

Mapping the Future — The Florida Model Task Force Chooses TransCAD as the New FSUTMS Platform

By Systems Planning Office

In one of the most important decisions made by the Florida Model Task Force, a decision was made in May 2003 to use TransCAD from Caliper Corporation as the new platform for FSUTMS, the Florida Standard Urban Transportation Model Structure. This decision came about after more than one year of consultation with nationwide modeling experts, numerous software demonstrations, workshops put on by leading software vendors, testing and other evaluations by Model Task Force committees, and consideration of proposed pricing and support arrangements.

While TRANPLAN has served FSUTMS well during the last two decades, it had become apparent that a more modern platform was needed to face future modeling challenges and to streamline the modeling process. As recommended by a blue-ribbon panel of advisors, the Model Task Force evaluated the current offerings and forthcoming developments from the leading software vendors and voted to make a new choice.

TransCAD was preferred for many reasons. First, TransCAD has the widest range of planning methods, including many methods that have been identified as important for inclusion in future versions of FSUTMS. Second, TransCAD has an integrated GIS-T and powerful relational database that makes model building more efficient. Third, TransCAD has a superior user interface and the best documentation of all the packages investigated. Fourth, TransCAD has the best graphics for transportation planning. In addition, TransCAD has

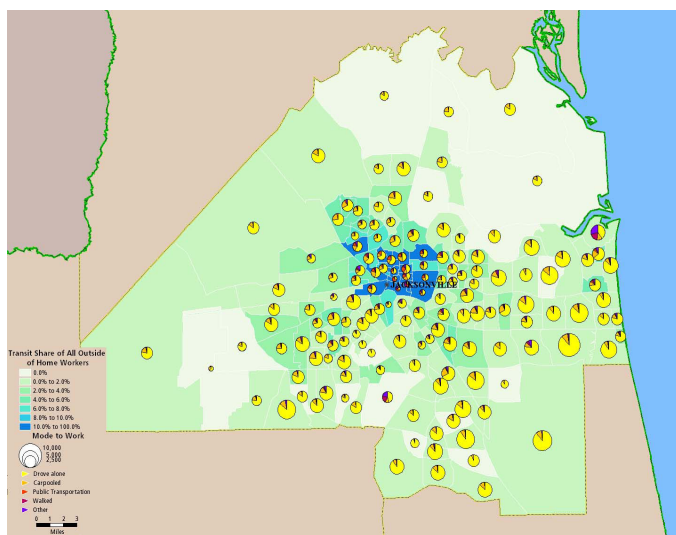
dozens of valuable procedures including tools for Census data access and extraction, geographic conflation of networks, statistical estimation of model coefficients, estimation of trip tables from traffic counts, and many others.



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Mapping the Future — The Florida Model Task Force Chooses TransCAD as the New FSUTMS Platform *Continued*

One of the exciting prospects about the move to TransCAD is that it can be used by a wider range of transportation organization staff. You do not need to be a programmer in order to use the software. Also, TransCAD has many uses beyond demand forecasting that make it valuable to anyone involved with transportation planning as a source of data, a means of producing maps, charts, and graphs for publications and presentations, and as a tool for analyzing land use and transportation issues.



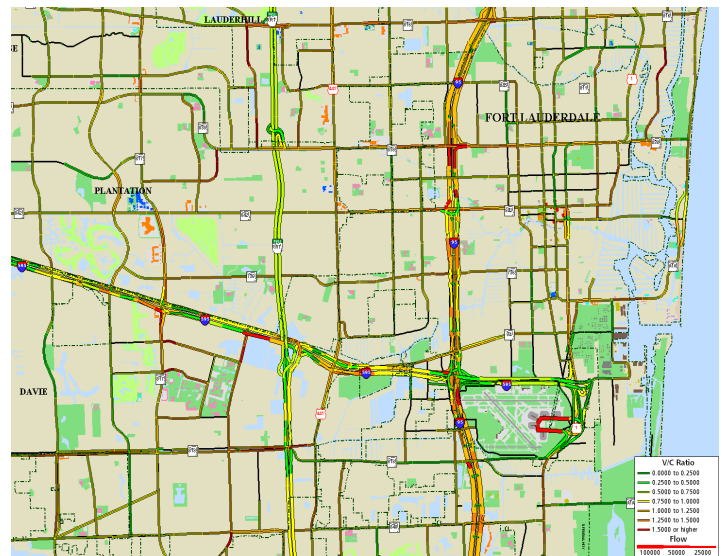
Duval County's mode share

The GIS functionality is unsurpassed for transportation and it is very easy to use compared to other GIS systems. TransCAD also works well with ArcView and can have native shape layers as well as shape file import and export. The database has higher performance and a much larger capacity than provided in other GIS systems, making it more suitable for handling Census and statewide datasets. Because the GIS and the modeling procedures are part of the same program, there is no need to learn how to use several different pieces of software or to spend time going back and forth between programs. Because TransCAD is one integrated software package, many task force

members think it will be much more manageable than a solution that involves using many different pieces of software to accomplish the same tasks.

Confidence in the selection was provided by the fact that TransCAD is already the most popular software for travel demand forecasting in the US. More than half of the MPOs and approximately 20 states have already standardized on TransCAD. This will ensure that there is a pool of trained users and consultants to assist Florida in making the transition.

Caliper Corporation is a highly regarded transportation and GIS software and consulting company that is the largest American supplier of planning software. Caliper has a large support staff available to help Florida users make the transition to TransCAD. As part of this process, FDOT will be providing training courses nearly every month for Florida FSUTMS users. You can contact your district office or the FDOT Systems Planning Office to find out more about these courses. Caliper will also be performing model conversions and will provide help suggesting future enhancements to FSUTMS.



Key Biscayne Trips

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FSUTMS: How did we get here?

A personal perspective on the history of Florida's standard model.

By Ken Kaltenbach, P.E., The Corradino Group

After an interest in modeling in graduate school and about four years of developing small urban area transportation plans for the Commonwealth of Kentucky, using PLANPAC on an IBM 370, I arrived in Tallahassee in 1976 as my firm's first full-time Florida resident employee. My job was to assist FDOT in a study to perform sketch planning, and then more detailed planning for the Tampa Bay Region. In those days, FDOT Planning was centralized in Tallahassee. The "state of the art" transportation planning package was PLANPAC/UTPS on an IBM-370 (BIG IRON), with full OS, using Job Control Language (JCL). And, FDOT had near "Star Wars" capabilities. Why, you could access the computer via a terminal (TSO). Just think, no punch cards. You still had to see the man at the window to the Data Center if your job used a tape, say for big files more than a megabyte (a million characters!), and to retrieve your print out (thousands of lines and pounds of green-bar paper). Really sophisticated models had digitized networks, and you could get the plots at the window, but that took several more hours. You might get better service from the night computer operator if you brought him a pizza (put it on your expense account as "data flow lubrication"). Well, so much for the mechanics.

But in 1976, there were no standards. There was no FSUTMS. Say you knew how to run the Miami model. That didn't help you much for Tampa. Or St. Pete. Or Clearwater. It wasn't just that the model structure was different, there were no file naming conventions. In those days consultants did most of the modeling. Each brought their own ideas and naming conventions. There was no common ground.

In the mid-1970's some of the FDOT Central Office staff thought it might be a good idea to standardize the models. "Wouldn't it be nice if everybody developed models in a common way, using common terminology, and methods that were proven to be appropriate for Florida?" In the meantime, FDOT began to de-centralize, and the Central Office modelers were scattered. Standardization became much more important.

The first RFP issued by FDOT for a standard modeling process, called Phase I Model update, had two tasks. Task A dealt with the overall structure of the model, and Task B dealt with trip generation. The basic structure followed some of the methods the Department used in the Tampa Bay Region. Burning issues included things like, "should balancing trip tables be part of mode choice, or part of

highway assignment?" "What should we call each of these steps?" "How should we name the data files?" So, at this point, FDOT established some basic parameters that gave us the standard steps on the FSUTMS menu. Task B, which produced the famous "Task B" report on trip generation, established the "GEN" model. Again, the models developed for Tampa Bay were tapped here. The basic methodologies for GEN were established here: trip rate equations for attractions and cross-classification models for productions. In the late 1970's few organizations were conducting new O-D surveys. So, FDOT looked for their old data from the urbanized areas household O-D surveys conducted in the 1960's (remember the 12.5% samples?). FDOT went to warehouses where the data were stored, and found boxes of moldy punch cards and tapes. The elements had rendered some of this data unreadable. But some data were useful, and they were used to develop the two sets of trip generation rates that were incorporated into GEN (see the Task B report). It was about this time that the Florida Standard Urban Transportation Model Structure (FSUTMS) was born.

Phase II followed close on the heels of Phase I and dealt with trip distribution. Suffice it to say that a standard gravity model was chosen for the standard distribution model. Gravity models are still used in FSUTMS, and the only serious departure from the original specification is that some areas use composite impedance so that distribution is based on both transit and highway travel times.

In the meantime, FDOT decided it would be good to have a set of coding conventions for highway networks. In 1981 my firm was retained by the Department to develop a set of guidelines for coding FSUTMS highway networks. The result was the Standard Highway Network Procedure. This report provided guidelines on coding highway networks. It was still aimed at UTPS models, run on the mainframe computer.

Shortly thereafter, as part of the "Volusia Land Use Study," my firm developed FSUTMS zonal data from the 1980 Census, ES-202 files, and the "DIME" file. Our job included making future year forecasts of the zonal data. To do this, we developed the "Simplified Land Allocation Model" (SLAM). SLAM was a precursor to ULAM. While not an official part of FSUTMS, SLAM fit into the overall structure of the Florida modeling process. It is also interesting to note that we developed the original SLAM code in FORTRAN on an Apple II computer, and later ported it to the FDOT mainframe. All Florida MPOs did not use SLAM, but

A brief history of FSUTMS *Continued*

some found it to be a useful tool for developing future year zonal data.

Next, the Department recognized the need for transit models, and issued an RFP for the Phase III Model Update. This was about 1982. This study developed a set of transit models, including transit network coding conventions, rules for transit path-building, multinomial logit models, transit assignment models, and a little-used transit evaluation model. At that time nested models were experimental and multinomial models were in use throughout the US.

About this time, Comsis was marketing the MINUTP microcomputer package all around Florida. In order to maintain consistency in Florida modeling, FDOT decided to issue an RFP for a “standard” microcomputer-modeling package, “NEVER TO REPLACE MAINFRAME FSUTMS.” Jim Fennessy and Tranplan won the job as the new microcomputer-modeling package. Tranplan had some capabilities that surpassed UTPS. But, since micro-FSUTMS was never to replace the mainframe, the Department spent a lot of time adjusting Tranplan so that micro-FSUTMS would produce exactly the same answers as UTPS, and use exactly the same inputs. So, if you had a set of input files, you could run either on the mainframe or the microcomputer, using the same files, and get the same results. The goal was not to produce model results that were close to UTPS results, but exactly the same. Sometimes this meant changing UTPS, as errors in the mainframe package were discovered, analyzed, verified, and then corrected. All in all, it was a remarkable and productive effort.

Shortly thereafter, my firm was retained by the Department to develop menu-driven scripts for the mainframe UTPS version of FSUTMS. In retrospect, we produced good, standard, easy-to-use software. But this system was used only for a short time because microcomputers quickly replaced the mainframe, despite the original assurances to the contrary.

Micro-FSUTMS caught on quickly. Everybody went to microcomputers. If you had a microcomputer and someone who had a reasonable grasp of how to use them, you could run the models, even if you knew almost nothing about transportation planning. Every MPO could run their model and the results were consistent. There was a problem with

the large studies as the DOS-based microcomputers could not deal with the large file sizes, didn't have enough memory, and took hours and days to run. This led to FSUTMS versions that used the IBM-RS6000 Unix-based computer, and OS/2 versions. These systems became more or less obsolete with the advent of 32-bit processing available with Windows 95, and the availability of large hard drives.

In the early 1990's, there was a push for new data and better models. Folks started to consider small-sample O-D surveys, nested logit models, time-of-day models, alternative volume-delay functions, life-style models, and activity-based modeling. Microcomputer power and storage capabilities greatly expanded. And geographic information systems came into the mainstream. With these tools, models could do so much more. But Tranplan/FSUTMS was a command-line-based system, ported from the mainframe. While limited efforts were made to link Tranplan with GIS, Tranplan fell behind the state of the art. Caliper's TransCAD, and Citilabs' Cube Voyager offered powerful packages that were more integrated with GIS. Limits like Tranplan/FSUTMS' fixed record length for highway links were perceived as problems by many modelers. Thus, there was a push for adoption of new software.

After a lengthy evaluation process, the Department acted on recommendations from the Model Task Force, adopting TransCAD as the new modeling package in May of 2003. TransCAD offers:

- Tight integration with GIS and spatial analysis
- Fast processing, using all the powers of Windows
- A relational database structure
- Open architecture, allowing procedures to be customized
- Advanced, state-of-the-art modeling algorithms
- The ability to produce Windows-based graphics easily and quickly.

The Model Task Force's adoption of TransCAD signifies the beginning of the FSUTMS transition process. Building on their past knowledge and experience, the Model Task Force and FDOT will work together to ensure a successful transition to a new era for Florida's standard model.

You are invited to participate at the

Florida Model Task Force



Meeting

November 12-13, 2003

November 12

1:00PM - 5:00PM

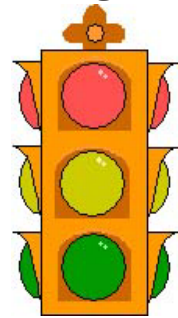
Guest presenters from out-of-state agencies will be discussing their experiences with TransCAD conversion.



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November 13

9:00AM - 4:30PM



The MTF will hold an open forum requesting input from the MTF members on the development of a FSUTMS/TransCAD implementation plan.

Please make arrangements to attend this important meeting.

**EMBASSY SUITES HOTEL
8978 INTERNATIONAL DRIVE
ORLANDO, FLORIDA 32819
PHONE: (407) 352-1400**

\$89.00 per night

Reservation Deadline: October 27, 2003

To help us with planning accommodations, please let us know if you will attend by e-mailing Huiwei Shen at : huiwei.shen@dot.state.fl.us.

Southeast Florida FSUTMS Users' Group Members Survey

By Shi-Chiang Li, FDOT, District 4 and Thuha Nguyen, Kittelson & Associates, Inc.

In an effort to evaluate the operations of the South Florida's FSUTMS Users' Group, the group conducted a member survey in June 2003. The questionnaires were sent to more than 60 members on its mailing list and a total of 27 responses were received. Among them, 18 were from consultants, five from public agencies, and four from universities.

A key question was asked about the usefulness and relevancy of the Users' Group meetings, 10 responses (37%) indicated they were *always* informative, 16 (63%) indicated they were *mostly* informative. Respondents indicated their interests on the format of the meetings and the organizational structure of the group.

A set of survey questions was designed to probe members' preference regarding the format, frequency, and scheduling of the meetings. The survey results are shown on the following table:

Question: Which meeting format do you prefer?	Number of Responses	Percentage
Current format: (Mostly one presentation at each meeting)	8	30%
More in-depth, extended training/workshop type	5	19%
More than one (shorter) presentations at each meeting	12	44%
All of these above	2	7%
Question: Do you like to see more "hands-on" demonstrations?		
Not necessary	3	11%
Depending on the topics	15	56%
The more the better	9	33%
Question: For meeting frequency, would you like to:		
Meet once a month, for 2 hours?	8	30%
Meet once every two months, for 3 hours?	10	37%
Meet quarterly for ½ day?	9	33%
Question: For meeting place, where do you prefer:		
Meet at the same current location (FDOT District 4 Headquarters)	20	74%
Meet at the same centralized location, somewhere other than the FDOT Headquarters	0	0%
Rotate meeting locations	5	19%
No Preference	2	7%
Question: Should we meet over lunch hours?		
Never	7	26%
Only if lunch catering is arranged	4	15%
I will bring in my own brown bag, but catering is preferred	5	19%
Will take the advantage of lunch time regardless of lunch arrangement	10	37%

The members expressed their desire of seeing different types of presentations in the following preference order:

- GIS Functionalities/Applications
- Modeling theories and concepts
- Model Validations/Validation Criteria
- Model applications
- Travel survey findings
- Software application techniques
- Model Structures
- Land Use modeling
- Statistical methods and applications in modeling
- Census findings
- Planning/PD&E projects
- Traffic/Capacity Studies

Southeast Florida FSUTMS Users' Group Members Survey *Continued*

Many of the members also expressed their desire to make presentations at future meetings. The topics they planned to present include: Self-calibrating feedback process, PD&E and corridor planning studies, and Use of Paramics model on the Ramp Metering Project.

Another set of questions was designed to probe organizational structure preferences, interest in social activities, as well as publications. The results are as follows:

Question: In your opinion, what is the best future organizational structure of the users' group?	Number of Responses	Percentage
Activities managed by an elected chair and officials (assuming one-year term, with a term limit, similar to all the other users' groups in Florida. Subject to further discussion if this structure is being chosen.)	14	52%
Activities managed by a steering committee (assuming a five-person committee with representatives from both public and private agencies as well as universities. Subject to further discussion if this structure is being chosen.)	11	41%
Question: Do you think a membership fee is appropriate for group activities?		
Yes	2	7%
No	12	44%
Depending on Organizational Structure	11	41%
What are we using the fee for?	1	4%
Question: Do you like to participate and/or help organizing non-working hour social events		
Not likely available	10	37%
Will participate	11	41%
Can help to organize events	4	15%
Will help to organize events	3	11%
Question: Would you be interested in (Check all applicable):		
Quarterly newsletter?	16	59%
I can contribute articles for the newsletter	6	
I can contribute for newsletter editing	8	
Internet Discussion forum?	6	22%
I can help to establish a discussion forum	1	
I can help to administrate a discussion forum	2	

There were other comments including: making sure the subject discussed is consistent with our practice, having presentations in line with the challenges we face, presenting a wide range of transportation topics and providing information with respect to the latest techniques, and creating the means for queries and discussions to solve modeling problems.

This survey serves as a basis for enhancing and expanding the users' group activities. Based on the survey findings, Shi-Chiang Li, who has run the group activities for the past eleven years, led the September meeting to discuss how the group should be operating. The group had great exchanges of ideas and showed enthusiastic volunteerism. Phil Steinmiller volunteered himself as the next users group driver and Ken Kaltenbach volunteered to serve as the group representative to the MTF for the next year. The group also decided to hold annual business meetings to plan and delegate their group activities.

New Features in the Florida Traffic Information 2002 CD

by *FDOT Statistics Office*

The Florida Department of Transportation received an award from AASHTO for the development of the Florida Traffic Information (FTI) CD in 2000. The FTI CD was first developed in 1998 and has been updated every year. The 2000 AASHTO award-winning team has continued to improve the FTI CD-ROM by including several new and improved features.

FTI 2002 contains a graphical interface to access traffic data collected for over 7,500 traffic count locations on the State Highway System. The FTI program allows users to locate, identify, and access this information from thousands of traffic count sites monitored in 2002.

New features in the FTI 2002 CD include:

- **Search Feature**

The Find feature has been enhanced and can be found in a new drop-down menu. The Find Roads feature has been improved and can now be used to find the intersection of two local roads. Once the feature is found, it will stay highlighted until cleared under the Find dialog screen or Find menu item.

- **Truck AADT Map**

Truck AADT Map displays color-coded truck volumes.

- **Distance Measure Tool**

A new tool that can be used to measure distance has been included to measure distances on the map.

- **Video Tutorial**

A new tutorial video is available to explain how to use the program.

A new report has been added to the FTI 2002:

- **Volume Factor Category Summary Report**

The data from each station making up a category is included in the Volume Factor Category Summary Report. The conversion factors are displayed for each month in a category. A category is made up of a group of telemetered traffic monitoring sites, usually showing similar traffic characteristics. These groups are determined for traffic count stations that report characteristics for a geographic location.

Updated reports available in the new version include:

- **Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) Report**

This report provides the Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) for every segment of Florida's State Highway System.

Annual Average Daily Traffic is the total volume of traffic on a highway segment for one year, divided by

the number of days in the year. Both directions of traffic volumes are reported individually as well as total two-way volumes.

- **AADT Forecast Report**

This report projects the future AADT for a site based on the past history for that site.

- **Annual Vehicle Classification Report**

This report gives the distribution (percentage of 15 categories of vehicles) at each station. Each vehicle is classified according to one of the 15 categories (as described in the FHWA's Traffic Monitoring Guide, Section 4, Appendix A), or a special state-supplied or unknown category.

- **200 Highest Hour Report**

The 200 Highest Hour Traffic Count Report is an annual report which provides traffic count information for the highest 200 hours of the year at all permanent count stations, or telemetered traffic monitoring sites (TTMS), that have a sufficient quantity of data. These sites are located throughout Florida, primarily on the State Highway System.

- **Historical AADT Report**

The Historical AADT Report displays the directional and total AADTs for as many years as data has been collected from the traffic monitoring site.

- **Hourly Continuous Count Report**

This report displays traffic counts for every hour of each day by month and direction for a permanent traffic monitoring site (TTMS).

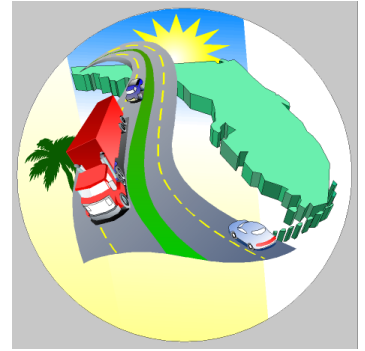
- **Peak Season Factor Category Report**

The Peak Season Factor Category Report provides:

- Weekly Seasonal Factors (SF); used to adjust a short-term traffic count into an AADT
- Peak Season Conversion Factors (PSCF); used by traffic modelers
- Model Output Conversion Factors (MOCF); converts model output to AADT

- **Vehicle Class History Report:**

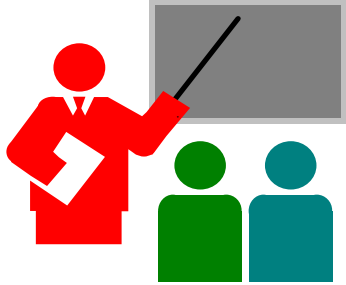
The Vehicle Class History Report displays Vehicle Classification for past years of available data. The Volume is calculated by multiplying the percentage of vehicles in each group by the AADT for that year.



Updated Traffic Data Reports & Information can found at the following website:

<http://www.dot.state.fl.us/planning/statistics/trafficdata/>

Workshop Schedule



FSUTMS/TransCAD Workshop

Hotel: Adams Mark
Dates: November 3-7, 2003
 Rate: \$69.00 Single/Double
 Address: 100 N. Atlantic Ave Daytona Beach, FL 32118
 Phone: 386.254.8200 (Reservations)
Starting Time: Monday, 1:00 PM
Ending Time: Thursday, 12:00 Noon
Res. Deadline: October 20, 2003
 Instructor(s): Caliper Corporation

FSUTMS/TransCAD Workshop

Hotel: Sea Turtle Inn
Dates: December 8-12, 2003
 Rate: \$88.00 Single/Double (Note: \$88 room rate includes \$7.00 nightly service fee)
 Address: One Ocean Blvd Atlantic Beach, FL 32233
 Phone: 904.249.7402 (Reservations)
 Fax: 904.247.1517
Starting Time: Monday 1:00 PM
Ending Time: Friday, 12:00 Noon
Res. Deadline: November 17, 2003
 Instructor(s): Caliper Corporation

FSUTMS/TransCAD Workshop

Hotel: Hilton Garden Inn
Dates: January 26-30, 2004
 Rate: \$89.00 Single/Double
 Address: 6623 Hospitality Way Orlando, FL 32819
 Phone: 321.663.7981 (Reservations)
 Fax: 407.363.9335
Starting Time: Monday 1:00 PM
Ending Time: Friday, 12:00 Noon
 Res. Deadline: January 9, 2004
 Instructor(s): Caliper Corporation

FSUTMS Model Calibration Workshop (Tentative)

Hotel: Hilton Daytona Beach
Dates: February 23-27, 2004
 Rate: \$90.00 Single/Double
 Address: 2637 South Atlantic Ave Daytona Bch, FL 32118
 Phone: 386.767.7350 (Reservations)
 Fax: 386.767.0180
Starting Time: Monday, 1:00 PM
Ending Time: Thursday, 11:30 AM
Res. Deadline: February 9, 2004
 Instructor(s): The Corradino Group, TSG, FDOT

FSUTMS Traffic Impact Analysis Workshop (Tentative)

Hotel: Homewood Suites
Dates: March 1-4, 2004
 Rate: \$89.00 Single/Double
 Address: 8745 International Drive Orlando, FL 32819
 Phone: 407.248.2232 (Reservations)
 Fax: 407.248.6552
Starting Time: Monday 1:00 PM
Ending Time: Friday, 12:00 Noon
Res. Deadline: February 16, 2004
 Instructor(s): PBS&J, Department Staff, TSG

FSUTMS/TransCAD Workshop

Hotel: Hilton Fort Lauderdale/Sunrise
 Dates: May 10-14, 2004
 Rate: \$79.00 Single/Double
 Address: 3003 North University Drive Sunrise, FL 33322
 Phone: 954.748.7000 (Reservations)
 Fax: 954.747.9593
Starting Time: Monday 1:00 PM
Ending Time: Friday, 12:00 Noon
 Res. Deadline: April 26, 2004
 Instructor(s): Caliper Corporation

Registration can be completed on-line at: www.dot.state.fl.us/planning click on "Training" and "Modeling Workshops." **Be sure to notify us if you are a P.E. needing professional development hour credits.**

FSUTMS Users' Group News

The **Central Florida Users' Group** is planning to hold their next meeting at the end of October. The exact date and time will be announced. The meetings are held at FDOT District 5 Orlando Urban Office. For additional information about the group, please contact [Dawn Bisplinghoff \(407\) 482-7879](mailto:Dawn.Bisplinghoff@fdot.com)

Due to the plan update process, the **Southwest Florida Users' Group** has decided to hold their next meeting after the first of the year when the validation process is completed. All users' group meetings are held at the Charlotte County Airport (2800 A-6 Airport Rd., Punta Gorda, FL). For additional information about the group, please contact [Jim Baxter \(863\) 519-2562](mailto:Jim.Baxter@fdot.com)

At their last meeting, the **Southeast Florida Users' Group** discussed the results of a recent survey the Group had conducted (see page 6.) As noted, Shi-Chiang Li, FDOT District 4, handed over his administrative responsibilities to Phil Steinmiller of FDOT District 6. The next meeting will take place on **December 4, 2003**. The meeting will be held at 9:30 AM at the FDOT-District 4 "Old Auditorium." For additional information, please contact [Phil Steinmiller \(305\) 377-5896](mailto:Phil.Steinmiller@fdot.com)

In August, a new users' group was formed in Northwest Florida. The **Northwest Florida Users' Group** will meet on Wednesday, **November 5, 2003** at 1:15 PM. The meeting will be held at FDOT-District 3 "Design Conference room." For additional information, please contact [Craig Gavin at \(850\) 638-0205](mailto:Craig.Gavin@fdot.com).



The next meeting for the **Northeast Florida Transportation Applications Forum** is set for Friday **November 14, 2003**. The meeting will include a presentation from Caliper on TransCAD and from FDOT on the latest LOS developments. The Applications Forum meets at the FDOT-District 2 Jacksonville Urban Office-Training Facility. The meeting starts at 2:00 PM and runs until approximately 4:00 PM. For additional information, please contact [Karen Taulbee \(904\)360-5652](mailto:Karen.Taulbee@fdot.com)

The **Tampa Bay Applications Group** will hold their next meeting on **October 30, 2003**. The meeting will be a workshop on Specific FSUTMS Skills. This brown-bag lunch workshop will be held from 12:00 PM to 2:00 PM at the FDOT-District 7 office. For more information, please contact [Danny Lamb \(813\) 975-6437](mailto:Danny.Lamb@fdot.com).

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