STOPS Overview

• Stand-alone software that predicts transit travel patterns
• A limited implementation of the conventional “4-step” model
  – Highly simplified modeling process
  – Based on ridership data on fixed-guideway systems across the nation
• Outputs New Starts project justification performance metrics – trips on the project, VMT and new transit trips
• Project evaluation process streamlined
  – Reduced level of effort & resource requirements
  – Readily-available required input data
  – Reduced/limited level of scrutiny by FTA
Available of STOPS

- Google or download from FTA website at http://www.fta.dot.gov/grants/15682.html
- FTA provides technical assistance to project sponsors
- Currently version 1.02 is available
  - FTA planning to release version 1.5 soon [more in Jay’s presentation]
Consider Using STOPS When...

- Forecasting any New or Small Starts project
  - Certain considerations mentioned on the next slide
- A locally maintained demand model that
  - Does not have transit modeling components
  - Has not undergone meaningful tests against suitable data on current transit ridership
- Performing quality control by developing alternate forecasts [*more in Dave’s presentation*]
- Performing a system planning study where multiple fixed-guideway projects are being studied in multiple corridors
Think Before Using STOPS When...

- Performing highway or air-quality conformity analysis
  - Well, you cannot use STOPS at all in this instance
- Forecasting to support local bus-system planning studies
- Forecasting for corridors
  - With strong special travel markets [*more in Jeff’s presentation*]
  - Where alternatives include some with no highway capacity change for general traffic & some which include major capacity change
  - Which have grown substantially since 2000
- Instances when either the GTFS files are not current or are not available at all
- Requiring detailed estimation of O&M costs, bus/fleet requirements and station parking demands, unless significant local validation has been performed
Sub Committee’s Recommendations to the Modeling Community

• STOPS is NOT a substitute for regional travel models
• Ongoing efforts to enhance the travel demand modeling practice in Florida should continue
• STOPS is not a “plug ‘n chug” model -> invest in plausibility checks of forecasts [more in Jeanette’s presentation]
  – Understand its applicability to local corridor conditions
  – Understand that STOPS is still evolving as FTA learns from its applications around the country
Sub Committee’s Recommendations to this Forum

• Raise awareness and share experiences
  – Through various venues such as MTF, FSUTMS user group meetings, communications to FDOT systems planning and PTO offices

• Develop a data repository
  – Maintain current and historical GTFS files from all Florida transit agencies (PTO)

• Provide assistance/training to agencies that currently do not have GTFS files for their system (PTO)
Audience Poll

• In which of the following situations, would you consider using STOPS as a forecasting tool?
  A. Developing design traffic volumes for a major freeway expansion project
  B. Estimating ridership impacts of truncating a portion of a fixed-route bus service serving an arterial
  C. Estimating ridership on a new commuter rail service where no premium transit mode currently exists
  D. Estimating ridership on a monorail system that ferries visitors between Magic Kingdom and Epcot
  E. None of the above