

MODEL REGULATIONS AND PLAN AMENDMENTS FOR MULTIMODAL TRANSPORTATION DISTRICTS

PROBLEM STATEMENT

In 1999, the Florida legislature amended Chapter 163, Florida Statutes, commonly known as the Growth Management Act, authorizing local governments to establish multimodal transportation districts. The purpose of the legislation was to provide a planning tool that Florida communities could use to systematically reinforce community design elements that support walking, bicycling, and transit use. It also enabled Florida communities to advance transportation concurrency—a policy requirement that transportation facilities be available concurrent with the impacts of development—through development of a high quality multimodal environment, rather than the typical approach involving road widening for automobile capacity. Multimodal transportation districts (MMTDs) are to be carried out through local comprehensive plans, land development regulations, and capital improvements programs.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of this project is to develop model land development regulations and comprehensive plan amendments that local governments can use and adapt to promote multimodal transportation systems and development patterns, while advancing access management objectives.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This project involved the review of existing plans and practices to discover the various approaches communities are using to create safe, comfortable, and attractive pedestrian environments with convenient interconnection to transit. A best practices approach was then used to develop land development regulations and comprehensive plan amendments for local governments to use as a model in creating or updating their own documents. The final report begins with a brief summary of Florida Department of Transportation's Multimodal Transportation Districts and Quality of Service Handbook that provides guidance on the designation and planning of MMTDs as provided in Florida's growth management legislation along with information in regard to developing a community profile. The report also stresses the importance of providing incentives to developers and monitoring the progress of the MMTD.

The model plan amendments include a plan objective and twenty supporting policies. The objective is to "establish multimodal transportation districts (MMTD) within the community where secondary priority is placed on vehicle mobility and primary priority is placed on providing a safe, comfortable and attractive environment for pedestrians and bicyclists with convenient access to transit, thereby encouraging the use of multiple modes of transportation and leading to a reduction in automobile use and vehicle miles traveled." The supporting policies

establish designation criteria, and procedures then cover various factors within the district such as land use, street design and connectivity, parking, transit, bicycles, and pedestrians.

The model land development regulations are intended to implement the policies established as plan amendments. Topics addressed include general requirements, land use, street network and connectivity, traffic calming, parking, transit facilities, sidewalks and pedestrian facilities, bicycle facilities, amenities and design, application requirements and incentives.

BENEFITS

This project provides local governments with the basic comprehensive plan amendments and model land development regulations to implement multimodal transportation districts as established by the legislature in 1999. This document places attention on multimodal needs often left out of the development process and provides local governments with a readily available practical model. The resulting multimodal transportation districts are expected to encourage the use of alternative modes of transportation and ultimately result in a reduction of vehicle miles traveled. This document also provides a readily acceptable template for local government to implement any coordinated non-automobile oriented improvements.

This research project was conducted by Kristine Williams and Karen Seggerman, of the Center for Urban Transportation Research, at the University of South Florida. For more information, contact Martin Guttenplan, Project Manager, at (850) 414-4906, martin.guttenplan@dot.state.fl.us .