

## 2010 SIS Strategic Plan Update

## Community and Environment Breakout Group Meeting Summary

<b>Meeting Date:</b>	5/6/09	<b>Meeting Time:</b>	8:30-10:30 AM	<b>Type of Meeting:</b>	Teleconference
<p><b>Participants:</b> <u>Leadership Committee members:</u> Janet Bowman (The Nature Conservancy), Charlie Gauthier (Florida Department of Community Affairs), Pat Steed (Florida Regional Councils Association), Matthew Ubben (Florida Trucking Association, designee for Mary Lou Rajchel), Bridget Merrill (Enterprise Florida, Inc., designee for John Adams)</p> <p><u>Observers:</u> Drew Draper (Reynolds, Hills, and Smith)</p> <p><u>Support Staff:</u> Peter McGilvray (FDOT Environmental Management Office, Lead Technical Advisor), Kathy Neill (FDOT Office of Policy Planning), George Ballo (FDOT Environmental Management Office), Mariano Berrios (FDOT Environmental Management Office), Rusty Ennemoser (FDOT Environmental Management Office), Vicki Sharpe (FDOT Environmental Management Office), Yvonne Arens (FDOT Office of Policy Planning), Brian Watts (FDOT Office of Policy Planning), Maria Cahill (FDOT Office of Policy Planning), Dennis Scott (FDOT Safety Office), John Zielinski (FDOT District 5), Teresa Jacobs (FDOT District 5), Brian Pessaro (FDOT District 7 ), Joe Feaster (FDOT District 7), Barbara Davis (Florida Turnpike Enterprise), Ruth Roaza (URS, EMO Consultant Support), Hal Beardall (FCRC-Consensus Center), Rafael Montalvo (FCRC-Consensus Center), Ken Leonard (Cambridge Systematics), John Kalinski (Cambridge Systematics), Sarah Adams, (Cambridge Systematics), Tara Crawford (Cambridge Systematics)</p>					
<b>Agenda</b>	<b>8:30</b>	<b>Welcome and introductions</b>			Rafael Montalvo
		Review Agenda and Teleconference Protocols and Breakout Group Charge			
	<b>8:35</b>	<b>Review Draft Summary of First Teleconference</b>			Rafael Montalvo
	<b>8:40</b>	<b>Background Presentations</b>			
		- <b>Status of Regional Visions</b>			Kathy Neil
		- <b>Climate Change</b>			Kathy Neil
		- <b>Air Quality</b>			Yvonne Arens
		Brief Q&A for each presentation			
	<b>9:15</b>	<b>Review and Refine Initial Draft Policy Statements</b>			Rafael Montalvo
	<b>9:45</b>	<b>Review and Discuss Emerging SIS Designation Criteria</b>			John Kalinski
		o Overview of current Community and Environment Designation Criteria			
		o Identify potential policy changes to the designation criteria for the full Leadership Committee to consider as part of the 2010 SIS Strategic Plan update			
	<b>10:15</b>	<b>Initial Review and Discussion of SIS Goals &amp; Objectives</b>			John Kalinski
		o Overview of current SIS Goals and Objectives			
	<b>10:25</b>	<b>Next Steps and Schedule</b>			Rafael Montalvo
	<b>10:30</b>	<b>Adjourn</b>			Rafael Montalvo

### **Key Discussion Comments:**

The meeting began with issue questions not discussed during the first Breakout Group meeting. Presentations were given concerning the background on these issues. Policy recommendations based on discussions from the first meeting were introduced to the group and discussed.

#### ***Question 3: How can the SIS planning and investment decisions incorporate regional and community visions?***

- Issues coming out of regional visions relevant to SIS are related to the environmental component, especially at the systems level. It is important to link regional visions and knowledge of the local environmental systems in relation to the effects of transportation on those systems.
- There needs to be more detail when honoring future SIS and Emerging SIS commitments. Emerging SIS could be more important in the long-term when considering effects on the environment. It is also important to make the link between regional visions and Emerging SIS facilities for that reason. This has possible implications for identification of future SIS facilities.
- What legal status should/do regional visions have? They have no real legal status unless they come as part of a legal plan such as a Strategic Regional Policy Plan. How can a SIS plan coordinate with a free form visioning exercise? The visions need to be within a legal framework, possibly incorporated into part of the SIS planning process.
- Regional visions that don't have legal weight are of little use.
- Regional visions are not all created equally. How do you take the good thinking in some visions and apply it to the SIS? Which ones should have some kind of standing? Also, how do you deal with regions that cross multiple regional planning council boundaries, or the need to coordinate among regional visions for an interregional corridor? We should understand that regional visions are important and integral to the SIS and the local community. We should focus on how to incorporate them.
- The FTP Steering Committee did not really mandate or legally require regional visions, but thought they were a good thing to do. There were discussions that FDOT should not predefine the regions, but allow the visioning process to be a cooperative effort among the interested parties.
- An implementation strategy could be to take the regional vision and coordinate it with other plans including the MPO planning process, the city and county comprehensive planning processes, and other long range plans. This could help develop the SIS and coordinate among key stakeholders to achieve regional vision integration.
- It is more likely that a regional vision would have standing when they are adopted into a local or MPO plan and even more so into state plans like the SIS. This would show that it is being incorporated into local or state planning processes.
- There is concern that the regional visions that get adopted into the SIS may represent stakeholder buy-in.
- What happens if there is a vision that does not produce good results? Could we have some guidelines for what gives a vision some standing, such as adoption by RPCs, MPOs, etc? It needs to be something more than just a group of people who came together. Also we should encourage regional visions to give some consideration to how they protect the SIS. We briefly discussed this in the FTP process, but

perhaps now we can consider some thresholds and criteria.

- Instead of incorporating the regional visions into the SIS process, we should try to incorporate the regional visions into their respective regional strategic plans.
- Regional plans will eventually be a part of a Strategic Regional Policy Plan and other statewide plans, but we're not there yet.
- There should be an effort to intertwine a certain level of environmental data, including water management districts and nature conservancy information into the SIS as a measure to protect these resources. We should be taking advantage of the wealth of environmental information to be a part of these regional visions in the future and incorporate the data into the SIS process.
- Agree with general direction of dialogue, like the concept that visions should eventually get into comprehensive plans. However, this process can take a number of years.

***Question 2: Should we give greater attention to air quality, climate change, and energy issues in SIS planning and investment decisions? If so, how do we do this?***

- As we move to bio-fuel and other alternative fuels, what are the impacts on air quality? If we reduce carbon content of fuel, does that help air quality?
  - Fuel does not really impact changes in matters of air quality. The alternative fuels will impact carbon emissions but not pollutants. If we want to accomplish both goals we probably need to focus on reducing VMT.
- What factors in the environmental screening criteria does FDOT envision in making this link? What do you have in mind on environmental screening criteria in relation to SIS projects to VMT, etc?
  - It could include factors like the type of transportation facility, for example in terms of a new facility the environmental screening criteria could be used to help determine if the facility is relevant to the regional vision, or if the SIS project is consistent with the regional, state or local plan dealing with greenhouse reduction strategies.
- How many regional visions contain the element on greenhouse gas emissions (GHG)?
  - Some have included at a high level such as Central Florida. The Central Florida visioning effort is more developed in that they looked at air quality and VMT. They dealt with that on proxy measures. Air quality is very important because they are concerned with the non-attainment designation.
- Does non-conformity mean that there is a potential decrease in funding in those non attainment areas across the state?
  - Not a decrease in funding, but a limitation on types of funding. Theoretically, federal funding could be cut off for the non-attainment areas.
- There would be an increase in planning requirements but no additional dollars to ensure that these areas are in compliance with the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). In those non-attainment areas, the type of money that the state receives will change for those jurisdictions. For example, Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality (CMAQ) funding could be used in those non attainment areas for

transit or bicycle/pedestrian projects that could help improve air quality.

- This would be a great vehicle when local governments are considering greenhouse gas (GHG) plans. This could be one avenue to move forward on this issue.
- Other operational improvements should be considered when trying to improve air quality and reduce GHG emissions.
- This indicates a need for stronger emphasis towards transit investment as an alternative to automobile travel; this would help give greater attention to air quality.
- The big picture would be a shift to transit. Transit investment would be a suitable response.
- It's important to consider mass transit investments. FDOT has right-of-way on several corridors reserved for transit investment in the future for rapid travel, for example the I-4 corridor.
- How much does political reality come into play on this? For example the SunRail issue? There was spirited discussion in the legislature on SunRail, not a lot of discussion on air quality, but a lot of discussion on stakeholders that were heavily invested.
- Many people were supportive of the concept of commuter rail in Central Florida. The concern was about the nature of the acquisition and how it would be managed rather than how it could possibly have an impact on air quality.

***Question 1: How can existing processes for community and environmental screening, ETDM, and others be integrated and enhanced to ensure that SIS supports environmental stewardship and community livability goals?***

Draft Recommendations

- A. Continue efforts to integrate the SIS community and environmental screening process and the Efficient Transportation-Decision Making (ETDM) process to ensure early and ongoing partner coordination and sequential consideration of community and environmental issues at all stages of SIS designations, needs identification, projects prioritization and selection, and project development.

*Additional considerations from 1<sup>st</sup> breakout group meeting: are these all captured in the above statement?*

- *Ensure that there is no duplication of effort between SIS community and environmental screening, ETDM, PD&E, and the permitting processes, but rather that these processes leverage the information collected and decisions made in prior processes.*
- *Ensure that all necessary supporting data are shared and integrated into the process.*
- *Ensure that participating agencies have adequate staff resources for data collection, analysis, and coordination.*
- *Consider using SIS designation as a trigger for enhanced partner coordination regarding SIS facilities.*

- B. Continue to apply the SIS community and environmental screening process to all facilities proposed for SIS or Emerging SIS designation, regardless of mode or ownership.

- C. Apply the ETDM process to all SIS projects, regardless of mode or ownership.

*Issues for discussion*

- *How do we extend ETDM in cases in which funding is local and the responsible agency is not DOT/non Federal- e.g., transportation authority projects. Should this be a requirements, or an option with incentives?*
- *How do we extend ETDM to all modes (e.g., freight rail, airport, seaport)?*
- Issue of transportation noise and vibration should be considered in the screening process especially for facilities with heavy truck traffic. This issue is not currently in the recommendations. This is important because overall the SIS facilities carry a lot of traffic, and we are talking about adding a transit component to those facilities, so this issue should be considered. We should encourage the state to adopt a land noise compatibility component. We should require local governments to adopt noise compatible design strategies to protect communities.
- FHWA has been encouraging states to adopt ‘most compatible land uses,’ and this is a good opportunity to address this issue.
- Concern that the first bullet does not emphasize the need for pieces of information that are gathered separately to be used to leverage the process as a whole. We need a stronger statement.
- The difference between the statements is really subtle. Need more clarification.
- Statement A is meant to address leveraging of all the pieces of information into a single process; Statement B recommends continuing the C&E screening for facilities proposed for SIS designation, to include all facilities including Emerging SIS not just SIS facilities; and Statement C encourages the shift in policy for applying ETDM to all SIS projects, not just the ones that use federal and state dollars. Statement C seemed significant enough to separate from the other two.
- There is concern about the recommendations that they may need clarification. Statement A seems more of an integration of processes while Statement B is a continuation of what is being done now. For Statement C how would we bring all SIS projects under ETDM? Agree with these statements but think they could be difficult to operationalize. For example, I support Statement C and think this use of ETDM could be more effective when developing the system, but I understand the practical difficulties of implementing this.
- When the state doesn’t own/operate all designated facilities, how do we bring all projects under ETDM? This is a practical concern that should be addressed.
- Would like to see all the projects go through ETDM, but understand the operational issues behind this.
- Statement C seems like a legislative requirement, not something FDOT could implement.
- There are benefits to the ETDM process. I could see having to go through ETDM as being a criterion for designation on the SIS.
- Potential refinements to the recommendations; Statement A could clarify language to include more integration into one process and Statement C could make ETDM part of the SIS as a criterion.

***Questions & Comments on Emerging SIS Designation Criteria***

- Part of the update process could involve making changes to the criteria themselves.

- Would like to look over the criteria more closely and discuss at the next meeting.
- Under section (a) of the 4<sup>th</sup> measure, we should add: water management districts and conservancy lands.

***Questions & Comments on SIS Goals and Objectives and their relation to the FTP***

- This will be discussed further at the next full group meeting.

**Action Items**

- Send additional comments/questions to Brian Watts, FDOT Office of Policy Planning.
- Post Adopted Community and Environment Screening Criteria for review by committee members.
- Next meeting of the Community and Environment Breakout Group will be at the next Leadership Committee meeting May 19-20, 2009 in Orlando, FL.
- Staff will revise language for draft recommendations based on comments received
- Bridget Merrill volunteered to report on the Breakout Group's progress to the full Leadership Committee. Staff will work with Bridget to prepare a brief presentation for this meeting.
- Meeting summary will be posted online ([www.sisupdate.org](http://www.sisupdate.org)).