

*Stalling Sprawl:
A Transportation Reform Initiative*

*A Three Year Project Funded By
The Surdna Foundation
With Assistance from The Energy Foundation*

*1000 Friends of Florida
Post Office Box 5948
Tallahassee, Florida 32312*

December 1997

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Florida faces fundamental problems with its transportation planning process, including failure to adequately recognize the interrelationship between transportation systems and land use decisions, failure to take into account the effects of transportation decisions on the environment and on quality of life, and the need for greater and more meaningful public participation in making decisions regarding transportation and land use.

To better address these problems, 1000 Friends of Florida initiated a three-year transportation reform initiative in 1994, which concluded in the fall of 1997. The study was funded by The Surdna Foundation and The Energy Foundation for the first two years, and solely by The Surdna Foundation for the third and final year. The goal of the project was:

To establish a policy and citizen participation framework, encouraging sustained consideration of transportation and land use linkages and solutions. Where possible, specific projects will be used to demonstrate the effectiveness of citizen participation and/or the viability of non-traditional transportation solutions.

1000 Friends of Florida selected two demonstration areas—the Orlando urban area, located in central Florida, and the Loxahatchee region north of the West Palm Beach urban area. These two areas, in different stages of growth and development, offered a variety of opportunities for the study. 1000 Friends of Florida developed the framework for an integrated transportation planning process which could be utilized by areas in any stage of development throughout the state and the nation.

1000 Friends' transportation reform initiative was more process oriented than project oriented, focusing on establishing a policy and citizen participation framework to promote the consideration of transportation and land use linkages. This allowed for improving the transportation planning and decision making process, transportation modeling, and land use policies to better reflect the interrelationship between transportation and land use. Over the course of the study, a viable framework was established to serve as a model for other areas struggling with transportation and land use issues: citizen participation, government advocacy, public education, and specific projects.

1. Citizen participation was the major activity of the study, because effective citizen participation is a fundamental element of the transportation planning process. The public is the most affected by transportation decisions and should have a major voice in the decision making process. Meaningful public participation in the planning process is key to implementing successful transportation reform. To accomplish this goal, 1000 Friends of Florida worked to establish citizen coalitions in the two study areas, and to establish new forums for public involvement in transportation planning throughout the state.

2. Government advocacy focused on all four levels of government: federal, state, regional, and local. On the federal level, the reauthorization of the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act (ISTEA) was promoted. On the state, regional and local levels, activities centered on the policies, procedures, regulations and codes which concern transportation and land use planning.
3. Public education focused on informing the public about the transportation decision making process, the policies which govern that process, and the linkages between transportation, land use and the environment.
4. Specific projects involved monitoring land use patterns and individual transportation projects from a regional perspective, because the resulting impacts of projects are often widespread, crossing political boundaries and jurisdictions. The focus was on the two study areas of Orlando and Loxahatchee.

Accomplishments

The three-year transportation reform initiative brought about significant improvement to the transportation planning process, both at the state level and in the two study areas. At the state level, the Florida Department of Transportation requested assistance and input into the state long range transportation plan. 1000 Friends made recommendations and FDOT incorporated changes related to improving citizen participation, strengthening the role of local comprehensive plans in the decision making process, and allowing greater use of flexible design standards and other techniques to help reduce adverse impacts of projects. The inclusion of these factors is a major accomplishment and illustrates a shift in standard policies and procedures.

1000 Friends of Florida also worked with the Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Committee (MPOAC), the state umbrella organization for the local Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). Solely through the efforts of 1000 Friends of Florida, the MPOAC included language in their mission statement addressing the importance of the linkages between transportation and land use. The committee also included a goal in their strategic plan to recognize these linkages.

To generate greater understanding of the linkages between transportation, land use and the environment, 1000 Friends of Florida participated in numerous workshops and seminars. Recognizing the need for need for easily-understandable materials on transportation planning, 1000 Friends developed and widely distributed informational material. These included *The Dictionary of Transportation Acronyms*, providing a translation of the universally used acronyms in the transportation field, and *Merge Lanes Ahead*, a series of nine fact sheets dealing with the links between transportation, land use, and the environment. The Fall 1996 issue of 1000 Friends' newsletter, *Foresight*, included a lead article on traditional neighborhood development, and the Winter 1997 issue is devoted to the transportation reform initiative. 1000 Friends has also produced short, simple guide to citizen participation for general distribution. All of these materials are also on 1000 Friends of Florida's web site at www.1000fof.usf.edu.

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1000 Friends of Florida played an active role in advocating for the reauthorization of the federal ISTEA legislation, and will to push for its adoption in 1998. Much of 1000 Friends' work, however, focused on bringing about change at the local level, to provide a model for other communities struggling with transportation planning and citizen participation.

Orlando—In Orlando, the impetus for the formation of the citizens group was project specific. 1000 Friends worked with a citizens group, the I-4 Environmental Advisory Committee (I-4 EAC), to proactively insert meaningful citizen input into the design and development of proposed improvements along the Interstate 4 corridor. Although the group began as corridor specific, in the later stages of the project it would expand to examine other issues of regional concern.

Comprised of representatives from local governments, the regional planning council, the water management districts, involved federal and state agencies, and environmental and citizen activists groups, this diverse group focused its immediate attention on identifying community and environmental planning issues raised by the I-4 Master Plan, and to bring about changes in future design where needed. The broader goal of the group was to illustrate to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) that citizen participation can occur in a cooperative manner, early in the stages of a project when the recommendations made by citizens, meeting outside the formal public hearing process, can be incorporated into the design.

Over the course of the three-year project, the I-4 EAC expanded its membership from an Orlando urban area base, which included Orange and Seminole Counties, to a more regional one, including members from the adjacent counties of Volusia and Osceola. The committee provided recommendations to FDOT on the I-4 Master Plan. FDOT accepted these recommendations, representing a radical departure from the normal public participation process, both in the timing and the structure of the citizen involvement.

FDOT received positive feedback from the Federal Highway Administration regarding the I-4 EAC, and with the conclusion of 1000 Friends' transportation reform initiative, has taken on the formal responsibility for scheduling and maintaining its activities of the I-4 EAC. FDOT has committed to working with the I-4 EAC on the PD&E studies of the I-4 corridor. There are also opportunities for involvement by the I-4 EAC in other transportation planning activities including the proposed light rail system, running from Seminole County to Orlando, currently under study. 1000 Friends of Florida will continue to encourage FDOT to use the I-4 EAC as a citizen participation model in other parts of the state.

Loxahatchee—1000 Friends of Florida laid the groundwork for establishing a citizens group in the Loxahatchee region in the first year by identifying primary issues, public forums, local activists, staff and elected officials. The Loxahatchee Citizens Transportation Coalition (LCTC) was formed and began meeting in the second year of the project. Originally composed of nine representatives from Martin County and nine representatives from Palm Beach County, the initial focus was the inter-county road dispute between these counties and the adjacent Town of Jupiter and City of Tequesta.

1000 Friends facilitated meetings with diverse interest groups, regional planners, and environmental specialists to highlight transportation and land use linkages. After several meetings of the LCTC, the affected local governments agreed to initiate a mediation process to further address transportation and land use issues in the region. 1000 Friends emphasized the need for citizen involvement in the mediation process, monitored the proceedings, and provided input to members of the LCTC and the mediator regarding non-traditional transportation solutions. During the second year, 1000 Friends of Florida also organized a meeting with project consultants from the Florida Overland eXpress (FOX) to present information to the group about the high speed rail proposal and to receive public comment.

In the third year of the study, the focus of the group shifted to Martin County due to citizen interest and the scaling back of resources because of the unanticipated loss of funding from the Energy Foundation. The LCTC continued actively reviewing transportation and land use proposals and issues potentially affecting the community and natural resources in the region. Members of the LCTC were active in the development of the Martin County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan, and laid the groundwork to provide input into the Florida Department of Community Affairs' "Sustainable Communities Demonstration Project" proposed to begin in Martin County in 1998.

Over the course of the project, policy level changes were brought about in the Loxahatchee area, reflecting that positive change will continue beyond the three-year initiative. Martin County recently requested letters of interest from consultants to perform a comprehensive land use and transportation planning analysis within the county. The transportation and land use linkages are to be considered a major factor in the analysis, as well as the consideration of nontraditional transportation solutions. The inclusion of these linkages and nontraditional solutions are a result of the efforts initiated by the study. This, along with the Sustainable Communities Demonstration Project, offers the opportunity for the LCTC to stay involved in dealing with transportation and land use issues and alternative modes of transportation.

Lessons Learned

There are several valuable lessons learned from the transportation reform initiative. The transportation planning process is regulated by policies from all levels of government, which makes it extremely time-consuming to bring about change. Recognition within the process of how transportation and land use decisions affect each other is vital to any change and a strong, meaningful citizens participation effort should be the most fundamental element of the process.

It is only with fundamental changes in the process that transportation proposals will be more responsive to the needs of citizens and more responsible in dealing with developmental impacts. This shift in the process should come from working within the system and the most effective way to accomplish this change should come from a cooperative stance, rather than an adversarial position. Making progress in changing the process can seem to be very slow, and can be very discouraging. However, it is through committed, long term, meaningful citizen participation that change will occur.

Beyond the Transportation Reform Initiative

With the end of the three-year project, 1000 Friends of Florida will no longer be directly involved in managing and directing the citizen participation efforts implemented in the Orlando and Loxahatchee areas. A framework for sustained activities and citizen involvement was established, however, and 1000 Friends will continue to offer support and assistance to these groups. Hopefully, this framework will be used as a model to establish active citizen coalitions in other urban areas. 1000 Friends has developed reader-friendly materials to share this model with others.

Government advocacy activities will also continue by 1000 Friends of Florida. On the federal level, 1000 Friends will continue its advocacy for ISTEA reauthorization. On the state level, advocacy for improving the planning process through policy changes and better, more meaningful citizen participation will continue. Advocacy for addressing land use and transportation linkages will continue on both the local and state level, as well as promoting change or removal of regulations impeding more responsible developments.

Through the transportation reform initiative, 1000 Friends of Florida has laid a firm foundation for bringing about positive change in transportation planning in Florida. We will continue to work hard to share this model with other communities around Florida and across the nation. Only with greater citizen participation will we be able to effectively deal with the transportation pressures that have such a major impact on our natural resources and quality of life.

INTRODUCTION

As with most states, Florida faces fundamental problems with its transportation planning process. Traditionally, these problems have included failure to adequately recognize the interrelationship between transportation systems and land use decisions, failure to take into account the effects of transportation decisions on the environment and on quality of life, and the need for greater and more meaningful public participation in making decisions regarding transportation and land use. Transportation decisions not only shape the transportation system and the environment, but also affect the overall development of communities. They have a major impact on the quality of life today, as well as the future.

To better address these problems, 1000 Friends of Florida initiated a three-year transportation reform initiative which began in 1994 and concluded in the fall of 1997. The study was funded by The Surdna Foundation and The Energy Foundation for the first two years, and solely by The Surdna Foundation for the third and final year. The goal of the project was:

To establish a policy and citizen participation framework, encouraging sustained consideration of transportation and land use linkages and solutions. Where possible, specific projects will be used to demonstrate the effectiveness of citizen participation and/or the viability of non-traditional transportation solutions.

1000 Friends of Florida selected two demonstration areas—the Orlando urban area, located in central Florida, and the Loxahatchee region, located on the Atlantic Coast north of the West Palm Beach urban area. These two areas, in different stages of growth and development, offered a variety of opportunities for the study. 1000 Friends of Florida envisioned developing the framework for an integrated transportation planning process which could be utilized by areas in any stage of development throughout the state.

Orlando/Orange County, a highly urbanized area, has experienced tremendous growth and development over the last twenty-five years. The project approach for this highly developed area required, to some degree, a "retrofit" effort in dealing with planning issues. The Loxahatchee region, which includes the southern portion of Martin County and the northern portion of Palm Beach County, is on the front line of growth moving up the east coast from the Palm Beach region. This area is just beginning to experience the type of growth other areas have been dealing with for the last several years, particularly in the southern portion of Palm Beach County. The Loxahatchee region has the opportunity to better integrate land use and transportation planning before the rapid growth and development take place.

However, both demonstration areas are coping with issues common to any developing region, whether the growth is in the earlier or latter stages. Orlando and the Loxahatchee region are either continuing, or beginning to experience, rapid growth with sprawling land use patterns. Both are dealing with the issue of fragmentation of area communities, as well as with environmental issues related to rapid growth and development. Both have faced a lack of a regional focus, with transportation projects generally seen as local in scope, with no consideration of how the project might impact neighboring areas. Both of the areas, like the majority of other urban areas in Florida, are heavily reliant on roads and automobiles as the major transportation mode and option.

1000 Friends' transportation reform initiative was more process oriented than project oriented, and focused on establishing a policy and citizen participation framework to promote the consideration of transportation and land use linkages. This allowed for a modification of the transportation planning and decision making process, transportation modeling, and the land use policies to reflect the interrelationship between transportation and land use decisions.

Over the course of the study, a framework was established to provide a model for other urban areas within the state and the nation: citizen participation, government advocacy, public education, and specific projects.

1. Citizen Participation--1000 Friends' overriding goal was to establish a policy and citizen participation framework that encouraged the sustained consideration of transportation, environmental, and land use linkages. 1000 Friends identified forums for decision making on the key issues facing each study area, and opportunities for citizen participation in the decision making process. 1000 Friends also focused on modifying the transportation planning process to allow for a more involved and effective citizen participation effort.
2. Government Advocacy--There are two ways to bring about change in the transportation planning process. The first is on a project by project basis, which is generally more adversarial in approach and usually not very successful. The second requires a change in policy, emphasizing the need to address fundamental land use issues and to promote cooperative and proactive involvement with transportation and land use projects. Changes in policy can be accomplished through a cooperative effort, and will then be more effective over the long term. 1000 Friends focused on bringing about policy change.

Government advocacy focused on all four levels of government--federal, state, regional and local. Each level of government has its realm of impact on transportation and land use decisions, and in order to make any significant changes in the planning process, all of the governmental entities must be willing partners. Only with advocacy on *all of these levels* can changes in processes and policies be accomplished.

Federal Level--The major policy issues affecting any type of transportation planning reform occur on the federal level. Federal legislation provides funding distribution guidelines to the state Departments of Transportation. The 1991 Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency

Act (ISTEA), a piece of landmark legislation, for the first time provided funding for innovative transportation solutions, as well as requiring improved citizen participation in transportation decision making. ISTEA also recognized the linkages between transportation, land use and environmental issues. The ISTEA legislation, currently under congressional debate for renewal, allows funding for nontraditional and innovative transportation solutions, as well as providing dedicated funding for modes of transportation other than the automobile. Because of its importance, 1000 Friends of Florida has actively advocated for its renewal.

State Level--While the federal level deals with the overall funding of transportation systems, it is incumbent upon state government to set the policies and procedures within the federal guidelines for transportation planning. It is also up to the state to determine, again within federal guidelines, funding levels for individual areas and projects. Advocacy on the state level is extremely important to the transportation planning and decision making process. The majority of the state level advocacy initiatives centered on monitoring issues which could affect transportation and land use decisions throughout the state, and within the two study areas. 1000 Friends remains committed to working with numerous other civic and not-for-profit organizations in our advocacy role.

Regional Level--Often ignored is the regional level, which provides the opportunity to look at planning issues from a broader perspective. 1000 Friends of Florida constantly reinforced the need for a regional focus in transportation planning, and provided educational materials to both citizen groups and regional planning entities to reinforce that linkage.

Local Level--Local governments and the local planning structures play a vital role in the transportation and land use decisions that are made. It is on the local level that transportation and land use decisions can be most affected. However, in order to make good decisions, local citizens must be well informed. Local level government advocacy centered mainly on the MPO planning process and citizen participation activities.

3. Public Education--The transportation planning process can be very difficult to understand, even for transportation advisory board members and elected and citizen members on the MPOs, so the educational activities were very important. It was essential to learn how information was disseminated concerning transportation and land use activities within the demonstration areas, and to form strategies for informing and educating the political leaders and the general public in the most efficient and understandable manner concerning these issues. This included developing reader-friendly material on transportation planning.
4. Specific Projects--1000 Friends of Florida recognized the importance of nurturing active citizen participation in specific projects crucial to each area. 1000 Friends worked to establish and strengthen citizen groups so they could play a meaningful role in refining and improving proposed transportation projects.

YEAR ONE: 1994 - 1995

The first year of the project was planned as the "get acquainted" year. The issues pertinent to each study area had to be recognized and understood, in order to develop the most viable approach to deal with those issues. The primary goal was to build a foundation for the more involved transportation reform activities and initiatives planned for the last two years of the project.

First Year Activities and Accomplishments

In the first year, most of the activities were targeted toward building the necessary foundation for a successful study. Many of the activities within the four defined areas of citizen participation, government advocacy, public education, and specific projects overlapped, due to the interrelationships inherent in the transportation planning process. The activities and accomplishments during the first year are as follows:

1. *Advocated for ISTEA*--In Florida, discussions concerning reauthorization of ISTEA versus new or amended transportation legislation have focused on the inequitable funding distribution among states and how changes in the legislation could result in funding gains for the state. However, this issue has obscured the fact that reauthorization of the ISTEA legislation is crucial to the continued progress made in responsible transportation planning.

To promote reauthorization of the bill, information was distributed which encouraged citizens and organizations, particularly in the two study areas, to contact congressional leaders serving on federal transportation committees. 1000 Friends of Florida co-sponsored press conferences dealing with this issue, and participated in other media activities promoting reauthorization. 1000 Friends of Florida worked with national organizations, such as the Surface Transportation Policy Project (STPP), Friends of the Earth, National Center for Economic Security Alternatives, Road-Rip, and World Watch to promote the reauthorization. 1000 Friends of Florida also worked with these organizations to promote continued citizen participation in the transportation decision making process, and consideration of transportation and land use linkages.

At the request of US Senator Bob Graham's office, 1000 Friends of Florida reviewed proposals to streamline environmental permitting and public involvement procedures through ISTEA legislation. The Local Growth Management Incentives Act was also reviewed with Senator Graham and his staff, and the need for improving citizen participation in the early stages of transportation planning were emphasized in both instances.

2. *Established a presence within the study areas*--Most of the activities in the first year focused on some facet of citizen participation. 1000 Friends of Florida worked to establish a presence in the study areas, making contact with political and community leaders, as well as with the staff members of involved agencies. Networking with key people in the transportation profession and the general public was important in establishing a presence.

Various state regulatory and planning agencies and organizations were informed about the project, its focus on transportation and planning issues, and the linkages between transportation and land use decisions. 1000 Friends of Florida established lines of communication with these state agencies and organizations that were directly involved with transportation planning. 1000 Friends of Florida promoted understanding of the interrelationships between transportation and land use, and advocated for the recognition of these linkages in the policies and procedures of these agencies and organizations. 1000 Friends of Florida also actively encouraged the involved agencies to recognize the vital importance of public participation.

3. *Learned the issues and collected information*--The next vital step was to understand the issues facing the study areas. Both study areas faced problems specific to their areas, as well as general transportation and land use issues faced by every urbanized region. In order to understand these issues, reference materials were collected and analyzed to establish a good database for dealing with transportation and land use planning.
4. *Developed a regional perspective*--Transportation and land use issues are not constrained by political jurisdictions. Likewise, the impacts of those decisions do not stop at the political boundaries. In making these decisions, impacts on the region must be addressed, not just the impacts on the specific corridor. Recognizing this fact, efforts were made at any available forum to explain and promote the idea of having a regional perspective in making transportation and land use decisions.
5. *Established and nurtured citizens groups*-- In both study areas, the need was recognized for more meaningful citizen input and participation in the transportation and land use planning process. Both Orlando and the Loxahatchee areas were undergoing tremendous growth and development pressures which were linked with the existing transportation system and future decisions. It was viewed as critical that the public knows, understands, and is involved in the process. In order to accomplish this goal, work was begun to establish working citizens groups in both areas.

Orlando--In the Orlando area, the impetus for the citizens group was corridor specific. The I-4 Environmental Advisory Committee (I-4 EAC) was established to proactively insert meaningful citizen input into the design and development of proposed Interstate-4 corridor improvements. While the group began as corridor specific, it provided the forum to examine other issues of concern within the region.

This committee was comprised of representatives from local government, the regional planning council, the water management district, involved federal agencies, and various citizen environmental and activist groups. The immediate goal was to identify community and environmental planning issues impacted by Interstate 4 and to bring about changes in the final design. The broad goal of 1000 Friends of Florida was to illustrate to FDOT that effective

citizen participation can occur in a cooperative manner, rather than in the traditional public hearing process or from an adversarial relationship.

The committee advocated that the design of I-4 should support, rather than fragment, any of the communities it traverses. The committee also supported the inclusion of any appropriate multi-modal aspects, including HOV lanes and light rail. The I-4 EAC also promoted examining the impact of the I-4 project on the entire region, rather than focusing solely on the corridor impacts.

A significant aspect of the I-4 EAC is that it provided recommendations about community and environmental planning issues impacted by the proposed expansion of Interstate-4. It allowed for citizen input in the early stages of the project, even before the design phase. It also is significant that this input occurred outside of the normal participation process, which is the formal public hearing.

Loxahatchee--The Loxahatchee region includes both Martin and Palm Beach Counties, multiple local jurisdictions, and two Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs). Many of the problems faced by this area were regional in scope. Traditional transportation planning generally focuses its efforts within political boundaries, but in reality the impacts of projects transcend jurisdictional lines and affect the entire region. In order to address this problem, the groundwork was laid to form the Loxahatchee Citizens Transportation Coalition (LCTC).

The proposed LCTC was seen as a regional citizens group made up of representatives from both counties to fill the need in the region for a citizens group capable of proactively affecting the transportation and land use issues in the region. One broad goal of the LCTC was to insure that effective citizen participation was included in the early stages of all transportation decisions. Another focus was to provide the mechanism for organizing this participation and to provide a regional perspective. The LCTC was also proposed as the forum to bring citizens from both counties together to discuss issues and projects of regional importance.

6. *Advocated, advised, reviewed and monitored various land use issues*--The study recognized that land use is one of the critical elements facing both rapidly developing and highly developed areas. Because of its importance, land use issues were monitored and reviewed. Traditional neighborhood developments often face many impediments due to various codes and regulations. However, these types of neighborhood developments usually contribute less to sprawl than typical development. 1000 Friends of Florida worked with several developers in reviewing and advising on the traditional neighborhood developments in Martin and Palm Beach Counties, including SeaWinds and Abacoa. Meetings were also held with local elected officials to promote traditional neighborhood developments and the recognition of the need for mixed use ordinances. In Orange County, 1000 Friends reviewed the Horizons West Development of Regional Impact and specifically the Village Land Use Category which promoted traditional neighborhood development.

As a result of the study efforts, 1000 Friends of Florida was invited to help draft the state land plan. 1000 Friends of Florida strongly and successfully advocated for the inclusion of language supporting land use patterns which do not rely exclusively on cars and which provides clear links between transportation and land use. The state also requested advice on the traditional neighborhood development issue.

7. *Worked with Florida Department of Transportation and other groups on transportation issues*--A recognition of the interrelationship between transportation, land use and the environment is crucial to managing development and growth. 1000 Friends of Florida worked with an alliance of environmental organizations to encourage the inclusion of transportation issues in their organizational focus.

Due to the efforts of the project, the Florida Department of Transportation requested assistance and input into the 2020 Florida Transportation Plan, the long range plan for the state transportation system. Recommendations were made and accepted by FDOT, and three major factors concerning the transportation decision making process were included in the plan as a result of the involvement of 1000 Friends. These three factors are as follows:

- Citizen participation is an inherent part of the transportation planning process
- FDOT will consider the objectives set forth in local comprehensive plans in the decision making process
- FDOT will consider the use of flexible design standards and other techniques to help reduce project impacts and make more livable communities.

The fact that FDOT included these three factors is a major accomplishment and illustrates the shift in the standard policies and procedures in the transportation planning process. The FDOT also requested assistance in the development of the short range transportation plan, which translates the broad goals and objectives set forth in the long range plan into policies and work items to be accomplished over a five-year period.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requested that FDOT summarize the public participation efforts initiated by this study in the Orlando and Loxahatchee areas. Through this request, the FHWA recognized these activities as a valid model for public participation and citizen involvement which could be utilized in other urban areas across the nation.

8. *Conducted public education efforts.* As part of the educational initiative, 1000 Friends co-sponsored a seminar with the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council. This seminar dealt with bicycle and pedestrian planning and other issues pertinent to alternative transportation modes. 1000 Friends of Florida also assisted with a planning charette for Martin County. Sponsored by the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, the charette dealt with the development of 90,000 acres in the southern part of the county.

Lessons Learned in the First Year

In the project's first year, several major accomplishments were achieved, but problems were also encountered. The scope of the project was enormous, and really required more than one staff person. At the onset of the project, it was felt that the staff member should be permanently located in Tallahassee in order to provide easy contact with the involved state agencies, and visit the demonstration areas periodically. However, because of the amount of local contact found necessary, the need for a staff member to be available at all times in the demonstration areas was recognized. Ideally, a project of this magnitude would have a staff member in each demonstration area, in addition to the staff member located in Tallahassee.

Another important lesson learned during the first year was flexibility. When dealing with the many different organizations, governments, and agencies involved in the project, the ability to be flexible was essential. Political shifts, changes in proposed projects, and new proposals are just a few of the contributing factors for the need for versatility.

A major problem in the Loxahatchee region was the sheer number of governments located in the area. As noted earlier, the region contains two counties, two Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO) and numerous local governments. Gaining a consensus on how to respond to development and growth issues was a challenge, as each entity had their own version of "good" growth. A shift in the political balance in the Loxahatchee region—from an environmental and planning focus to a more development-oriented approach—also created a problem. This shift presented some problems in gaining and maintaining the support of those in the political realm. Another problem was the difficulty in getting the average citizen to understand the complicated transportation planning process. There was also difficulty in explaining the linkages between land use and transportation decisions in a clear and understandable manner.

YEAR TWO: 1995 -1996

The second year of the project focused on the continuation of the efforts begun in year one. The major issues in the two demonstration areas were identified. It was a major goal of the study in the second year to strengthen public understanding of the interrelationships between transportation and land use decisions. The citizen group established in the Orlando area began to have a very definite role in the decision making process and the formation of the citizens group in Loxahatchee came to fruition. As new concerns in the two areas surfaced, the two groups were able to address those new issues and participate in the process in a viable way. The project also focused on changing perceptions, as well as policies, at the statewide level. For the study to be successful, it was imperative that the state agencies involved in transportation and land use planning did not carry on "business as usual."

Activities and Accomplishments in the Second Year

The foundation for a more responsive transportation planning process was laid in the first year of the study. That foundation was critical in the success of the activities of the second year. The specific activities and accomplishments are as follows:

1. *Advocated for ISTEA-1000* Friends of Florida continued to promote reauthorization through communications with the US Department of Transportation Secretary Frederico Pena and his staff. Funding from ISTEA for the Orlando Light Rail Transit Program rather than the Western Beltway was also promoted.
2. *Strengthened mission statement of the Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC)*—Comprised of MPO staff and elected officials from all of the MPOs in Florida, the MPOAC provides leadership to all of the MPOs in the state. Solely through the efforts of 1000 Friends of Florida, the MPOAC agreed to include in its mission statement language addressing the linkages between transportation and land use. A specific goal of recognizing these linkages was also included in the strategic plan. The inclusion of this language and the specific goal represented an extreme policy shift for the council. Due to the top-down nature of the governmental structure in the state, including this language was very important and is expected to have long term effects.
3. *Developed and disseminated public information and education materials*—The need for clear and understandable materials explaining the transportation planning process and its associated issues was defined. To address this need, 1000 Friends of Florida developed informational materials for widespread distribution.

The Dictionary of Transportation Acronyms or H.A.D.-Help for the Acronym Disadvantaged—The transportation profession probably makes use of more acronyms than any other discipline. Many citizens, as well as many elected officials and representatives on transportation advisory boards, do not know what every acronym means. Thus, the need for the dictionary was identified. It is a valuable tool in wading through the "alphabet soup" of transportation jargon.

Merge Lanes Ahead—The linkages between transportation, land use decisions and the environment were an important facet of the study. In order to more clearly define those issues, a series of nine reader-friendly fact sheets, each addressing a pertinent portion of the issue, were developed. They were widely distributed through statewide organizations, community coalitions, elected officials, transportation and planning staff and community groups, and presentations were made to interested groups. The series was also distributed at the *Rail-Volution Seminar* in Washington, DC, the *Transportation/Land Use Symposium* in Orlando, and the *Creating More Liveable Communities: An Eastern United States Conference* in Miami.

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4. *Prepared case studies*--1000 Friends of Florida began working on case studies of three large scale development projects incorporating elements of a traditional neighborhood development. The projects include Horizon West in Orange County, SeaWinds in Martin County and Abacoa in northern Palm Beach County. The focus of these case studies was to identify specific impediments to alternative land use patterns and mixed use ordinances. The reports, currently in draft form, highlight the primary constraints found in developing traditional neighborhood developments, which include issues such as financing, market demand, land use and planning regulations, transportation planning and concurrency, and environmental regulations.
5. *Prepared newsletter article about traditional neighborhood developments*--In the Fall 1996 issue of 1000 Friends of Florida's newsletter, *Foresight*, several traditional neighborhood developments were highlighted in an effort to promote this type of development. The newsletter addressed the specific benefits of this type of development, as well as identifying the major deterrents.
6. *Undertook citizen participation activities*--Activities in the two study areas continued, and centered on the two citizen groups which were dealing with specific projects underway in their areas, as well as focusing on regional issues. The goal was to continue efforts to empower citizens and foster meaningful citizen involvement in transportation planning.

Orlando--The I-4 Environmental Advisory Committee continued to work with the Florida Department of Transportation to review the I-4 Master Plan. The I-4 EAC provided written comments to FDOT with recommendations on the environmental and community issues. This report also included design recommendations to minimize some of the impacts. This review was a radical departure from the normal citizen participation process.

The membership of the I-4 EAC was also expanded to include representatives from the adjacent counties of Volusia and Osceola. This expansion occurred because of citizen interest within those counties in the I-4 EAC and its activities. The I-4 master plan project directly impacts these counties, and addressing all of the impacts and issues of the project became a regional effort.

A light rail system serving the Orlando area was proposed and is currently under study. 1000 Friends of Florida and the I-4 EAC fully supported the proposal and participated in the Light Rail Project Advisory Committee.

Loxahatchee--The Loxahatchee Citizens Transportation Coalition, with nine members from Martin County and nine members from Palm Beach County, was formally established in the second year of the project. This group, which had very diverse interests, focused its attention on land use, transportation, and environmental issues.

One issue with regional impacts was a proposed route between the two counties to increase

capacity of north/south traffic movement. 1000 Friends of Florida and the LCTC recognized the need for mediation and began discussing the issues involved with the proposal. Members of the LCTC were directly involved with the mediation process and 1000 Friends of Florida provided information and input to these members and to the mediator in order to address citizen concerns and promote possible solutions.

Various meetings were held by the LCTC to discuss the issues facing the region. Future land use patterns, growth and development, and transportation and land use linkages were examined and discussed. The LCTC also worked with other organizations to promote the use of alternative solutions to transportation problems. The LCTC participated in the creation of the Martin County Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan. 1000 Friends of Florida worked with the members of the LCTC who served on the Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee to encourage more innovative bicycle and pedestrian plans. The LCTC also reviewed the Florida Overland eXpress (FOX) high speed rail project as it related to the region. The LCTC helped sponsor a public information meeting concerning the proposed corridor, station locations, project cost, environmental impacts, and projected ridership.

7. *Monitored various land use and development issues and projects*—Many development regulations and codes do not allow traditional neighborhood developments. The development regulations in the areas were reviewed, and the impediments to this type of neighborhood design were identified. 1000 Friends of Florida advocated at every opportunity for changes which would allow these types of land use patterns. 1000 Friends of Florida also monitored the Abacoa project, worked with the developer of SeaWinds in Martin County to promote traditional neighborhood development, and met with local elected officials and staff to promote these types of development and mixed use ordinances.

The Limestone Creek Recreational Greenway project, located in northern Palm Beach County, is impacted by the inter-county dispute concerning the proposal to increase north/south traffic capacity. This project also points out the need for alternative and innovative transportation solutions. 1000 Friends of Florida worked with the Conservation Fund, the Land Trust of Palm Beach County, Palm Beach County local elected officials and staff, and state land buying groups to organize a specific plan to implement this greenway project.

The Treasure Coast Strategic Regional Policy Plan, including Palm Beach, Martin, St. Lucie, and Indian River Counties, was reviewed. 1000 Friends of Florida promoted the inclusion of traditional neighborhood developments and mixed use zoning provisions in the plan.

In the Orlando area, the Western Beltway project, sponsored by the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority, advanced. This proposed toll road is to be located on the western side of Orlando, outside of the urban area on what is now agricultural land. This route was included in the area's long range transportation plan, but was not funded, and there were no funds available in the foreseeable future. However, federal demonstration project funding unexpectedly materialized. This proposed route totally contradicts every effort made within

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this project to reform the transportation planning process. There are many environmental concerns and quality of life impacts for the communities it bisects. Additionally, it directly promotes urban sprawl. In addition, the public participation element of this proposal is the typical "business as usual" effort.

1000 Friends of Florida opposed this proposal and participated in meetings to review the proposal. Information concerning this proposed route was provided to interested citizens activist groups on the local, state, and federal level. 1000 Friends of Florida also reviewed the Preliminary Development and Environmental (PD&E) studies and provided written comments and objections to the Expressway Authority. 1000 Friends of Florida also collaborated with the members of the I-4 EAC who were interested in the Western Beltway. The activities of these members became more effective due to the efforts and help provided by 1000 Friends. 1000 Friends of Florida also worked with national nonprofit organizations to expose this project on a national level.

1000 Friends of Florida worked with several organizations to promote bicycle and pedestrian plans and development, and advocated at the state and regional level for a network of recreational greenways and trails. 1000 Friends also assisted various local and regional organizations in identifying funding sources for specific projects. These projects included redevelopment, beautification, and revitalization efforts.

Lessons Learned in Year Two

In the second year, several important lessons were learned. The transportation planning process is complicated, encompassing many issues on different governmental levels. It is difficult for citizens, and sometimes elected officials and representatives on transportation advisory boards, to fully understand the relationship between land use and environmental impacts. Tremendous need exists for clear, understandable information on the overall process and transportation and land use linkages. In addition, the transportation industry has a language of its own. In order for citizens to have meaningful input, the ability to understand the terminology commonly used in transportation planning is imperative.

Another very important lesson learned was the importance of vigilant monitoring of transportation issues. A prime example is the Western Beltway project in the Orlando area. This project was not of major concern because there was no funding available for it, even in the foreseeable future. However, the funding became available through a federal demonstration project. Suddenly, the proposal became one of primary importance.

The sudden advancement of the Western Beltway project points out the need for an ongoing, active citizens group to constantly monitor proposals in their areas. It is through long term, committed citizen involvement that this type of transportation alternative and its funding scenario will become more rare in the future and changes can be made in the planning process.

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1000 Friends of Florida could have decided to focus its entire effort on fighting this proposal. However, this three-year project was not designed as a forum to fight specific transportation projects.

This project was an effort to try to bring about change in transportation planning process and policies, through a cooperative effort, rather than from an adversarial position. If the Western Beltway had been targeted as the main focus of the project's efforts, then the overall goals would not have been met, and the success of the project would have been negligible. While that specific battle could perhaps be won, the struggle to change the process, and to do so cooperatively and within the system, would have been sacrificed.

THIRD YEAR: 1996 - 1997

The first two years of the study were funded by The Energy Foundation and The Surdna Foundation. However, in an unanticipated move, The Energy Foundation did not renew their commitment to the project for the third year, in part due to the decision made by 1000 Friends of Florida not to focus on fighting the Western Beltway project. The Surdna Foundation continued their funding as the sole participant. While the focus of the third year was on the continuation of those activities established in the first two years, this partial loss of funding required scaling back on some of the proposed activities for the last year.

The goal of the final year of the study was to provide the coaching necessary for the citizen coalitions to maintain their involvement in the transportation and land use planning process beyond the three years of 1000 Friends' transportation reform initiative. In order to provide continuing, proactive citizen participation in the study areas, it was imperative for these groups to function on their own with minimum guidance and support.

Activities and Accomplishments in Year Three

The third year was targeted toward ensuring the efforts could continue once the study concluded. Activities centered on support, guidance and maintenance.

1. *Continued advocating for ISTEA*-1000 Friends of Florida continued their active support for the reauthorization of the ISTEA legislation. This advocacy was accomplished by working with various citizens groups and activists organizations in promoting ISTEA, communicating with key legislators on the state and national level, and disseminating information to local governments and groups concerning the importance of reauthorization.
2. *Advocated on the local government level*-1000 Friends of Florida provided information to county commissioners in the Orlando region about various educational programs concerning transportation and land use. These programs informed citizens and the business communities about the transportation needs in central Florida. Local land use regulations which promoted sprawl and impacted rural communities and the environment in a negative way were identified.

1000 Friends of Florida worked with interested I-4 EAC members to identify and challenge these regulations.

3. *Continued public education efforts*—1000 Friends participated in various workshops, seminars, conferences, and programs. These activities provided an excellent forum for disseminating educational and informational materials to both elected officials and the general public. Local citizen groups, grass roots organizations, government officials, and community and business leaders were provided with information regarding land use, transportation, and development and growth issues. The linkages and relationships between these issues were also emphasized. Upon the request of various organizations and local governments, projects impacting transportation, land use, and growth management were reviewed. Recommendations were made concerning these projects and possible grants and funding sources were identified.
4. *Expanded citizen participation activities*—The activities begun in the first and second years were continued. These activities focused more on guidance and maintenance, so that at the end of the study, the citizen coalitions could function with a minimum of support. The continuation of these citizen activities after the conclusion of the study is vital to a meaningful public participation process.

Orlando—Work continued with the Florida Department of Transportation and its consultants on the review of the PD&E studies for the I-4 corridor. Representatives from the I-4 Environmental Advisory Committee and from the four affected counties worked with FDOT to ensure that the environmental and community recommendations set forth in the committee's report were recognized and implemented. The committee arranged to meet with representatives from FDOT in the field to discuss the recommendations for design changes.

1000 Friends of Florida also worked with FDOT to formally recognize the I-4 EAC and the validity of the committee's input. Regular meetings of the group, held under the direction of FDOT and their project public involvement coordinator, were scheduled on a quarterly basis. The efforts of this committee are ongoing and will continue after the conclusion of the project.

1000 Friends of Florida continued to work with the Light Rail Transit work group, particularly focusing on alignment issues. The melding of the transit proposal with the I-4 corridor master plan was advocated due to the geographical overlap of the projects, as well as the planning issues involved. 1000 Friends presented the I-4 EAC report to the consultants for the light rail project on behalf of the committee.

Loxahatchee—During this year, due to the scaling back of resources and the interest of the membership, the LCTC focused primarily on Martin County. Guidance and assistance were provided to the LCTC to enable that group to become a citizen watchdog group for the MPO in Martin County. 1000 Friends of Florida also offered guidance to the LCTC in dealing with specific transportation projects in the region. Support and information were provided to those Martin County residents interested in the outcome of the inter-county road dispute mediation.

A major focus of the LCTC in the third year was on county-wide issues in Martin County, including existing and future land use patterns and alternative modes of transportation, such as bicycle and pedestrian planning. These issues were presented to a wide variety of local audiences in the county. Assistance was also provided for a bicycle and pedestrian charette in Martin and St. Lucie Counties. 1000 Friends of Florida continued its efforts to identify sources and obtain funding for implementing the recreational greenway demonstration project. This project incorporates the goals of sustainable development, effective citizen participation and a nontraditional transportation program and solution.

Work continued in the area of better citizen involvement in the planning process. 1000 Friends of Florida worked with planning staff from Martin County to better facilitate public participation in the transportation and land use issues facing the region. Steps were taken to ensure the inclusion of the LCTC in the development of the transportation element of the local comprehensive plan.

Martin County has requested letters of interest from consultants to perform a comprehensive land use and transportation planning analysis for the county. The consultant performing this analysis will be required to develop a short term and long term transportation concurrency management system for the county, with the evaluation of land use and transportation linkages and nontraditional solutions to be major factors in the study. The inclusion of these components are due to the continued efforts of 1000 Friends of Florida during the three-year project and represent a major accomplishment.

5. *Monitored projects and provided assistance*--The Florida Overland eXpress (FOX) high speed rail proposal also continued to be reviewed in the Loxahatchee region. Specific comments were provided concerning the preferred alignment and station locations. 1000 Friends of Florida recognizes that the FOX proposal is important for the State of Florida. However, there are many challenges that must be met for the proposal to be a working success, including corridor location, station siting, and how well the proposal is integrated with land use plans. The FOX project is an important piece of the long range transportation system of the state and 1000 Friends of Florida has an integral role by focusing attention on the impacts of a project of this magnitude.

Upon request, assistance on several revitalization, redevelopment, and beautification projects was provided. One major example is the Limestone Creek Recreational Greenway project in the Loxahatchee region. The proposals were reviewed and recommendations dealing with specific items within the plan were offered. Potential funding sources were also identified.

1000 Friends of Florida continued to monitor the progress of the three major developments in the two study areas, Horizon West, SeaWinds and Abacoa. 1000 Friends of Florida reviewed these development projects and provided comments and assistance concerning the proposals. These developments incorporate elements of traditional neighborhood design.

Lessons Learned in Year Three

The major lesson learned in the third year is that the efforts made within the project must be ongoing. Change come very slowly, especially within a process that is so entrenched in the "always done it that way" mentality. The citizens groups must continue to be active after the project conclusion in order to maintain the levels of involvement in the process achieved during the study.

It is also evident that maintaining the levels of involvement for citizens groups is extremely difficult. This difficulty reinforces the desirability of having a staff person in the area on a full time basis to help coordinate activities. Most importantly, a committed core of citizens who are willing to be involved for the long term is absolutely essential for continuing involvement efforts over time.

However, it is also clear that change in the public participation process can occur. The most dramatic example of this change is found in the Orlando area. The inclusion of the citizens committee in the early stages of the planning process represents a tremendous policy shift on the part of FDOT.

It is also important to address fundamental land use issues before embarking in solving problems with individual transportation projects. Only by reaching the root of the problem can a community hope to develop in a sustainable manner. The Martin County effort emphasized this facet of regional land planning first.

CONCLUSIONS

1000 Friends of Florida learned some very valuable lessons while undertaking this project. It is desirable to have a staff member located in each demonstration area, to be able to attend all of the local and regional meetings, be available for any requests, and establish a meaningful presence. It is also helpful to have a staff member in the state capital to act as a liaison between the state governmental agencies and the field personnel.

The transportation planning process is regulated by policies from all levels of government. The fact that the federal, state, and local levels are all involved in the process make it more difficult to bring about change. Specific projects can be dealt with one by one, sometimes successfully. However, using this method, there will always be another proposal that must be considered in the future.

This project attempted to change the process and gain recognition within the planning process of the way transportation and land use decisions affect each other and the way our communities are developed. By changing the overall process, future transportation proposals will be more responsive to the needs of the citizens, and more responsible in dealing with the developmental impacts.

The most logical way to bring about change in the overall process is from working within the system--from a cooperative stance, rather than from an adversarial position. However, by attempting to change

the process through this fashion, the progress may seem much slower.

It is through truly meaningful citizen participation process that this change will occur. The citizens, who bear the brunt of impacts from transportation projects, should be well informed about the issues, and involved in the planning of the project from the earliest stages. It is from this early involvement that transportation solutions will recognize the land use impacts and its effects on the quality of life within communities.

Sustainable Accomplishments

With the end of the three-year project, 1000 Friends of Florida will no longer be directly involved in managing and directing the citizen participation efforts implemented in the Orlando and Loxahatchee areas. However, a framework for sustained activities and citizen involvement was established, and 1000 Friends will continue to offer support and assistance to these groups. Hopefully, this framework will be used to establish active citizen coalitions in other urban areas.

During the project, the transportation planning process was changed within the two demonstration areas to include more proactive, meaningful citizen participation. These activities should continue in the future.

The I-4 EAC will remain involved in the PD&E studies of the I-4 corridor. FDOT has committed to on-site visits to discuss proposed design changes, and the I-4 EAC will continue to work with FDOT on implementation of the recommended design changes. FDOT has also formally recognized the I-4 EAC, and has taken on the responsibility for scheduling and maintaining its activities. FDOT received very positive feedback from the Federal Highway Administration concerning the involvement and activities of the I-4 EAC, and hopefully, a new standard for cooperative citizen participation has been created. There are also opportunities for involvement by the I-4 EAC in other transportation planning activities. One in particular is the proposed light rail system, running from Seminole County to Orlando, currently under study. Many of the planning issues in this light rail study overlap with the issues already identified by the I-4 EAC, providing the opportunity for similar involvement in the light rail study by the committee.

Over the course of the project, policy level changes occurred in the Loxahatchee area, particularly Martin County. Martin County recently requested letters of interest from consultants to perform a comprehensive land use and transportation planning analysis within the county. Transportation and land use linkages are to be a major factor in the analysis, as well as the consideration of nontraditional transportation solutions. The inclusion of these linkages and nontraditional solutions are a result of the efforts initiated by the study. This also offers the opportunity for the LCTC to stay involved in dealing with transportation and land use issues and alternative modes of transportation. Another avenue of involvement is the Sustainable Communities Development Project in Martin County. This project is examining the transportation and land use linkages, and how responsible planning can result in sustainable development and more liveable communities. This project provides an opportunity for involvement by the LCTC and a continuation of the citizen participation effort.

Government advocacy activities will also continue by 1000 Friends of Florida. On the federal level, 1000 Friends will continue its advocacy for ISTEA reauthorization. On the state, regional and local levels, 1000 Friends of Florida will continue its advocacy for improving the planning process through policy changes, enhancing meaningful citizen participation, addressing land use and transportation linkages, and promoting positive change to regulations impeding more responsible developments.

Activities which began during the study will be carried on by the groups established in the areas, and supported by 1000 Friends of Florida. Hopefully, these activities can be expanded into other communities. It is through continuation of these efforts, particularly citizen participation, that the transportation planning process can be changed for the better. To assist with disseminating these lessons to other communities, 1000 Friends is devoting its Winter 1997 issue of *Foresight* to the transportation reform initiative, and preparing a reader-friendly report on how other communities can replicate what has occurred in the two demonstration areas.

Lessons for Other Communities

In a departure from studies usually conducted in the transportation field, this project was process oriented. The focus was on how the transportation planning process worked, the impacts and linkages of transportation and land use decisions, and how the decision making process could be improved, with particular emphasis on the importance of meaningful citizen participation.

The two demonstration areas provided settings which are applicable for most urban areas, with the Orlando area being highly developed and the Loxahatchee region just beginning to experience a high rate of growth and development. However, even though these areas are in different stages of development, there are similar issues facing both of these areas. These issues are universal for urban areas, regardless of their position in managing anticipated growth.

The issues include how the transportation and land use decisions are made, how these decisions are linked, and how transportation decisions affect both the environment and the quality of life. It is essential to recognize that citizen participation is a fundamental element of the decision making process, and find viable ways to obtain that participation.

Communities also commonly face pressure to continue to sustain sprawling development, with serious costs to the environment. Local regulations and codes often impede innovative, less auto-oriented types of development. There is often fragmentation of communities and neighborhoods in dealing with transportation solutions and associated land uses. Most urban areas also tend to view transportation and land use decisions from a local perspective, rather than recognizing the regional impacts these decisions may have.

The project focused on how to improve and reform the transportation decision making process. These improvements were achieved through the four areas of activity identified at the beginning of the study. The techniques used to improve the decision making process in the two study areas can be

adapted to any urban area.

1. *Citizen Participation*--The first component, citizen participation, is the foundation. The difference made by citizen participation was evident in both of the demonstration areas. Citizen participation is most effective when organized into some type of coalition. Once organized, citizen groups can become formally integrated into the process. If, as in Orlando, the citizen group focuses on one specific project and is successful, the focus can be expanded to deal with other issues and projects. Citizen participation can be promoted through a series of steps:
 - *Involve a core group of citizens*--The grass roots effort should involve citizens from all areas, such as political leaders, community and business leaders, neighborhood associations, citizen activists groups, and concerned citizens. It is important to establish a committed core of citizens who will keep the group active and involved. The membership of this organized citizens effort can easily be expanded.
 - *Inform and educate*--Once formed, the group should become informed about the process and the issues. This education can be accomplished through various seminars and workshops which are often offered. The MPO citizen participation plans should be reviewed, as should local land use plans and regulations.
 - *Establish contacts*--The group should contact other organizations, political leaders, and agency representatives to encourage a cooperative partnership, rather than adversarial roles.
 - *Develop a vision for the future*--Citizen consensus on how the area should develop in the future should be reached. This vision can be accomplished through workshops and seminars, and by reviewing existing plans and documents. The citizens group should set forth their recommendations after reaching a consensus or reviewing existing documents.
 - *Deal with specific issues*--Once the vision is determined, then the focus should shift to specific projects and issues which will impact or shape the area in the future. Dealing with specific issues in a positive manner can be accomplished through the contacts at the political and agency levels which have already been formed. Again, a cooperative partnership type is preferable to an adversarial approach.
 - *Maintain levels of involvement*-- In order to be successful, levels of involvement must be kept high. Once the group has been made a part of the process, participation must be maintained. The group should be regional in scope to involve the largest number of participants, as well as to maintain the regional perspective necessary in gauging the impacts of a project or issue. Committed leadership is imperative to keep the group active. If possible, funding sources, donations, or grants from involved governments should be explored. These funds can provide the necessary funds for meeting notices, meeting space, and other administrative type of activities.

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- *Encourage agency involvement*--The involved agencies and political entities will recognize an organized group attempting to become a part of the process through informed participation. As evidenced in the two study areas, both citizen groups were recognized and made a part of the process. Again, the participation was made in a cooperative partnership effort.
- 2. *Government Advocacy*--The second component is government advocacy which must occur on all levels--federal, state, regional, and local. Any type of legislation which allows and/or provides funding for non-traditional, alternative modes of transportation must be actively promoted. Advocacy for a more involved citizen participation effort should be accomplished. The various state agencies which participate in the transportation and land use decisions should be lobbied to recognize the validity of the concerns of citizens and to cooperatively work with the public in making decisions. Greater emphasis should be on the regional perspective. Advocacy on the local level should center on the development regulations and codes. These regulations should encourage, rather than discourage, traditional neighborhood developments and other innovative development ideas and techniques. Local plans and the Metropolitan Planning Organizations should recognize the relationships and linkages between transportation and land use and make these linkages a part of their decision making process.
- 3. *Public Education*--The third component involves providing educational materials to the widest possible audience. Citizens who understand the issues involved in the decision making process are much more able to provide viable and meaningful input. With this type of understanding on the part of the public, a cooperative partnership between the agencies involved in making transportation and land use decisions and the citizens who are most affected by those decisions can evolve.
- 4. *Specific Projects*--The fourth component focuses on specific projects. Transportation or development projects, even when not considered to be very large, can have significant impacts on the quality of life in a community. The impacts of projects, both large and small, should be considered from a regional, rather than local, perspective.

Concluding Thoughts

The goal of the study was: *To establish a policy and citizen participation framework encouraging sustained consideration of transportation and land use linkages and solutions. Where possible, specific projects will be used to demonstrate the effectiveness of citizen participation and/or the viability of non-traditional transportation solutions.*

This goal was achieved through the steps outlined above. The framework for effective citizen participation has been established. The two groups, the I-4 Environmental Advisory Committee and Loxahatchee Citizens Transportation Coalition, have been effective in providing meaningful citizen input into the process. The Florida Department of Transportation and Federal Highway

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Administration have recognized these groups and accepted their input as a valid part of the process, proving that citizen participation can be accomplished in a cooperative manner with the citizens and the Department of Transportation functioning as partners. This acceptance of the citizen input, outside of the traditional forums and much earlier in the process, represents a major policy shift for FDOT.

Another major accomplishment of the study was getting state agencies to formally recognize the transportation and land use linkages. Again, this recognition by the Metropolitan Planning Organizations Advisory Committee and the Florida Department of Transportation of these linkages represents another major policy shift.

The successful formation and acceptance of the citizens groups and the major policy shifts are very important accomplishments and are part of achieving the goal of the study. The formation of the framework for meaningful citizen involvement is another major accomplishment. This framework provides a model that can be applied to citizen participation efforts throughout Florida and the nation.