



## **Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization**

### **2016 State Legislative Priorities**

Adopted October 26, 2015

- Support legislation to raise transportation revenue using means such as those recommended by the MPO Advisory Council (MPOAC).
  - Implement Top 6 revenue options overwhelmingly supported by elected officials on the MPOAC Board and its Blue Ribbon Study Committee (attached).
- Restore, protect and increase transportation trust funds and funding to Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) and County Incentive Grant Program (CIGP).
- Support legislation that expands local revenue options which fund transportation facilities or operations.
- Support increased funding for innovative alternative forms of transportation such as multimodal improvements including public transportation; bicycle, pedestrian and trail facilities; and intelligent transportation system technologies (ITS).
- Support continued investments for Port Manatee, strategically serving Sarasota and Manatee Counties and all Southwest Florida, as the closest deepwater cargo port in the United States to the Panama Canal and Cuba.



## **Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization**

### **2016 Federal Legislative Priorities**

Adopted October 26, 2015

- Support significant federal transportation legislation that increases funding levels and provides a long-term, self-sustaining and predictable transportation and infrastructure program.
- Reduce unnecessary federal regulations in order to lower project costs and expedite project construction, including elimination of federal restrictions that prevent implementation of innovative transportation mobility alternatives.
- Support more equitable rate of return of federal gas tax revenues to the State of Florida of 97%, as referenced in MAP-21.
- Continue efforts to provide transportation funding streams for increased flexibility and improved efficiency, and eliminate federal restrictions that hold back implementation of innovative transportation mobility alternatives.
- Support continued investments for Port Manatee, strategically serving Sarasota and Manatee Counties and all Southwest Florida, as the closest deepwater cargo port in the United States to the Panama Canal and Cuba.



## About the Sarasota/Manatee MPO

- The Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is a regional transportation planning agency, which provides a forum for cooperative decision-making concerning regional and local transportation issues.
- The MPO was created by Federal and State law to develop transportation plans and programs which encourage and promote the implementation of transportation facilities which include all modes of transportation in a manner that will maximize the mobility of people and goods.
- The Sarasota/Manatee MPO area encompasses the entire counties of Sarasota and Manatee, nine (9) cities, the Sarasota Bradenton International Airport and Port Manatee Seaport; estimated 2013 U.S. Census population Sarasota County 390,429 and Manatee County 342,106.
- The Sarasota/Manatee MPO is a regional partner in producing a cost-efficient regionally integrated transportation system, with numerous partnerships and relationships:
  - The West Central Florida Metropolitan Planning Organizations Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC) (all MPOs in the Tampa Bay Region),
  - Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA) (7 Counties in Tampa Bay Area),
  - Interlocal Regional Planning Agreement with the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and Polk Transportation Planning Organization (TPO)
  - Participation with both Tampa Bay and Southwest Florida Regional Planning Councils,
  - State and nationally recognized Tamiami Trail (US 41) Scenic Highway, which spans the entire length of Manatee and Sarasota Counties and 5 municipalities, and
  - Interlocal agreements for regional inter-county bus travel service by Manatee and Sarasota transit entities.



**Sarasota County**

Commissioner Charles Hines  
Commissioner Alan Maio  
Commissioner Christine Robinson

**Manatee County**

Commissioner Larry Bustle  
Commissioner Betsy Benc  
Commissioner Vanessa Baugh

**City of Sarasota**

Mayor Willie Shaw  
Commissioner Susan Chapman

**City of Bradenton**

Councilmember Patrick Roff, Vice Chair  
Councilmember Gene Brown

**City of Venice**

Councilman Jim Bennett, Chair

**City of Palmetto**

Mayor Shirley Groover Bryant

**City of North Port**

Commissioner Linda Yates  
Vice Mayor Jacqueline Moore

**Island Transportation Planning  
Organization** (Anna Maria, *Holmes  
Beach* & Bradenton Beach)  
Mayor Bob Johnson

**Town of Longboat Key**

Commissioner Jack Daly

**Sarasota Bradenton Airport Authority**

Commissioner Carlos Beruff

**Florida Department of Transportation**

(Non-Voting Advisor)

Secretary Billy Hattaway, P.E.

**MPO Executive Director**

David Hutchinson  
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# Top 6 Revenue Options

- Index All Fuel Taxes not Currently Indexed

In addition to the State taxes mentioned above, there are several different local option taxes levied on a per gallon basis in addition to the Constitutional Fuel Tax (2 cents per gallon), County Fuel Tax (1 cent per gallon) and the Municipal Fuel Tax (1 cent per gallon). The Constitutional, County and Municipal taxes are collected by the State for distribution to local governments. None of these or the local option fuel tax is indexed to the CPI. This option would index them on the same basis as the State Fuel Sales Tax and the SCETS, providing local governments with the same inflation hedge enjoyed by the STTF and generating approximately \$115 million annually for investment in transportation infrastructure. Some of these user fees have not been adjusted since the 1940s.

- One Cent Municipal Optional Sales Tax

Under current Florida Statute, Charter Counties and those included in a Regional Transportation Authority district may elect to impose up to a one percent sales tax on items up to \$5,000 with revenues available for transportation uses. This option would extend that flexibility to cities with a population of 150,000 or more, but could not be duplicative of any County transportation sales tax. For example, today Miami-Dade County voters approved a one-half percent sales tax. If the City of Miami wanted to put this in place, it would be limited to an additional one-half percent. In counties without a city with a population of 150,000, the option would be available to the largest municipality in that county based on the latest available census. If fully implemented, it could generate approximately \$830 million to cities in total.

- Two Cent Fuel Tax Increase per Year – 5 Years (10 cents) Indexed for Inflation

Implementation would raise the State Highway Fuels Sales Tax from the current rate of 12.6 cents per gallon by 2 cents per year for the next five for a total 10 cent increase. This tax is currently adjusted annually by the Consumer Price Index (CPI) as is the State Comprehensive Enhanced Transportation System (SCETS) Tax which is currently at 6.9 cents per gallon. Additional forecast revenues of approximately \$183 million in 2013 growing to \$1.17 billion by 2020 for the State Transportation Trust Fund (STTF).

# Top 6 Revenue Options

- Vehicle Miles Traveled Study (VMT)

This recommendation is to have the Legislature commission and fund an extensive effort to deal with the systemic issues of fuel taxes becoming less sustainable as a primary surrogate for a transportation user fee. While fuel taxes served as an adequate substitute for a true user fee for decades, significant increases in mandated vehicle fuel efficiency and the introduction of all electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles are eroding transportation revenues. It is recognized that there are significant concerns over the concept of charging users of the highway system based on each mile traveled. These include privacy of citizens, the cost of implementing such a system, and institutional issues associated with revenue sharing. This effort is intended to address these issues at a minimum, deploy a demonstration of the concept and develop a business plan and implementation roadmap to move Florida to a VMT-based system.

- Five Cent Local Diesel Tax

Local option tax rates are fixed in State Law to provide diesel fuel tax rate consistency among counties for purposes of administering the provisions of the International Fuel Tax Agreement. The local option diesel tax rate is currently 7 cents per gallon, while the statewide average for local option gasoline taxes has risen to 9.6 cents per gallon. There has long been recognition that a higher per gallon rate on diesel fuel is appropriate, as the major users of the fuel are heavy trucks. For example, the federal gasoline tax is 18.4 cents per gallon and 24.4 cents for diesel because of the distinction of the demands that are placed on the highway system by heavy trucks and light duty vehicles. This option would establish an additional five cent diesel fuel tax in each county, and the revenues would be required to be expended on projects that serve or enhance commercial highway traffic. This dedicated local source of funding could be used to encourage economic development and improve existing commercial operations. It is estimated to generate about \$72 million per year to Florida's counties.

- Return Motor Vehicle License, Registration and Titling Fee Increases to the State Transportation Trust Fund

This recommendation would redirect the increases in the fees that were enacted in 2009 from the State General Revenue Fund to the STTF. These fees have historically been dedicated to the transportation system as a method to further the concept of user fees supporting the transportation system. After a 20 year hiatus of fee adjustments (30 years for registration fees), they were raised in 2009 with the incremental revenue being used to help solve the general budget crisis due to the economic recession. With increasing pressures on transportation funding sources coupled with growing needs, action was taken in the 2012 session of the Florida Legislature to restore a portion of these traditional STTF funds. While the most Title Fees will be remitted to the STTF yielding about \$200 million per year, the Motor Vehicle License Fee and Surcharge increases along with the Initial Registration Fee increase are recommended to be returned as well. The annual estimated revenue impact to the STTF is \$413 million.