



2035 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION (LRTP) FACT SHEET

Introduction

Lee and Collier Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) are currently developing their respective 2035 Regional Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs). The LRTP represents a long-term vision for the counties' transportation systems, in essence, a blueprint for the future. The Plan documents the transportation planning process of each county and ensures proper management and efficient transportation operations as well as complements regional planning initiatives.

Planning Horizon

Federal law requires that the LRTP address a minimum 20-year planning horizon from the last LRTP adoption. Lee MPO completed their LRTP in December 2005 (amended June 2007), while Collier MPO completed their LRTP in January 2006 (amended June 2007). Both of these documents will set the foundation for the 2035 LRTP.

The update process allows each MPO to accurately reassess existing and projected travel conditions and needed improvements based on current economic, population, and socioeconomic data.

Individual vs. Regional Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs)

For this 2035 LRTP update process, a regional approach will be used to identify and satisfy regional transportation needs. Per the requirements of Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act - A Legacy for Users (SAFETEA-LU), regional projects will be identified. Innovative ways to enhance mobility throughout both counties will be sought and regional highways will be identified and documented. This effort will continue until the first public workshop (during Needs Assessment), at which time, all efforts will be individually county-based.

Guidance and Planning Factors

The LRTP must comply with the requirements of the SAFETEA-LU, 23 CFR 450.320 and the eight planning factors described in 23 CFR 450.306(a), as listed below.

1. Support the economic vitality of the metropolitan area, especially by enabling global competitiveness, productivity, and efficiency;
2. Increase the safety of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
3. Increase the security of the transportation system for motorized and non-motorized users;
4. Increase accessibility and mobility of people and freight;

5. Protect and enhance the environment, promote energy conservation, improve the quality of life, and promote consistency between transportation improvements and State and local planned growth and economic development patterns;
6. Enhance the integration and connectivity of the transportation system, across and between modes, for people and freight;
7. Promote efficient system management and operation, and
8. Emphasize the preservation of the existing transportation system.

The degree to which each factor is addressed will vary, depending on the unique conditions of each county. The passage of SAFETEA-LU in 2005 established extensive new resources and opportunities to advance highway safety throughout the country in a comprehensive, strategic manner. SAFETEA-LU addresses the many challenges facing our transportation system today, such as improving safety, reducing traffic congestion, improving efficiency in freight movement, increasing intermodal connectivity, and protecting the environment, as well as laying the groundwork for addressing future challenges.

It is anticipated that the upcoming Clean, Low Emission, Affordable New Transportation Efficiency Act (CLEAN-TEA) will feature similar planning factors as those listed above, with an additional emphasis on greenhouse gas reduction. Where possible, the LRTP will consider this factor as well.

LRTP Process

The following components will be developed during the LRTP planning process for each county. A simplified diagram showing this process is attached.

Identify Goals and Objectives – this effort will set the framework to guide the LRTP. The goals and objectives from the most recent LRTPs will be reviewed and re-evaluated, and used as a base for developing new and/or refined goals and objectives. Combined (bi-county) Goals & Objectives (G&Os) will be filtered through the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), from which countywide Goals & Objectives will be developed.

Develop an Inclusive Public Involvement Plan – this effort documents the public involvement activities to be conducted during the LRTP Update process. The process includes outreach to low-income, minorities, traditionally underserved populations, and tribal efforts, as well as all other citizens of the metropolitan area, throughout the transportation planning process. Using this process, the LRTP documents the overall transportation needs of the metropolitan area and demonstrates how public feedback and input help shape the resulting plan.

Collect and Analyze Data – this effort includes a review of data from existing LRTPs and related documents, traffic model, land uses and socioeconomic conditions to ensure validity. The existing model data (2007) is validated (i.e., its ability to replicate actual travel). As necessary, change the data/inputs that go into traffic model (dwelling units, population, employment, land use, road network characteristics, etc.) to reflect more realistic conditions.

Assess Needs and Identifying a Transportation Vision – this effort assesses needs based on travel demand, financial feasibility, efficient movement (of people and freight) and satisfying the goals and objectives. At this point, an initial set of projects are identified and presented to the public at the first public workshop (planned for the Spring of 2010). The workshop will provide ample opportunities for comment, and help to identify problem areas and projects which concern the public. In essence, it begins to identify the county’s transportation vision.

Define and Develop Projects – this effort entails starting with using the projects from the 2030 LRTP as a base from which to develop 2035 LRTP projects. The Plan will include all modes of transportation, intermodal connections, etc, as well as determine those that are cost feasible (i.e., what can be built based on available funding sources). Also included will be projects that meet a regional demand. This will be helpful to the MPOs when they begin developing their Regional LRTP.

Evaluate Projects Against Goals – this effort helps to determine whether the projects meet the G&Os. Other criteria are considered, including traffic demand, air quality, socioeconomics, environmental impacts, noise, costs, etc. The travel demand model is critical at this point, since it is the most important technical data from which to evaluate. Public comments and input are also a key consideration. This evaluation process will become the initial stages of developing the Cost Feasible Plan.

Recommend Preferred Plan – this effort entails the recommendation of the LRTP, through a collaborative effort between the MPOs and public. The recommended Plan includes all modes of transportation and adheres to federal requirements, as well as meets the criteria of building a “safe and efficient transportation system” within each county.

MPO Board Adopts and Implements the LRTP – the recommended LRTP will be presented to both MPO Boards in late 2010 for adoption. When adopted, the LRTP becomes the document from which individual projects are developed. The Plan may be amended as conditions change and/or if new legislation comes into effect.

LRTP Project Evaluation Criteria

- Update every five (5) years since both Lee and Collier counties are considered “attainment” areas. An attainment area is a zone within which the level of air pollutants is considered to meet United States National Ambient Air Quality Standards.
- Identify transportation facilities (including major roadways, transit, multi-modal and intermodal facilities, pedestrian walkways and bicycle facilities, and intermodal connectors) that function as an integrated system, giving emphasis to facilities that serve national, state, and regional transportation functions.
- Include a discussion of potential environmental mitigation activities, along with potential sites to carry out the activities to be included.
- Include proposed transportation and transit enhancement activities.
- Consult with State and local agencies responsible for land use management, natural resources, environmental protection, conservation, and historic preservation concerning development of the plan.

- Include operational and management strategies to improve the performance of existing transportation facilities to relieve vehicular congestion and maximize the safety and mobility of people and goods.
- Include a financial plan that demonstrates how the adopted transportation plan can be implemented and indicates public and private resources that are reasonably expected to be available to carry out the plan.
- Develop a public participation plan that provides reasonable opportunities for all public and agencies to comment.
- Conduct public meetings at convenient and accessible locations during convenient times; employ visualization techniques to describe plans; and make public information available in an electronically accessible format, such as on the designated project website (www.mpo-swfl.org/CollierLeeMPO.shtml).
- Publish the LRTP and all related documents and make available electronically, such as on the designated project website (www.mpo-swfl.org/CollierLeeMPO.shtml).

Project Schedule

An abbreviated project schedule of major milestones is attached. The project was initiated in February 2009 and is anticipated to take approximately 20 months to complete. As shown, the final 2035 LRTP will be recommended to the MPO Boards in November 2010.

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