Florida’s Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process and Environmental Screening Tool

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Workshop: Managing The NEPA Process for Complex Projects

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Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM)

- A new integrated approach to transportation planning, project development and delivery in Florida.
- A collaborative process involving
  - FDOT
  - Resource Agencies
  - MPOs
  - The Public
- Committed to at the HIGHEST LEVELS
- Process principles incorporated into formalized agreements
Participating agencies agree to a partnership with a common set of goals:

- Produce good transportation projects that address the mobility needs of Florida residents, visitors and commerce
- Simultaneously protect the extremely valuable environmental resources which make Florida unique.
- Do this in a timely manner
Concerns with Traditional Planning Approach

- Environmental considerations not linked to project planning up-front
- 20 Year Time Horizon
  - Forecast traffic
  - Analyze deficiencies in level of service
  - Cost out what it would take to build that “type” of capacity improvement
  - Reconcile total projected costs with total expected revenues
  - Adopt cost feasible plan
Projects in plans not considered in environmental context

- Minimal or no input from resource agencies on potential impacts of the project on the natural and human environment
- Minimal or no recognition of the potential costs of actually building the project in the affected environment
  - Costs to the resource
  - Costs to mitigate
  - Costs to community

Time and resources being spent producing environmental documents; but hasn’t necessarily correlated into producing projects the public perceives as “better” in the end for their community
Goals of The ETDM Process

- Introduce identification and consideration of potential environmental and sociocultural effects of major capacity improvements into the planning process
- Study projects more efficiently
  - Build on input at each stage
  - Don’t continue to invest time and money if fatally flawed
  - Don’t continue to address if a non-issue
- Obtain permits earlier
How is This Accomplished?

- Early, continuous and interactive involvement of resource agencies, public, MPO’s and the FDOT from the planning phase through NEPA approval and permitting.

- Implementation of Planning & Programming “Screens”

- Good documentation throughout project life; project “diary” stays with project

- Use of the Florida Geographic Data Library (FGDL) and GIS based Environmental Screening Tool to enhance analyses of impacts and to record results and decisions made at every phase.
The Problem

Planning input not conveyed to project development

A 5-year gap before NEPA begins

Late agency involvement

Mobility Planning → FDOT 5-Year Work Program → PD&E → DESIGN → PERMITS

FDOT/MPO

FDOT

AGENCIES
ETDM Process

Needs Plans → Long-Range Cost-Feasible Plans → Project Development → Design

Planning Screen → Programming Screen

NEPA Approvals & Permits

Early Environmental Resource Agency and Community Involvement

Earlier Permits
Key Players and Roles

- Environmental Technical Advisory Team
  - Each FDOT District has an ETAT
  - Comprised of representatives from 23 resource agencies
  - ETAT member speaks for agency - responsible for interaction with FDOT
  - Role shifts from planning phase through permit approval
    - Planning Screen: Recommendations
    - Programming Screen: NEPA Scoping
    - Project Development: Coordination
    - Approval/Permits: Coordination
For More Information Visit Our Website

- http://www.dot.state.fl.us/emo

ETDM Public Access Site

- http://etdmpub.fla-etat.org/