practices throughout the state, I was also able to identify some areas where we need to coordinate and promote change. While in some areas we are seeing TIM teams doing well, in others not



Road Ranger managing an incident.

all the partners are attending the TIM meetings. The question I came home with is how do we get all the agencies in the area to attend? While I realize each agency has its own responsibilities at a traffic incident, how do we convey the message that a coordinated response is beneficial to the first responder and the traveling public? One of the approaches is to ensure we are promoting the Strategic Highway Research Program 2 Traffic Incident Responder Training. This training stresses the benefit of TIM to the attendees and while there have been several trainings held statewide, how can we offer more?

Another area that my office is going to concentrate on is updating all of our policies and procedures that affect the Road Ranger Program. This is imperative to ensure we are keeping pace with the constant changes that are occurring at the District level that continually improve the program. The Districts are doing a great job and it's imperative that we provide the needed support to ensure we have the best incident response program in the nation.

My goal is to ensure we are providing the support needed to the Districts so they can perform their job to the required levels. That might cause us to have to make some changes ourselves. I am reminded of a quote I read from *Strategic Simplicity*, “...we avoid change. Until the pain of not changing exceeds the pain of changing.” I sometimes have to remind myself that change isn't always a bad thing.

For information, please contact Mr. Clark at (850) 410-5607 or e-mail to Paul.Clark@dot.state.fl.us.

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FDOT Highlights the ITS Program at the 21st World Congress on ITS

By Karen England, Atkins

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) will exhibit at the 21st World Congress on Intelligent Transport Systems in Detroit, Michigan, on September 7-11, 2014, at the COBO Center. This provides FDOT with a great opportunity to follow-up with progress made on their connected vehicle program since hosting the 18th World Congress in Orlando and to provide overall information on their Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) Program.

Prior to the 18th World Congress, FDOT, with support from the United States Department of Transportation, established a connected vehicle test bed using a connected vehicle module in the SunGuide® software, FDOT's advanced transportation management system (ATMS) software. Florida was the first state to have such a module in ATMS operation. This module allows FDOT to collect data from installed roadside equipment on 25 miles of Interstate 4, International Drive, and John Young Parkway. Since then, FDOT has continued the success of this test bed and is in the process of upgrading its infrastructure to include wrong-way driving and work zones. FDOT is exhibiting at the 21st World Congress and will exhibit the benefits of its connected vehicle test bed.

Along with connected vehicle, FDOT will provide information on the overall ITS Program and other ITS topics, including:

- TSM&O
- FL511
- Paynes Prairie ITS deployment for fog detection
- Wrong-way driving pilot project
- Traffic Engineering Research Laboratory
- ITS wide area network

Exhibiting at this conference provides FDOT with the opportunity to gain exposure to a wide spectrum of ITS technology, including worldwide agencies and the automotive sector, amongst others. We invite you to stop by our booth (423) to speak with our representatives.

For information, please contact Ms. Elizabeth Birriel at (850) 410-5606 or email to Elizabeth.Birriel@dot.state.fl.us.

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Announcements

21st World Congress

Get ready now; spring and summer will soon come and go...then the 21st World Congress on Intelligent Transport Systems will be upon us. This year, the World Congress is at the newly refurbished Cobo Center in Detroit, Michigan—America's original Motor City—on September 7-11. Now is the time to make plans to attend. The World Congress only comes to North America every third year so this will be the most important ITS gathering until 2017. This year's World Congress promises to provide the most relevant forum for scientific and technical achievement in the industry. Not only is it located on an international border crossing—providing a geography capable of showing how ITS are critical for the safe and efficient movement of people and goods across international boundaries; it is also in a high-tech business hub where partnerships are being forged between companies new and old, large and small.

Information on registering and/or participating is available at <http://itsworldcongress.org/>.

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ITS 3C SUMMIT [2014] Mobile, AL

ITS 3C Summit

Registration is now open for the the 2014 ITS 3C Summit, a joint annual meeting between the Gulf Region Intelligent Transportation Society, the Intelligent Transportation Society of Florida, and the Intelligent Transportation Society of Georgia. The meeting will be held September 14 - 17, 2014 at the Arthur R. Outlaw Convention Center in Mobile, Alabama. More information is available at <http://www.its3csummit.com>.

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FDOT Traffic Engineering and Operations Mission and Vision Statements

Mission:

Provide leadership and serve as a catalyst in becoming the national leader in mobility.

Vision:

Provide support and expertise in the application of Traffic Engineering principles and practices to improve safety and mobility.

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