



Chapter 4: Important Themes

During the course of preparing the *Moving Martin Forward* project, several key themes became apparent to build upon the Goals and Objectives and the input heard from the community during public engagement events.

Roadway Maintenance Needs

Roads and streets are among the most important public assets in Martin County. Proper road maintenance contributes to reliable transportation at reduced cost, as there is a direct link between road condition and vehicle operating costs. Without regular roadway maintenance, roads can rapidly fall into disrepair, and postponing road maintenance results in high direct and indirect costs. Currently, 71% of the local fuel tax is invested in roadway operations and maintenance.

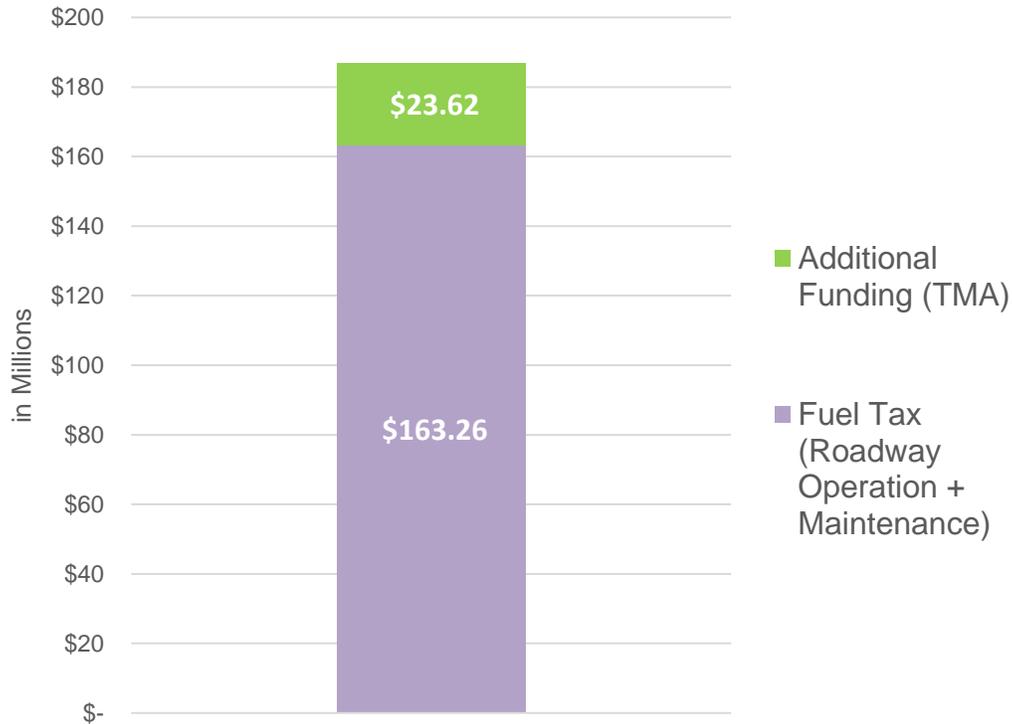


Roadway Maintenance is Funded in the Multimodal Cost Feasible Plan

Based on the results of multiple forms of public engagement techniques, it was found that the general public strongly supported maintenance of roadways and bridges (maintaining the existing system) and considered it as one of their top priorities when compared to other forms of transportation investment. Results from the general public are noted in the Public Engagement section and more information can be found in Appendix A-3. In the Multimodal Cost Feasible Plan (CFP), an additional 60% of flexible federal funding is recommended to go towards roadway maintenance utilizing Transportation Management Area (TMA) funds on federal aid roadways. This represents an additional \$23.62 million of forecasted revenues over the 20-year span of the CFP. Figure 4-1 depicts the maintenance funding sources for *Moving Martin Forward*.



Figure 4- 1: Maintenance Funding Sources



Bicyclist and Pedestrian Safety

Walking is a basic human activity. Yet during the past 100 years or so, walking for transportation has been marginalized in the quest to build sophisticated systems for motorized vehicle efficiency. Bicyclist and pedestrian crashes and the resulting deaths and injuries are a serious problem as documented within crash data. Furthermore, Florida has consistently suffered the highest pedestrian and bicyclist fatality ratio in the United States according to National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) data; Martin County suffers similar fatality rates as the State of Florida as a whole except for Martin County’s percentage of pedestrian and bicyclist fatalities, which increasingly surpasses the state percentage, as demonstrated by the data in Table 4-1.



Table 4- 1. Overview of Pedestrian and Bicyclist Fatality Data

	Pedestrian			Bicyclist		
	Pedestrian Fatalities	Percentage of Total Fatalities	Fatalities per Million Persons	Bicyclist Fatalities	Percentage of Total Fatalities	Fatalities per Million Persons
United States	4735	14.5%	14.98	743	2.3%	2.35
Florida	501	20.8%	25.62	133	5.5%	6.80
Martin	4	26.7%	26.49	1	6.7%	6.62

Sources: National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) *Traffic Safety Facts 2013 Data*; Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (DHSMV) *Traffic Crash Facts Annual Report 2013*; U.S. Bureau of the Census population data

Historically Florida has one of the highest if not the highest rate of bicycling deaths of any state in the nation according to historical NHTSA data. Florida’s bicycling mortality rate of 6.80 persons per 1,000,000 population is more almost triple the nationwide average of 2.35 persons per 1,000,000 population. In addition, a recent Centers for Disease Control (CDC) report finds that the rate of decline of bicyclist fatalities between 1975 and 2012 in Florida is far slower than other states, indicating that other areas are making bigger gains in reducing the safety problem. Bicyclists die on Florida roadways at a rate double that of vehicle occupants.

Martin County pedestrian and bicyclist data tend to be similar to the Florida statewide average. Approximately one in every three traffic fatalities in Martin County is a pedestrian or a bicyclist, despite mode share data that indicates that less than 5 percent of all trips are made on foot or by bicycle. These data underscore a need to improve bicycling and walking conditions in Martin County. Guidance from both the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) indicate a shift toward funding multimodal transportation projects that improve pedestrian and bicycle facilities. Furthermore, based on the results of multiple forms of public engagement, it was found that LRTP meeting participants strongly favored improvements to bicycle and pedestrian facilities in Martin County.

Congestion Management Process (CMP) / Livable Communities Initiative (LCI)

The Congestion Management Process (CMP) is a systematic procedure that provides for safe and effective management and operation of transportation facilities through the use of demand



reduction and operational management strategies. CMP strategies are lower-cost alternatives to traditional roadway widening that typically involve traffic operational improvements. Demand reduction may include improving street and land use connectivity so that fewer local trips must use arterial roadways, as well as providing facilities for pedestrian and bicycle travel. Operational management strategies may include intersection and driveway improvements.

The Livable Communities Initiative (LCI) is defined in United States Code 49 Section 5309(a)(5) and (7). The objectives of the LCI are to improve mobility and quality of life through improvements that encourage the use of alternative transportation modes. These objectives are accomplished through broad-based strategies such as the following.

- Linking communities to public transportation
- Creating a more positive environment for bicyclists and pedestrians
- Obtaining support of stakeholders
- Encouraging innovative urban design

Characteristics of livable communities include community participation in the decision-making process; well-planned mixed-use neighborhoods; transit, pedestrian, and bicycle access that is compatible with land use; facilities that are Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) compliant; and safety, security, and accessibility for all users of the transportation system.

Federal Guidance

Federal transportation legislation stipulated the requirement for the use of CMP in Transportation Management Areas. The CMP builds upon the accumulated knowledge of how greater availability of data, enhanced tools for data management and modeling, expanded use of intelligent transportation systems (ITS), and opportunities for regional collaboration. The CMP is a process that provides for effective management and operations and enhanced linkage to the planning process. It also includes the environmental review process, based on cooperatively developed travel demand reduction and operational management strategies as well as capacity increases for alternative travel modes.

The CMP uses a number of analytic tools to define and identify congestion within a region, corridor, and activity center or project area, and to develop and select appropriate strategies to reduce congestion or mitigate the impacts of congestion. The Federal Highway Administration



(FHWA) has conducted several workshops and technical outreach events that address the CMP. In addition, FHWA has funded projects that developed guidebooks on the subject of the CMP.

Funding

Beginning with the 2035 LRTP, the Martin MPO funds CMP/LCI improvements by setting aside a “box” fund for these demand reduction and operational improvements, which serve as an alternative to traditional roadway widening. In 2011, the Martin MPO updated the CMP so that it resulted in a living document, written in plain language that is understandable to a broader audience. The new process also produced recommendations that could be implemented within a reasonable time. The new design separated the CMP into two tiers. Tier I is the planning process through which a segment of roadway is chosen for further study. Tier II analyzes the selected section of roadway to perform a detailed Operation Analysis. The Operational Analysis results in specific recommendations for reducing congestion. Ultimately, these recommendations would be funded by the CMP/LCI “box” funds. The 2040 LRTP Multimodal CFP proposes to increase the box funds for the CMP/LCI improvements to \$600,000 per year using a Federal funding program called TMA funds.

Analysis

As part of the travel demand analysis conducted for the LRTP, corridors that appear to be approaching overcapacity conditions by 2040 were identified as being candidates for CMP improvements. Overcapacity conditions were determined using the volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratio, which is displayed on the 2040 roadway deficiencies map in Figure 6-1. Volume is the total number of vehicles passing a specific point on a roadway; capacity is the maximum number of cars that can pass a certain point at a reasonable traffic congestion level. Roadways analyzed to have a V/C between 0.8 and 1.0 are considered to be approaching capacity and are identified as CMP corridors. Roadways with a forecast future traffic volume equal to capacity are considered to have a V/C ratio of 1.0. Roadways analyzed to have a V/C greater than 1.0 are considered to be over-capacity.

CMP/LCI is Funded in the Multimodal Cost Feasible Plan

The Multimodal CFP includes funding for CMP/LCI strategies to address roadway capacity deficiencies where applicable.



CMP strategies include improvements such as traffic signal timing optimization, adding intersection turn lanes, multimodal transportation solutions, and other traffic operational enhancements. CMP strategies are appropriate for roadways where overcapacity roadway deficiencies could be realistically addressed through operational enhancements or travel demand strategies. CMP strategies may also be appropriate where roadways are physically constrained from traditional roadway widening. The following corridors are identified based on the analysis.

- SR 710 (Warfield Boulevard) between CR 609 (Allapattah Road) and CR 726 (Citrus Boulevard)
- SR 76 (Kanner Highway) between Jack James Drive and Cove Road – an alternative to future 8-lane widening
- SR 76 (Kanner Highway) between Indian Street and SR 714 (Monterey Road) – an alternative to future 8-lane widening
- Pomeroy Street between SR 76 (Kanner Highway) and Willoughby Boulevard
- CR A1A (Dixie Highway) between Indian Street and Salerno Road
- Mapp Road between Martin Highway and SR 714 (Martin Downs Boulevard)
- SR 714 (Palm City Bridge) between Mapp Road and SR 76 (Kanner Highway)
- SR 714 (Monterey Road) between US 1 and CR A1A (Dixie Highway)
- SR 714 (Monterey Road) between Kingswood Terrace and SR A1A (East Ocean Boulevard)
- SR A1A (East Ocean Boulevard) between SR 714 (Monterey Road) and MacArthur Boulevard
- CR 707 (Indian River Drive) between Palmer Street and SR 732 (Jensen Beach Causeway)
- NE Savannah Road between NE 24th Street and SR 732 (Jensen Beach Boulevard)
- SR 732 (Jensen Beach Boulevard) between Green River Parkway and NE Candice Avenue

Initial Congestion Management Process (CMP)/ Livable Communities Initiative (LCI)

Priority

The corridor for CR A1A (Dixie Highway) between Indian Street and Salerno Road was identified for the initial CMP/LCI priority. The range in the 2040 traffic volume consists from 4,000 to 15,500 which is less than a 3-lane undivided roadway. A lane elimination (road diet) for this corridor is



feasible since the traffic volumes do not exceed the capacity; the excess space can be repurposed to incorporate a better pedestrian environment and bicycle facilities. In addition, evaluating bus stop access with emphasis on measuring the quality of pedestrian and bicycle connectivity can improve this corridor. Reducing single occupancy vehicle (SOV) travel and developing and implementing strategies will truly improve the corridor to focus on enhancing the quality of life and improving safety and mobility, and improvements for land use, transit, biking, and walking.

Selection Criteria for Future Prioritization

The CMP/LCI corridors identified in the 2040 LRTP should be prioritized through the preparation of a study to develop a product to enhance criteria for project development. The study would be established to evaluate the corridors listed above with quantitative and qualitative measures for CMP/LCI opportunities.

Health and the Built Environment

The Martin MPO recognizes the importance of the relationship between public health and the built environment. Therefore, public health is one of the factors that play a key role in shaping the *Moving Martin Forward* 2040 LRTP project.

Historical Context

Industrialization in the nineteenth century highlighted the relationship between public health and the built environment, which led to the establishment of many reforms and practices, such as modern zoning codes, that significantly improved unsanitary conditions in urban environments. By the middle of the twentieth century, cognizance of the relationship between public health and the built environment began to diminish in part because of prior successes related to mitigating infectious diseases; therefore, the layout of cities and towns began to be seen in terms of land use economics and efficiency for automobile travel rather than as a matter of public health.

In the twenty-first century, there is growing concern that although infectious disease has been brought under control, the built environment is now contributing to modern society's primary health concern – chronic illnesses. These changes have not eliminated the connection between public health and the built environment, but suggest a sharply different focus than that of a hundred years ago. Sparse population densities and the strict separation between residential and



business areas were measures urged a hundred years ago to improve conditions associated with infectious disease and pollution. However, these conditions may contribute to chronic health problems. The sprawling design of suburbs increases reliance on the automobile. This in turn contributes to a sedentary lifestyle, obesity, and air pollution, with its detrimental effects including chronic respiratory ailments.

The Link to Transportation

Several aspects of the built environment can have an impact on chronic disease. These aspects include the provision of safe, well-lit open spaces and parks that encourage exercise; easily accessible nutritious food sources (such as grocery stores and community gardens); land use patterns that encourage active transportation (walking or bicycling) as a convenient option; and investment in transportation facilities that shorten trips, include non-motorized transportation facilities, or perhaps even incentivize non-motorized transportation by making it more convenient than the automobile for certain trip patterns. Since the purview of the MPO is transportation, the remainder of this section of *Moving Martin Forward* will focus on the link between healthy communities and transportation.

Potential Benefits

Many important benefits can be derived from shifting from an automobile-focused transportation planning process to a multimodal plan. These benefits relate to transportation efficiency, provision of mobility choices, economics, safety, social equity, and public health. This section focuses on the potential public health benefits to a multimodal transportation approach.

A multimodal transportation plan will provide options to increase the percentage of trips made by active transportation. The potential benefits of expanding Martin County's bicycle and pedestrian network, including accessibility to public transit, include the following.

- **Reduce incidences of chronic disease.** Active transportation can reduce the risk of diseases impacted by sedentary lifestyles, including Type 2 Diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, stroke, dementia, breast and colon cancer, as well as those related to poor air quality such as impaired lung development, lung cancer, and asthma, among others.



- Improve opportunities for active lifestyles. Sedentary lifestyles have been shown to result in negative health outcomes. Active lifestyles improve mental well-being in addition to reducing the likelihood of chronic illness.
- Enrich the aging experience. Elder adults may become geographically limited over time if the built environment does not respond to their needs by providing safe and convenient walking and bicycling options. Communities with complete transportation networks are able to offer quality “aging-in-place” experiences that include enhanced mental well-being, and independence by maintaining high levels of mobility.
- Develop active habits at a young age. Children are more likely to develop active lifestyle habits that last a lifetime if they have opportunities for outdoor play and active transportation at a young age. Providing walking and bicycling facilities, especially “safe routes to school,” can help curb childhood obesity and lead to a lifetime of positive outcomes including lower risk of heart disease and lower health care costs. A higher percentage of walk trips around schools leads to improved air quality around the schools, which can further lower the incidence of chronic illness such as asthma.
- Create higher levels of social capital. Residents living in neighborhoods with a connected street grid with higher levels of bicycling and walking are more likely to have higher levels of social capital (know their neighbors, participate politically, trust others, and be socially engaged), which improves mental well-being and sense of opportunity.
- Reduce health impacts associated with crash injuries. Although transportation safety is an important goal in its own right, recurring health impacts associated with crash injuries can reduce personal mobility as well as create a cost and resource burden on the healthcare system.

Age-Friendly Initiative



An age-friendly initiative enables the County to better adapt their structures and services to the needs of their aging population. It is an initiative that makes it easy for older people to stay connected to people and helps people to stay healthy and active even at the oldest ages.



Age-friendly initiatives can include any of the following from the *Age-Friendly Communities: An Introduction for Private and Public Finders*.

- New urbanism which promotes walkable neighborhoods
- Sustainable communities focuses on sustainable energy use, housing, transportation, education, health, job creation, and social factors such as Meals on Wheels
- Complete Streets which seeks to make streets safe and accessible for drivers, walkers, bicyclists, and wheelchair users
- Walkable communities designed “around the human foot, truly the only template that can lead to sustainability and future community prosperity”

The initiatives towards age-friendly will create places that support older adults and their families better, and enable older people to remain active, contributing members of their communities.

Martin County encourages living life to its utmost. The Kane Center, located in the City of Stuart, exemplifies this culture by embracing all elders. The Kane Center is a life center for the elders: their own space, designed to help them live happy, purposeful lives within a supportive social network of their peers and loved ones. It provides an Adult Day Club, the Kane Clinic (Health Clinic), and Kane Carriage (transportation provider) for elders in the area.



“Health begins with healthy communities and safe streets.” – Florida State Health Improvement Plan 2012-2015.

How Moving Martin Forward (2040 LRTP) Addresses Positive Health Outcomes

There is good evidence to indicate that the burden of chronic disease can be reduced through an active lifestyle combined with proper nutrition and reduced exposure to toxic conditions. However, many urban and suburban environments are not well designed to facilitate healthy behaviors or create the conditions for health.

Solutions that have the broadest impact may be found at the transportation network scale rather than at individual street segments. The design of the transportation network establishes the role



of, and design parameters for, individual street or corridor designs. Therefore, the Martin 2040 LRTP encourages enhanced connectivity through projects such as the Willoughby Boulevard connector between Monterey Road and U.S. 1 and CMP Strategies that can include local street connectivity as an alternative to arterial roadway widening (such as the Kingswood Connector, which would allow local residents to access a major shopping center and library without traveling along busy arterial roadways). The proposed Kingswood Connector roadway provides connectivity benefits by connecting Kingswood Terrace to East Ocean Boulevard, including sidewalks and bike lanes, and bypassing the need to travel along busy arterials. Investing in additional street connectivity, with walking and bicycling facilities included, encourages more efficient travel patterns and provides the opportunity for shorter trips to be made on foot or by bicycle.

Goal 1 of the Martin 2040 LRTP provides for “an efficient multimodal transportation system that supports the local economy and maintains the quality of life.” The Martin 2040 LRTP includes specific objectives to meet this goal associated with increasing the coverage of bicycle facilities and sidewalks within Martin County. To achieve these objectives, the Martin 2040 LRTP Multimodal CFP includes an interconnected network of bike paths, on-road bike lanes, and sidewalks. Furthermore, the Multimodal CFP proposes to allocate over \$50 million of transportation investment for bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

One of the most effective ways of extending the pedestrian and bicycle network is to add walking and bicycling facilities during roadway maintenance and capacity enhancement projects. These facilities are components of Complete Streets, which aims to design roadways for all users, transportation modes, and abilities. The Martin 2040 LRTP Multimodal CFP includes walking and bicycling improvements in the cost estimate for the roadway capacity projects, providing for sidewalks on both sides of the streets and bicycle facilities.

In addition to traditional roadway construction projects, the Martin 2040 LRTP proposes to increase the current funding level for the CMP Strategies and LCI box funds. CMP strategies are lower-cost alternatives to traditional roadway widening that typically involve traffic operational improvements and may include street connectivity and non-motorized transportation improvements. The objectives of the LCI are to improve mobility and quality of life through improvements that encourage the use of alternative transportation modes. These objectives are accomplished through broad-based strategies such as the following.



- Linking communities to public transportation
- Creating a more positive environment for bicyclists and pedestrians
- Obtaining support of stakeholders
- Encouraging innovative urban design

“Preventing disease with a healthy lifestyle is much more cost effective and better for all involved. The healthcare community understands that roadway design has a direct impact on Public Health, and we look forward to partnering with the Martin MPO to plan improvements to the community’s transportation network. Complete Streets provide safe facilities for all modes of transportation, especially pedestrians and bicyclists. This can be achieved incrementally as other improvements are being made to the existing roadways. Something as simple as adding lighting, shade trees or a multi-modal path can make people feel safer and more comfortable so they get out of their cars, enjoy the sunshine while getting the exercise they need for long-term health.”
– Karlette Peck, MPH, PA, Health Officer for the Martin County Health Department

In addition, the Martin 2040 LRTP Multimodal Cost Feasible Plan continues to fund the U.S. 1 Corridor Retrofit Project, which identifies a context sensitive approach developed as a strategic alternative to roadway widening along U.S. 1 to achieve viable transportation options and enhanced efficiency. A selection of the project elements that may have direct positive health outcomes are listed below.

- Context sensitive design solutions that encourage alternative modes of transportation
- Grid network of connecting streets utilizing traditional neighborhood design
- Bus priority treatments including transit signal priority (TSP) and bus queue jump lanes at key intersection bottlenecks

These projects and others will help the transportation planning community link together its outcomes with public health outcomes to improve the overall quality of life for Martin County and its residents in the years to come.

“The U.S. Surgeon General issued a new call-to-action in September 2015 focused on encouraging cities and towns to design and build their roads and public places to make walking easier, safer, and more pleasant.”” – Transportation for America.

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Freight Transportation

Freight and goods movement is an important component of the local economy. Critical goods and services are delivered primarily via truck to local retailers for purchase and consumption by local residents. In addition, western Martin County is an agricultural area supplying food products to the local, regional, state, and national economy. Improvements to Martin County roadways facilitate the efficient delivery of important goods and services and often serve as "Last Mile" connectors for truck movements. "Last Mile" involves the final leg of a truck move, which in the



case of Martin County could generally include a lot of the off-system/local road moves for final delivery to the retailer or end consumer.

Truck Traffic Overview

The FHWA has forecasted a continued and accelerated growth in truck traffic over the next twenty-five years. Until the early 1990's overall traffic and truck traffic changed at roughly the same rate. Since that time, the growth of trucks has been faster than that of overall traffic.

The primary mode of freight transportation in Martin County is truck, which is true for most of the United States. A recent study by the American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) considered current and projected modal split among primary freight transportation modes. Trucks carry the majority of freight when measured by any metric including tonnage, value, and distance.

Freight Pass-Through Trips

Martin County experiences freight pass-through on Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) facilities including I-95, Florida's Turnpike, SR 710 (Beeline Highway/Warfield Boulevard), the Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway, and Okeechobee Waterway. Martin County's position in the Treasure Coast between the Southeast Florida region and the Central Florida region is the primary contributor to freight pass-through trips.

Southeast Florida Regional Freight Plan

The Southeast Florida MPOs (Broward, Miami-Dade, and Palm Beach) in conjunction with FDOT prepared the 2040 *Southeast Florida Regional Freight Plan*. The study area of the Regional Freight Plan was directly adjacent to Martin County, but did not include Martin County. The Regional Freight Plan identifies and prioritizes freight improvements for roadway, seaport, rail, and airport infrastructure. Several significant facilities studied in the Plan continue northward into Martin County including I-95, Florida's Turnpike, SR 710, the CSX Railroad, and the FEC Railroad. It was noted that proposed intermodal logistics centers (ILCs) have advanced slowly, including one in St. Lucie County.

Several recent freight transportation improvements were highlighted in the Regional Freight Plan and set the context for future investments. Recent accomplishments include Port Everglades expanding the Southport Turning Notch, constructing a new intermodal container transfer facility



(ICTF), and completing the Eller Drive grade separation project. I-595 has been reconstructed to include reversible express lanes. These lane are unique in the sense that not only do they allow truck traffic, which increases access to the Port, but they are also separate from the general purpose lanes. The Port of Palm Beach is reconstructing Slip 3 berths and developing a project for mixed use operations. Port Miami is deepening its channel to 50 feet, constructing an ICTF on-port, and FDOT recently opened the Port Miami Tunnel to connect directly to the interstate highway system. The FEC rail lead to Port Miami has been upgraded. Miami International Airport (MIA) remains a dominant player in air cargo within Florida and the nation. These investments position the region to meet future growth opportunities including the widening of the Panama Canal, shifts in key global manufacturing centers in Asia, and new and expanded trade opportunities, including recent free trade agreements with Colombia, Panama, and South Korea, and the potential reopening of Cuba.

While the highest priority roadway freight improvements were identified in Miami-Dade and Broward Counties, ITS and severe incident response systems along I-95 in Palm Beach County were prioritized in the regional top 25 as future investment needs. Intermodal cargo transfer facilities and off-port intermodal rail improvements were prioritized at the Port of Palm Beach. Prioritized rail needs included improved connectivity between the FEC and the CSX, key track upgrades, and yard improvements. Investment strategies include public private partnerships (P3s), maximizing use of grant funding programs for freight, and opening freight bottlenecks.

Railroad Traffic Increase

Rail freight passes through Martin County on the CSX Railroad and the FEC Railroad. Rail freight traffic is projected to increase on the FEC Railroad in part due to capacity expansions at Southeast Florida seaports to meet growing demands, as discussed in the previous section. The FEC Railroad passes through eastern communities, including downtown Stuart, and connects directly to Southeast Florida seaports. This increase combined with FEC-proposed inter-city passenger rail service in the corridor will increase the frequency of trains in the FEC corridor, which creates the need to conduct a future study of a roadway grade separation to facilitate vital east-west travel.

Agriculture

Indiantown is the center of agricultural interests in western Martin County. Dating back to the 1930's Indiantown's economic drivers have been farming and ranching. The growing and



processing of citrus fruit was extensive throughout the area. Although the dominance of citrus to the local economy has waned, Indiantown remains a major provider of a broad range of agricultural products and diverse agribusiness interests. Martin County land use data shows that over 77,000 acres of land is classified as agricultural. According to the Martin County Business Development Board (BDB), primary products supplied include citrus, sweet corn, sugar cane, sod, tomatoes, and culinary herbs. In addition, there is a large egg farm supplying cage-free specialty eggs and an aquaculture company operating an inland shrimp hatchery producing chemical-free gulf white shrimp in their indoor recirculating raceway system.

Waterways

Although discussions of freight transportation often revolve around SIS roadway and railroad facilities, Martin County is home to two SIS waterways – The Atlantic Intracoastal Waterway (SIS) and the Okeechobee Waterway (emerging SIS). Emerging SIS waterway facilities are designated by a size criteria or an economic connectivity criteria. The Okeechobee Waterway links the St. Lucie Inlet to Lake Okeechobee via the St. Lucie River providing cross-state access. The SIS Plan describes the Okeechobee Waterway as having significant potential for future growth. Recent cargo reports indicate that the Okeechobee Waterway is currently primarily used for the movement of machinery. Drought concerns frequently close the channel section through Lake Okeechobee. The St. Lucie Inlet is used for navigation, commercial activity, and recreation.

Forecast

Based on recent trends and FHWA forecasts, freight traffic is likely to continue to grow relative to regional population growth. AASHTO identified four major drivers of freight demand: consumption, production, trade, and supply chain management. Consumption will increase as the population grows, although growth is expected to occur at a slower rate in Martin County than surrounding areas. Food production in the Indiantown area will continue to generate freight trips along SIS roadway facilities. There are currently no SIS freight terminals, such as deepwater seaports and cargo airports, in Martin County. This limits the impact of trade and supply chain management.