FSUTMS
FLORIDA STANDARD URBAN TRANSPORTATION MODEL STRUCTURE
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FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION MODELING NEWSLETTER

Volume 34 ◆ January 2007

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE DECEMBER 2006 MODEL TASK FORCE MEETING

A Florida Model Task Force (MTF) meeting was held December 12 and 13, 2006, in Tampa, Florida. The first day focused on technical presentations and the second day covered discussion items. This issue includes a brief summary of the topics covered at the meeting. Detailed minutes and PowerPoint presentations are available for review on the Florida Transportation Modeling website at www.FSUTMSOnline.net.

FSUTMS-Voyager: Transit Standards within Evolving FSUTMS

David Schmitt, AECOM and Yongqiang Wu, FDOT Systems Planning

This presentation focused on the issues related to incorporating the Public Transport (PT) module of Voyager into the Florida travel demand modeling process. The traditional Florida modeling process under Tranplan uses a single-path transit building methodology. However, Cube-Voyager incorporates the capabilities of the PT module to develop a multi-path transit building methodology. The advantages and disadvantages associated with multi-path transit building and the methodology were presented in specific detail. Version 4.1 includes a new Best-Path transit path-builder—a single-path adaptation employing new features that take advantage of the Cube-Voyager software. Mr. Schmitt also presented the transit model setups and network changes that have been implemented as a result of efforts to apply PT v4.1 to the current Florida transit modeling framework. The Systems Planning Office shipped PT v4.1 to public agencies in December 2006. The latest transit modeling standards will take into account new transit standards while keeping in mind existing standards, user and planner needs, and New Starts/Small Starts guidance. In particular, it is consistent with the recommended model properties the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) has released.

In This Newsletter:

Looking forward, the FTA is currently determining the impact of multi-path builders on its evaluation of New Starts projects. The transit modeling standards may be revised once the FTA has released guidance on their role in acquiring federal funding for projects and additional testing with Florida models is completed. However, this is not expected to be fully addressed for the next few years.

A Public Transport (PT) Transit Modeling workshop is scheduled for June 4-7, 2007, in Orlando, FL. Information on the workshop and registration is available through FSUTMSOnline's Training and Registration page. FDOT will distribute the public agency version of FSUTMS and new scripts prior to the workshop.

Mr. Schmitt discussed what to do for LRTP development and other project modeling between now and when the PT model is released since re-calibration and validation time relative to constants, coefficients, and parameters typically takes 6-18 months to complete. An Application Framework has been provided on FSUTMSOnline that includes recommended constants, coefficients, and parameters for those regions or MPO areas that have not collected local information. For those areas that need to further implement the framework or have a more urgent need, the FDOT Systems Planning Office will work closely with the individual agencies.

The PowerPoint presentation for this PT and transit building discussion is provided on FSUTMSOnline under Model Task Force Documents and Meeting Materials. A full discussion was presented during the Technical Session on Tuesday and a summary was provided on Wednesday during the Full Model Task Force meeting.

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Freight Analysis Framework Update

Dr. Tianjia Tang, P.E., Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Office of Freight Management and Operations

Dr. Tianjia Tang addressed the most recent updates to the Freight Analysis Framework (referred to as FAF^2). The objectives of FAF^2 are as follows:

- to answer freight shipment volume and congestion questions on the highway system
- to answer freight shipment route/corridor questions
- to answer freight shipment modal questions
- to address other derivative usages

MTF minutes and PowerPoint presentations are located at www.FSUTMSOnline.net

The ultimate deliverables of this new structure are viewed in two categories: commodity origin-destination-related (O-D) and FAF^2 network-related. The commodity-related products include the current 2002 O-D database and projections for years 2010 to 2035 in 5-year intervals. Network-related deliverables are the 2002 truck O-D database, future truck O-D databases for year 2035, and a FAF^2 national highway network.

The FAF^2 national highway network was validated against Highway Performance Monitoring System (HPMS) data provided by state DOTs to FHWA. The quality of data from FAF^1 to FAF^2 has improved significantly. Relative to Florida geography, the State's four freight zones can be easily aggregated to illustrate freight movement to and from Florida as a whole, as opposed to individual zones. Because of this geography, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is one of four existing pilot efforts currently underway to assess and analyze the data from FAF^2. In addition, the FHWA is looking for two Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in the U.S. to join the pilot effort and will sponsor the two selected MPOs to attend the 2007 National TRB conference in Washington, D.C.

The MTF asked that Dr. Tang emphasize the need for freight corridors during the new statewide corridor study currently underway. The FDOT will be meeting with the FSUTMS users' groups over the next year to coordinate on the FAF^2 pilot study. The FDOT will be developing a methodology to disaggregate the FAF^2 data into smaller geographies, possibly at the county-level.

Treasure Coast and Southeast Florida Regional Planning Models in Cube Voyager

Ken Kaltenbach, Corradino Group

This presentation covered the development history for the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Model (TCRPM) and the Southeast Regional Planning Model 6 (SERPM) and related each model's structure to FTA's current concerns and issues for transit modeling. The TCRPM includes Indian River, St. Lucie, and Martin Counties and was recently converted to the Cube Voyager platform with PT for a simple transit network. The network includes 731 TAZs and can be run as highway-only or with a simple transit structure. Specific operating statistics were provided for the current model.

SERPM 6 covers Palm Beach, Broward, and Miami-Dade Counties with 4,134 TAZs and 10 transit modes. The model was developed completely in the Cube Voyager platform and uses no Tranplan. Run time for this model can be from 22-28 hours on a 3.4 GHZ computer. Specific operating parameters were also provided for this model. The presentation is available on FSUTMSOnline under Model Task Force Documents and Meeting Materials.

2006 FSUTMS/Cube Voyager Model Conversion & Support Survey

The Systems Planning Office administered the survey this past October. The survey is part of Systems Planning's quality assurance process. The method was unique this year as a web-based survey tool "Zoomerang" was initiated to ensure total confidentiality. The survey consisted of 14 questions regarding modeling support from the MTF, FDOT, and Citilabs. The averaged scores indicated a general agreement that the modeling community is receiving adequate support, but there is a need to resolve the PT issue and provide faster standardization. Specific areas for improvement were listed in the presentation and Action Plans for the MTF, FDOT, and Citilabs addressing these comments were discussed.

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Model Status and FSUTMS Standardization

Yongqiang Wu, FDOT Systems Planning Office

The FSUTMS model status and standardization process was addressed at the full MTF meeting. Mr. Wu noted that the MPOs and FDOT Districts were mailed the Cube v4.1 CD in December to update their license agreements to 2007. The license includes Cube Base and Cube Voyager, but not new extensions such as Cube Cluster.

The FSUTMS Web portal, the FSUTMS launcher/interface and the new training model, Olympus, were highlighted. The proposed transit modeling framework relative to Cube PT was discussed in detail. The concept of PT Best-Path was reviewed and explained as two levels for analysis: general and New Starts areas. Impacts to the modeling structure for PT Best-Path include transit modules (transit access, network coding, path building, and mode choice), highway modules, and calibration and validation.

What does this new Best-Path framework mean? The planning agency must decide what area it belongs to based on local transit services and future growth. Large areas will want to implement the new transit framework immediately for regional project analyses; smaller areas can wait until the next LRTP cycle. Immediate actions for all areas will include reviewing and splitting TAZs, updating the highway network, revising transit modal numbers, and collecting transit service data. Specific guidelines for splitting TAZs for the purposes of transit modeling will be finalized in time for the June 2007 transit modeling workshop.

Short-term support from the MTF and FDOT for the new transit framework was detailed along with a five-year model development plan.

DELTASIM & Citilabs

For more information on DELTASIM, a land use model for the Tampa Bay region, and what's new for Citilabs check out the web for presentations at www.FSUTMSOnline.net.

MODEL TASK FORCE COMMITTEES RESTRUCTURED

The MTF committees have been restructured to better respond to MTF goals and objectives, future trends in transportation planning, and input from the FSUTMS 2006 User Satisfaction Survey. Four new committees replaced the old committees and are listed below with their responsibilities:

Data Committee
Chair: Gary Kramer, WFRPC
- Assessing modeling data needs
- Transportation/land use interaction

GIS Committee
Chair: Lina Kulikowski, Broward MPO
- Improvements/enhancements to GIS procedures
- Development of new GIS-related tools

Transit Committee
Chair: Larry Foutz, Miami-Dade MPO
- Addressing transit issues related to the application of PT
- Addressing issues related to New Starts/Small Starts

Model Advancement Committee
Chair: Mike Neidhart, Volusia MPO
- Assessing state-of-the-art transportation modeling applications

The Tri-Chairs will provide overall guidance and the Systems Planning Office will provide modeling staff support to the MTF committees. Technical subcommittees will be created as needed. The proposed chairpersons were introduced at the MTF meeting and goals and challenges associated with participating on the various committees were discussed. **The process for participating on these various committees can be found at FSUTMSOnline's Model Task Force Documents and Meeting Materials page.**

Regional Visions: 50-Year Transportation Demand Modeling

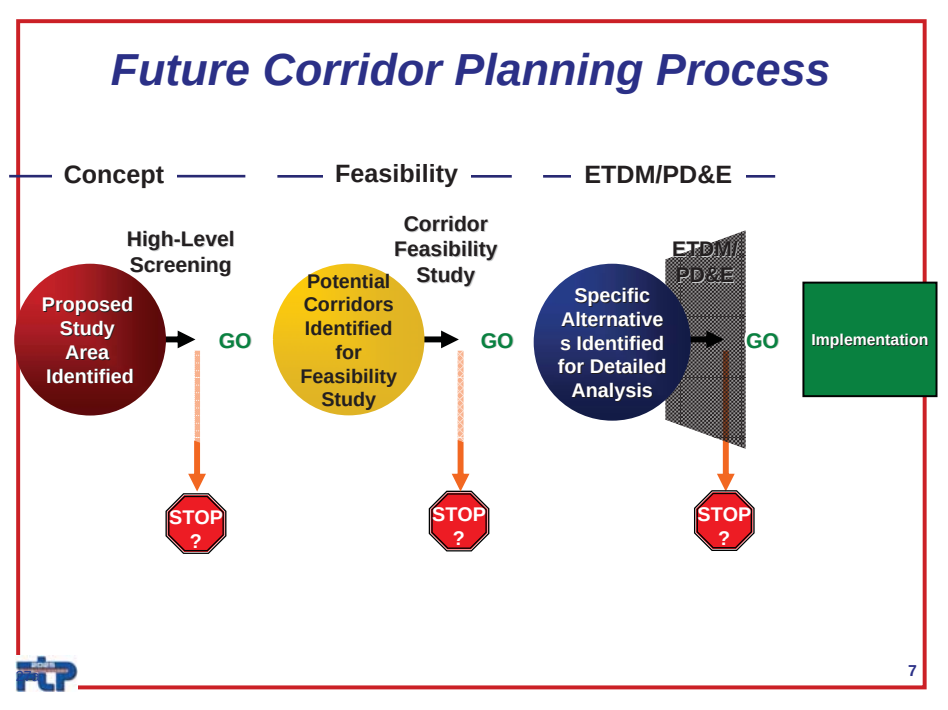
Kathy Neill, FDOT, Office of Policy Planning

Ms. Neill presented on potential issues regarding traffic modeling to support regional visioning initiatives and the Future Corridors Program that have 50-year planning horizons. The 2025 Florida Transportation Plan (FTP) encourages the development of regional visions that should result in key outcomes, including priorities for investments in a regional transportation network that includes multimodal options. The FTP also provides that statewide criteria should be development for identifying and developing new Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) facilities, which should be coordinated with regional and community visions.

Regional visioning initiatives have begun or are planned across the state. These initiatives typically engage the private and public sectors and other partners in discussions about how a region should accommodate the population growth expected over the next 50 years. The Central Florida "How Shall We Grow" initiative has sought public input on where residential growth should occur, lands for preservation, and new roads and transit, and based on this input developed five scenarios for future growth. The Department's District 5 has supported this initiative by conducting travel demand modeling and other analyses to support the transportation impacts of these scenarios.

Travel demand modeling will be needed to support the Future Corridors Program, as well. This program will identify statewide transportation corridors that will be significantly improved, transformed in function or design, or newly developed over the next 50 years. The future corridor planning process will include three stages for screening and planning potential corridors: concept, feasibility, and ETDM/PD&E. Travel demand models will assist in evaluating potential corridors for several of the statewide corridor screening criteria (e.g., congestion, delay).

Typical Florida travel demand models are used to forecast travel for the 20 to 25-year planning horizon, which is used for MPO LRTPs as well as for the SIS cost-feasible and unfunded needs plans. There is some concern that, when applied to forecast travel demand for a 50-year horizon to support regional visions and the Future Corridors Programs, the models might not fully capture the effects of various travel behaviors that are expected to change over this longer timeframe. An example includes an increase in the use of computers and the Internet for telecommuting, shopping, and education-related trips.



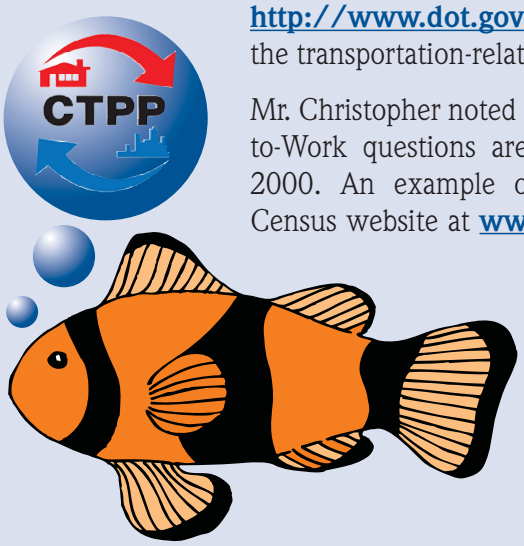
Ms. Neill indicated that additional research may be needed to assess how various issues should be considered when using the statewide, regional, or MPO models to assist in long-range (50-year) planning efforts (e.g., changes in household profiles, downtown residential development trends, changes in transit ridership). Input from the MTF will help identify future research and model development needs and identify potential guidelines and approaches for 50-year modeling.

The World of Census Data

Ed Christopher, FHWA
Resource Center Planning Team

Mr. Christopher announced that the CTPP 2000 production is complete and that the data is available from the Bureau of Transportation Statistics **https://www.bts.gov/pdc/**. Technical assistance is also available from FHWA (202) 366-5000.

In preparation for the American Community Survey (ACS), the replacement of the decennial "long form" data, AASHTO has been working on a pooled fund of all the states to support a new Census Transportation Planning Products (CTPP) program. Unlike the prior CTPPs, the new program will not only contain several data products but it will also include training, research and enhanced technical assistance.



The ACS represents a paradigm shift for the Census in its collection of "long form" data. The ACS is a continuous survey where a different sample of households is surveyed every month and the data is then aggregated over time. Data will be released for areas over 65K people every year with the very smallest areas, under 20K people, getting a five-year average. Areas between 65K and 20K will get three-year averaged data. The first of the ACS standard Census Bureau-defined tables for 2005 began being released for the largest of geographies in August 2006. FHWA has been working on transportation-specific data profiles which are getting posted on an AASHTO website.

There will be three different types of profiles. The first one dealing with resident-based travel characteristics is complete and the other two, one on households and one on workers, are in various stages of production.

There are two websites available for CTPP-related information: one maintained by the Transportation Research Board's Census Data Subcommittee **http://www.TRBcensus.com/**, the other by the FHWA at **http://www.dot.gov/CTPP**. Both contain links to the transportation-related ACS data profiles.

Mr. Christopher noted that essentially, the ACS Journey-to-Work questions are identical to the long form in 2000. An example of the questionnaire is on the Census website at **www.TRBcensus.com**; look under American Community Survey (ACS). While the data collected is roughly the same, Mr. Christopher cautioned that we need to pay attention to the geography for which it will be reported. Partly because the sampling and response rates may be smaller than the old decennial long form, the Census Bureau is taking additional steps to protect the confidentiality of the respondents. In addition, the new ACS data is being reported at a 90 percent confidence level and users must be ready to deal with statistical margins of errors. In the past, the Census Bureau never reported the statistical quality of its data.

Mr. Christopher's full PowerPoint presentation can be found under MTF meeting minutes.

MTF minutes and PowerPoint presentations are located at www.FSUTMSOnline.net

ERRORS? WHAT ERRIRS?

An article about the integrity of your model's data.
By: Dan Macmurphy and Samantha Smith, Traf-O-Data, Inc.

Have you noticed over the past several decades that our transportation models have increased in complexity? Sure. Today we are dealing with vast arrays of data and more complex computer-based procedures than ever before. It is human nature for a few errors to make their way into the gigabyte of data in our model files. But one thing that we have noticed about modeling in Florida, and elsewhere, is a lack of error-checking protocols in the Florida Standard Urban Transportation Model Structure (FSUTMS).

You know the old saying about computers, "Garbage in = garbage out." Well, it gets worse than that! We once had a customer who would tell us that **the whole model was a pile of junk** if he found one single error in the input data. He would proceed to debunk the entire LRTP process. Well, it's really not as drastic as that!

Sure, **anyone** can find an error somewhere in our transportation models **if they look hard enough**. What we want to do is eliminate the **obvious errors** – and almost every model has a few of them.

We, by necessity, have to wear the "land use planner" hat as well as the "traffic engineer" hat as we look into the crystal ball of data forecasting. Yes, FSUTMS has the land use check program LUCHECK, but we have found that, increasingly, output files from this program are not included with the model datasets, leaving us to wonder if it was even run! Then again, you have to pore through the printout looking for suspect data that may – or may not – be correct.

Sometimes it's obvious that during the last (and hurried) phases of a long range transportation plan update, something is amiss with the data. Some errors are introduced by "rounding" so that our data may not add up to 100%. Other errors are introduced by the complexity of land use decisions as we try to code into our future-year datasets all the changes discussed in "last-minute" deals.

For the 2000 model validations (and subsequent 2030 LRTP models) we were asked by the FDOT to review data from all 12 counties in FDOT District One. Here are errors that we have found in some of the model data files:

- TAZs with dwelling units but no population.
- TAZ with population but no dwelling units.
- TAZ with population/dwelling unit <1.
- TAZ with population/dwelling unit >8.
- TAZ where %vacant and non permanent less than %vacant.
- The Percent of zones where SFV=SFVNP (>60% unusual)
- TAZ where % auto is not equal to 100.
- TAZ with hotel units but no hotel population.
- TAZ with hotel population but no hotel units.
- TAZ with hotel units but no hotel occupancy rate.
- TAZ with students but no service employment.
- TAZ with hotel units but no service employment.

So how would you like to have a program that takes less than 15 seconds to run and looks for the most common data errors as a part of your modeling procedure? As part of the work for the district, we have developed a program that is very quick and easy for anyone to use that checks for inconsistent or illogical data in the model files.

It looks for data that "just can't be." For example: A TAZ with students, but no service employment. Or how about a zone with more than 8 persons per dwelling unit? Unlikely! We have run this program on models from other regions, and you would be surprised to find out how many models contain a problem or two!

The "errors" listed above are all obvious mistakes that can easily be corrected. That is all that we are checking for—data that does not seem to "make sense." Will most of these "errors" make a significant impact on the model assignment? Probably not. However, once in a while we will find one that requires a complete model re-do.

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These programs are designed to run independent of the FSUTMS model, although there is also a GEN. ALL script example we include that will imbed the procedure into your standard FSUTMS model. (For those of you who are using "Lifestyles" trip generation in District 7, we have developed programs for you to use also.)

Here's how the program works:

1) You copy the D1check_se.bat or D7check_se.bat file into your model's working directory.

2) Double-click to run.

The program will read your FSUTMS.CTL and your PROGRAM.MAS file and your ZDATA files and give you a summary of the errors (if any) that were found (as well as an errors_se.txt file). The program works by copying the needed working files from the root directory. It will run and then clean up miscellaneous files when done.

We also have two other programs. One is called CHECK_XY that checks for: Links with hard-coded distances and Nodes within 50' of each other, which is handy for node-on-top-of-node network issues. The other is called FIX_SE and it fixes all of the problems found (above) with default "decision variables" in seconds.

You may download the programs from **ftp://trafodata.net** and put them anywhere on your computer. You will have to edit the batch file so that files are copied from the correct location.

We hope that this program will be a benefit to the modeling community and that it will encourage discussion. We will be glad to take suggestions for additions or changes.

CHECK_SE.BAT

```
REM Please wait -- setting up menus
ECHO OFF
IF EXIST CONFIG.DB ERASE CONFIG.DB
IF EXIST CHECK1.DBF ERASE CHECK1.DBF
IF EXIST CHECK2.DBF ERASE CHECK2.DBF
IF EXIST CHECK3.DBF ERASE CHECK3.DBF
IF EXIST CHECK4.DBF ERASE CHECK4.DBF
IF EXIST CHECK_SE.EXE ERASE CHECK_SE.EXE
IF EXIST DIR.TXT ERASE DIR.TXT

COPY C:\CHECK_SE\CONFIG.DB
COPY C:\CHECK_SE\CHECK1.DBF
COPY C:\CHECK_SE\CHECK2.DBF
COPY C:\CHECK_SE\CHECK3.DBF
COPY C:\CHECK_SE\CHECK4.DBF
COPY C:\CHECK_SE\CHECK_SE.EXE
CD>DIR.TXT

CHECK_SE

IF NOT DIR.TXT==”C:\CHECK_SE” ERASE CONFIG.DB
IF NOT DIR.TXT==”C:\CHECK_SE” ERASE CHECK1.DBF
IF NOT DIR.TXT==”C:\CHECK_SE” ERASE CHECK2.DBF
IF NOT DIR.TXT==”C:\CHECK_SE” ERASE CHECK3.DBF
IF NOT DIR.TXT==”C:\CHECK_SE” ERASE CHECK4.DBF
IF NOT DIR.TXT==”C:\CHECK_SE” ERASE CHECK_
SE.EXE
ERASE DIR.TXT
```

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2006-07 FSUTMS CUBE WORKSHOPS & SCHEDULE

http://www.fsutmsonline.net/modeling_training.aspx

FSUTMS modeling training workshops are offered by FDOT to the Florida transportation modeling community. Live workshops now focus exclusively on the new FSUTMS powered by Cube Voyager. A desktop computer-based training (CBT) program for the Tranplan version of FSUTMS is available for download.

Training workshops qualify for professional development hour (PDH) credit for Florida professional engineers. The number of PDH credits for each workshop is equal to the number of classroom hours. If you would like to obtain PDH credits, please provide your PE registration number to the Systems Planning Office prior to the workshop.

There is no fee to attend the workshops, however registration is required. An automated e-mail will be sent confirming your registration. A seat assignment will be sent at a later date.

Advanced FSUTMS-Cube & Scripting Workshop

Date:	February 26 – March 1, 2007
Times:	Monday, 1:00 PM – Thursday, 12:00 PM
Location:	Homewood Suites 8745 International Drive Orlando, FL 32819
Reservations:	1-888-697-8745
Rate:	$98/night
Group Code:	FDOT Workshop
Res. Deadline:	2/12/07

FSUTMS Comprehensive Modeling Workshop

Date:	March 12 – 16, 2007
Times:	Monday, 1:00 PM – Friday, 12:00 PM
Location:	Homewood Suites 2233 Ulmerton Rd. Clearwater, FL 33762
Reservations:	1-727-573-1500
Rate:	$99/night
Group Code:	FDOT Workshop
Res. Deadline:	2/26/07

FHWA Mining Data for Transportation Planning

Date:	March 27 – 28, 2007
Times:	Tuesday, 1:00 PM – Wednesday, 5:00 PM
Location:	Homewood Suites 8745 International Drive Orlando, FL 32819
Reservations:	1-888-697-8745
Rate:	$98/night
Group Code:	FDOT Workshop
Res. Deadline:	3/13/07

Advanced FSUTMS-Cube & Scripting Workshop

Date:	April 9 – 12, 2007
Times:	Monday, 1:00 PM – Thursday, 12:00 PM
Location:	Homewood Suites 2233 Ulmerton Rd. Clearwater, FL 33762
Reservations:	1-727-573-1500
Rate:	$99/night
Group Code:	FDOT Workshop
Res. Deadline:	3/26/07

FSUTMS Transit Modeling Workshop

Date:	June 4 – 7, 2007
Times:	Monday, 1:00 PM – Thursday, 12:00 PM
Location:	Homewood Suites 8745 International Drive Orlando, FL 32819
Reservations:	1-888-697-8745
Rate:	$98/night
Group Code:	FDOT Workshop
Res. Deadline:	5/21/07

For further information please contact:
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USERS' GROUP PAGES

http://www.fsutmsonline.net/index.php?/user_groups_pages/user_groups_pages/

Local FSUTMS users' groups have been formed to provide a forum to facilitate and promote understanding and proper application of the models. These groups maintain mailing lists and hold regular meetings that usually feature one or more guest presentations. Year 2007 meeting dates are provided below, or check out the web address above for future dates and meetings.

The **Central Florida Traffic Data Users' Group** meets at the FDOT-District 5 Orlando Urban Office from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. For additional information, please contact **Jon Weiss** 407-482-7881.

The **Northeast Florida Transportation Applications Forum** meets at the First Coast MPO office at 1022 Prudential Drive. For additional information, please contact **Karen Taulbee** (904) 360-5652 or **Jeanette Berk** (904) 823-8982. Meeting dates are listed below:

Thursday, March 15, 2007, 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
September 20, 2007, 11:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

The **Panhandle Transportation Applications and FSUTMS Users' Group** meets at the Washington County Public Library in Chipley from 1:15 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. For additional information, please contact **Linda Little** at (850) 638-0250.

The **Southeast Florida Users' Group** meets at the FDOT-District 4 Auditorium. For additional information, please contact **Min-Tang Li** at (954) 777-4652. Meetings are tentatively scheduled to be held at the FDOT-D4 Headquarters Auditorium from 9:30 AM to noon on the following dates:

Friday, February 9, 2007
Friday, May 4, 2007
Friday, August 3, 2007
Friday, November 2, 2007

The **Southwest Florida Users' Group** meets at the Charlotte County Airport at 2800 A-6 Airport Road, Punta Gorda. For additional information, please contact **Jim Baxter** (863) 519-2562.

The **Tampa Bay Applications Group** meets at the FDOT-District 7 Tampa Office from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m. For additional information, please contact **Danny Lamb** (813) 975-6437. Meetings dates are listed below:

Thursday, February 22, 2007
Thursday, May 17, 2007
Thursday, August 23, 2007
Thursday, November 1, 2007

11TH TRB NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING APPLICATIONS CONFERENCE – DAYTONA BEACH, FLORIDA MAY 6-9, 2007

The goal of the Conference is to provide an outlet for new applied techniques and methods. The conference is sponsored by the TRB Committee ABD50 Transportation Planning Applications and hosted by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC), Florida Model Task Force (MTF), Volusia County MPO and McTrans.

The Hilton Oceanfront Resort is located directly on Daytona's only traffic-free beach in the heart of Ocean Walk Village, just five miles from the Daytona Beach International Airport.

For questions on the conference please contact:
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www.trb-appcon.org