



South Florida Transportation Roundtable Takeaways

The Palm Beach Transportation Planning Agency (TPA) hosted key stakeholders from Palm Beach County, Broward County, and Miami-Dade County to discuss funding the future of transportation. These stakeholders shared key lessons learned from their unique perspective and approaches to solving the transportation funding puzzle.

Broward County and Miami-Dade County both described how their use of transportation surtaxes have accelerated the implementation of roadway and transit projects, as well as mobility services. Both agencies have utilized this funding source to advance premium transit, including bus and rail service, along with ongoing operations and maintenance (O&M) funding for roads and transit.

Next Steps

- Palm Beach County should explore the benefits of a transportation surtax and learn from their peers in Broward and Miami-Dade Counties.
- Transportation priorities must align prior to public engagement and showing the benefits of a dedicated funding source, such as competitiveness for federal & state funds.
- Local agencies should submit transportation projects to the TPA for consideration in the Long Range Transportation Plan 2050 update.

Key Facts and Takeaways

Engage the private sector and cities – Don't underestimate the need to involve the private sector. Broward and Miami-Dade counties both attribute their transportation surtax success stories to bringing partners into the fold rather working independently.

We can't build new without fixing existing infrastructure – Showing how you plan to fix existing problems will help with acquiring a federal match for grants.


Use local funds to gain access to federal and state dollars – Both counties with transportation surtaxes are planning for billions of dollars in state or federal investment to match local funds. This includes a commitment to operate and maintain the projects over time.

Build a message from public involvement – The successful campaigns were the result of aggressive public involvement campaigns to collect input. This work required years of collaboration between the county, municipalities, and private sector staff to ensure success. Create the message you want and be proactive, don't let others tell your story.

Premium transit requires an operations and maintenance match – The partners in the region agreed that without O&M commitment, the federal and state government cannot provide the funds necessary to expand or create new transit services.

Oversight mechanism and earned trust – The need for oversight was critical in ensuring the funding would go towards the appropriate uses in both counties with a transportation surtax. It is beneficial to have a single oversight entity for all surtax generated funds.

The vision is prescriptive, the implementation is flexible – A good plan with an implementation focus will have development chasing transit and airport projects. Disclose that both operations and capital funds are needed. County staff must lead the development of a surtax



plan, alongside the public and private sector. Costs and projects will evolve over time. Focus on the vision and allow for flexibility since project expectations may shift over time.

Visitors are an advantage – Visitors also pay into the surtax, reducing the local burden.

Time is of the essence – A comprehensive plan (including a surtax financial plan) must be submitted to the Florida Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA) by July 2026 to complete their audit and place on the ballot by November 2026.

Panel Specific Highlights

Broward County's Mobility Advancement Program (MAP Broward):

- Broward County, the business community, and cities led coalition in 2018 for penny transportation surtax to fund planning, implementation, operations and maintenance
- Funding was necessary to support premium transit services and commuter rail discussions
- Cities were guaranteed a certain surtax revenue percentage, consistent with FL Statutes
- Surtax creates an estimated \$16B over 30 years to pursue \$9B in state and federal funds
- Oversight should be diverse (e.g. economic development, municipal league, etc.)
- Plan to have an all-electric bus fleet by 2035
- "Rapid Transit Zoning" is used for transit corridor planning across jurisdictions
- \$1B in transit investments = 49,000 jobs created
- Flexibility allowed for support of airport master plan projects

Miami-Dade's People Transportation Plan (PTP) & Citizens' Independent Transportation Trust (CITT)

- Ambitious promises were made during the plan's development, but last-minute decisions ultimately resulted in voters approving only a half penny surtax to fund a full penny's plan
- CITT was formed and consists of citizen volunteers to oversee surtax expenditures
- Strong auditing of funds and municipal implementing agencies
- Collected ~\$5B since 2002, with two thirds going to Miami-Dade Transit
- Bulk of ridership is on the bus system – focus where ridership is

South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA)

- 81-mile corridor with 19 stations, 50 trains carrying >15,000 riders daily
- Provides first and last-mile connections from station area, in addition to affordable fares
- 5 to 1 economic return on investment when dollars are spent on public transportation
- Transit Oriented Development (TOD) Policy adopted in 2017 to develop SFRTA lands
- 5 TOD initiatives underway, three of which are in Palm Beach County
- Northern Layover facility will add storage capacity outside of downtown West Palm Beach
- VA Medical Center is next station planned and currently in a feasibility study

Brightline

- 240 passengers on board each hourly train with more coaches ordered to add capacity
- New stations planned for Treasure Coast (now announced as Stuart and Cocoa Beach)
- Working towards St. Lucie River Bridge Replacement and RAISE grant safety project
- Working with Miami-Dade County and Broward County on FEC Commuter Rail Projects