



**Transportation
Planning
Organization**

ST. LUCIE URBAN AREA

July 21, 2008

Ms. Stephanie C. Kopelousos
Secretary of Transportation
Florida Department of Transportation
605 Suwannee Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0450

Re: Florida Rail Plan Stakeholders Advisory Committee

Dear Ms. Kopelousos:

The St. Lucie Transportation Planning Organization (St. Lucie TPO) is extremely excited about the possibilities of passenger rail expansion across Florida. We recognize the importance, from many perspectives, of providing transportation alternatives to the automobile to our residents. Protection of the environment, reducing household transportation costs, improving the quality of life, and ensuring the overall sustainability of our communities are only a few of the many benefits that we believe will result from providing alternatives such as passenger rail.

Therefore, it was with great disappointment when we discovered that the *Florida Intercity Passenger Rail Vision Plan, August 2006*, did not include a Proposed Coastal Station in St. Lucie County. With a population size approximately the size of the populations of Indian River and Martin Counties combined and which is projected by 2015 to significantly exceed the size of the those two counties combined, we were surprised that Coastal Stations were proposed for those two counties but not for St. Lucie County.

It was with additional disappointment when we discovered that the St. Lucie TPO does not have a presence on the Florida Rail Plan Stakeholders Advisory Committee. With a deep water port, international airport, and a fixed-route transit system, St. Lucie County certainly qualifies as a stakeholder with regard to the future of rail in Florida. Therefore, we respectfully request membership on this Committee. Fort Pierce City Commissioner Christine Coke has been nominated to represent the St. Lucie TPO on the Committee.

Please contact me at (772) 871-5159 or Peter Buchwald, Executive Director, at (772) 462-1593 should you require any additional information or clarification. We look forward to speaking with you soon.

Sincerely,


Jack Kelly
Chairman, St. Lucie TPO
Vice-Mayor, City of Port St. Lucie

cc: St. Lucie TPO Board Members
Peter Buchwald, Executive Director

Transportation Planning for Ft. Pierce, Port St. Lucie, St. Lucie Village and St. Lucie County