CUTRlines [January 2001]

CUTR

Follow this and additional works at: https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/cutr_newsletters

Scholar Commons Citation
https://digitalcommons.usf.edu/cutr_newsletters/123

This Newsletter is brought to you for free and open access by the CUTR Publications at Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. It has been accepted for inclusion in CUTR Newsletters by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ University of South Florida. For more information, please contact scholarcommons@usf.edu.
Search for new CUTR director begins

Brosch assumes new USF role

The University of South Florida, in coordination with the Tampa Bay Partnership, has announced that CUTR Director Gary Brosch will assume the post of USF’s Congressional Transportation Liaison for the Tampa Bay Partnership. The Partnership is a business-led marketing organization promoting economic development for the seven-county Tampa Bay area. Brosch will help the Partnership continue to revise and update its regional transportation priorities, maintain communication with members of Congress, and keep the Tampa Bay region abreast of transportation developments in the 107th Congress. Congress is scheduled to begin working on a redraft of the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century, known as the TEA-21 bill, which is the source of federal funding allocations to the states, during this calendar year.

In addition to his new role with the Partnership, Brosch will continue as chair of CUTR’s National Center for Transit Research and editor of the Journal of Public Transportation.

Brosch began devoting a portion of his time to the Partnership project in mid-January and will phase in greater involvement when a national search for his replacement is completed.

USF President Dr. Judy Genshaft congratulated Brosch, founding director of the Center, for his success in building CUTR to a nationally prominent transportation think-tank.

“We are sorry to lose Gary as CUTR Director, but thrilled that he is willing to stay in this new capacity,” said President Genshaft. “USF is strongly com-

continued next page

The strategic fit of alternative fuels in Florida

Throughout 2000, the issue of rising gasoline prices became a regular feature of news headlines, with retail gasoline prices in the U.S. increasing from an average of $1.16 per gallon in summer 1999 to $1.60 per gallon by winter 2000. Worldwide oil reserves are becoming more concentrated in a smaller number of countries, and, coupled

continued on page 9
submitted to helping economic development in our entire service area, and his work with the Partnership will certainly help our area deal with its infrastructure requirements.”

Lee Arnold, chairman of the Tampa Bay Partnership, said that Brosch’s new assignment will provide significant benefits. “The Tampa Bay area’s congressional delegation has shown a strong interest in working with the Tampa Bay Partnership to address our transportation funding needs.”

Stuart Rogel, President & Chief Executive Officer of the Partnership, said that transportation and other infrastructure became a key initiative for the Partnership nearly three years ago. “We felt it was important to have business leadership affirm and advocate for the transportation priorities that are important to our entire region.”

Under Brosch’s leadership, CUTR has grown to one of the top university transportation centers in the nation, with annual research grants of more than $5 million per year and its own building on the USF campus. Brosch was hired to start the center in 1988, which has now grown to a staff of more than 80, including many prominent national transportation experts.

“We have viewed Gary’s accomplishments with CUTR as a shining success story,” said Mel Anderson, Interim Dean of the USF College of Engineering. “Its interdisciplinary focus on real-world, practical innovations from transportation research has been of great value to the state and nation while serving as a tremendous learning laboratory for our students. I am pleased that Gary will continue to be involved and assist in CUTR’s continuing success and growth.”

According to Brosch, “CUTR’s success is attributable to leadership shown by the Florida Legislature, guidance from our Advisory Board, and growth fueled by the talents and dedication of the faculty, staff and students. I look forward to this new opportunity to assist Tampa Bay while staying involved with CUTR and the area of transportation policy that I love so much.”

A search for a new CUTR Director is currently under way. For further information, visit CUTR’s web site at www.cutr.eng.usf.edu or contact Patricia Ball, pball@cutr.eng.usf.edu, (813) 974-9759.
The potential of social marketing to improve commuter service agency performance

South Florida Commuter Services’ primary goal is to reduce peak hour congestion on area roadways in its three-county service area in South Florida (Broward, Dade, and Palm Beach). Commuters have a number of choices on how to reach their worksites, including driving alone, carpooling, vanpooling, using public transportation, and, for some commuters, walking or riding a bicycle. Arranging alternative work schedules (working at home, compressed work weeks, and so forth) is another option that can reduce traffic congestion. Historically, Commuter Services has concentrated most of its efforts on increasing the number of carpoolers and vanpoolers through direct contacts with large employers (to publicize and coordinate ridesharing programs and incentives) and through mass-market advertising (radio, TV, highway signs, etc.).

CUTR has conducted annual evaluations of Commuter Services’ performance since 1997. One of the elements of the evaluation in 2000 was telephone interviews of 750 commuters in the Commuter Services service area where respondents were asked about their current commuting habits and their awareness of Commuter Services. The sample for this survey was developed using a random-digit-dialing technique, designed to be adequately representative of the region’s commuter population.

A particular area of emphasis for Commuter Services in the last two years has been the level of awareness of ridesharing advertising among Hispanic and low-income residents of the service area. An examination of the awareness levels for the ride number indicates that awareness of either Commuter Services or the ride number is increasing among Hispanic residents, due to the agency’s efforts to reach this population since the last evaluation.

In 2000, awareness among Hispanics increased to 42%, up from 30% in 1999. However, despite increases in 2000, awareness among all residents (including non-Hispanics) with lower income levels still remains lower compared to awareness among those with higher income levels.

The survey results indicated that Commuter Services should continue implementing targeting strategies to generate greater awareness among lower-income residents and Hispanics, particularly in Miami-Dade County, where the Hispanic population is highest and they are more likely to adopt carpooling as a money-saving strategy. Carpooling is already more prevalent among lower-income households.

One of the ways that Commuter Services could accomplish this objective is through the use of social marketing techniques to better target these segments of the population and discover innovative means of disseminating the information to these hard-to-reach populations. Social marketing is the application of commercial marketing techniques to influence the voluntary behavior of target audience in order to improve their personal welfare and that of their society. The primary aim of social marketing is to promote voluntary behavioral change, such as switching from a single-occupant vehicle commute to an alternative mode.

A social marketing campaign is customer-centered and built around “the four P’s”: product, price, place, and promotion. The product is the behavioral change being offered, promoted or encouraged. The price relates to the benefits and costs of changing or
not changing behavior. Place refers to where the marketing materials can be accessed, and promotion refers to the medium of the message. To identify the right marketing mix (that is, the best product, the appropriate benefits and costs, and where and how to deliver the message), extensive qualitative research with the target audience may be necessary.

For low income and/or minority populations, finding the right marketing mix may differ substantially from Commuter Services’ other clients. For example, qualitative research could identify which benefits to emphasize and what costs, such as childcare issues, to mitigate. In terms of place, discount grocery stores, government assistance offices, or thrift stores may be more effective places to promote programs. Commuter Services could consider the following tactics related to the “four P’s” of marketing to better target low-income commuters:

- Target place by distributing information to locations likely to be frequented by low-income commuters, such as discount grocery stores or government assistance offices. Also, use Spanish AM radio during drive times.
- Target promotion by communicating benefits to more closely tie in to the interests of low-income commuters. For instance, focus on money-saving as opposed to reducing commuter stress.
- Focus communications on the fact that this is a free service, that is, a low-price service.
- Make sure the product is delivered in a way that fits the needs of low-income commuters. Is literacy a problem? Perhaps the materials should be redesigned to use more pictures and simpler language, as well as more Spanish-language advertising.

By using these social marketing methods, low-income and minority populations can become substantially more aware of the services and potential benefits offered by South Florida Commuter Services.

For more information, contact CUTR Senior Research Associate Francis Cleland, cleland@cutr.eng.usf.edu, (813) 974-9803.

Community Impact Assessment Handbook now available

CUTR recently completed a groundbreaking new handbook entitled Community Impact Assessment Handbook: A Handbook for Transportation Professionals. The handbook provides practical, community-based methods for identifying and addressing potential community impacts of transportation projects as well as a variety of tools and techniques practitioners can use to assess the impacts, a step-by-step instruction to guide the practitioner through the assessment process, useful and relevant case examples, and strategies for reducing adverse impacts.

Topics covered in the handbook include community cohesion, mobility, safety, community facilities, aesthetics, land use, civil rights and environmental justice, relocation, and economics. Also addressed are organizational objectives, legal requirements related to community impact assessment, and community impact assessment in the transportation planning process. Developed for the Florida Department of Transportation, the handbook is available at www.cutr.eng.usf.edu, under “Publications and Reports” in the Reports and Papers Section.

For further information, contact CUTR Research Associates Kristine Williams, krwillia@cutr.eng.usf.edu, or Jeff Kramer, kramer@cutr.eng.usf.edu, (813) 974-3120.
Florida Vehicle Procurement Program aids transportation agencies

Since 1996, the Florida Vehicle Procurement Program (FVPP), a joint partnership between the Florida DOT Office of Public Transit and CUTR, has provided Florida’s public and private non-profit transportation agencies with the opportunity to procure well-equipped, well-built transit vehicles at a reduced cost. The program has proven to be tremendously successful and popular; since its start, more than 960 vehicles have been purchased.

The program’s primary purpose is to organize and administer statewide contracts for vehicle procurement. Vehicle specifications are developed, and requests for proposal or bid packages are developed and announced. Negotiations are conducted with successful proposers, and contracts are awarded. Once the awards are made, public and private non-profit transportation agencies in Florida may then purchase those vehicles at the price established in the contract. Contracts are for one year, with up to four annual renewal options that are granted upon the review and approval of FDOT and the acceptance by the contractor. The FVPP ensures that the procurements adhere to and are consistent with all applicable federal, state, and FDOT guidelines, requirements, industry standards, and certifications, as well as the Federal Transit Administration’s “Best Practices Procurement Manual.”

In April 1999, CUTR completed a study for FDOT that examined the economic benefits of the program through the first three production years, 1996 through 1998. During those three years, 440 vehicles were purchased at a cost of $17.3 million, with an estimated minimum cost savings $4.1 million. However, it may be some time before the benefits beyond the cost savings of the program are revealed or examined. The FVPP has exacting standards contained within the technical specifications developed that are continually monitored by line inspectors at each of the four current production sites and upon vehicle delivery at the dealership. The structural and mechanical integrity of the vehicles produced is high, which could result in extended vehicle life. Likewise, with the volume of vehicles purchased through contracts established by the FVPP, agencies receive additional benefits through longer warranty periods, extended service after the sale, and training opportunities offered by both the vehicle dealer and component manufacturers. These benefits were not quantified in the economic benefit report.

In addition to organizing and administering statewide contracts for procurement, the FVPP also has assisted agencies with the development of technical specifications and provided technical assistance to them through their own procurement processes. The FVPP has an established resource center that houses technical specifications for various transit vehicles, inspection and procurement records for vehicles purchased through the program, Altoona bus test reports, and an extensive vendor database.

Customer service, communication, and outreach are critically important to the success of the FVPP. The FVPP has an advisory board comprising FDOT district staff, a vendor representative, and agencies that have purchased vehicles through the program. FVPP staff visit district FDOT offices and participate in meetings with their agencies. In addition, agencies that purchase vehicles through the program receive periodic status reports on their vehicles, including comments from the line inspectors and digital photos taken on the production line. A listserv has been established for the program that enables agen-
“We get better, longer-lasting vehicles for the agencies at better prices and without the paperwork and hassle of each agency having to go through its own competitive procurement process.”

Ed Coven, Manager
FDOT Office of Public Transit

NCTR to host career program

The National Center for Transit Research (NCTR) at CUTR will host its first Student Transportation Education Program (STEP) this July, designed to introduce high school students to careers in the field of public transportation. The program will provide an overview of areas of study and activities related to the transportation industry, including planning, engineering, safety, research, training, management, maintenance and policy making.

STEP, a one-week session conducted on the University of South Florida-Tampa campus, will offer high school students an overview of transportation systems, field trips, hands-on projects, and the opportunity to meet and talk with transportation professionals. Field trips are planned several of Florida’s local transportation facilities, including Tampa International Airport, the Tampa Port Authority, and Hillsborough Area Regional Transit.

According to Ed Coven, Manager of the FDOT Office of Public Transit, “The program does exactly what we had in mind when [FDOT staff members] Bob [Westbrook] and Paul [Johnson] proposed it years ago. We get better, longer-lasting vehicles for the agencies at better prices and without the paperwork and hassle of each agency having to go through its own competitive procurement process.”

For additional information on the Florida Vehicle Procurement Program, contact CUTR Senior Research Associates Ed Bart, bart@cutr.eng.usf.edu, or Lisa Staes, staes@cutr.eng.usf.edu, (813) 974-9787, or visit online at www.cutr.eng.usf.edu/research/fvpp/fvpp2.htm.
Electric transit circulator feasibility study conducted for Miami-Dade County

Electric and hybrid-electric transit vehicles have many benefits because of the uniqueness of their propulsion systems. These benefits include an improvement in air quality due to significantly reduced or eliminated emissions; a quiet, smooth ride; reduced maintenance and inventory costs over the life of the vehicles due to the simplicity of the electric motors; reduced operating costs due to greater fuel efficiency; an improvement in the image of public transit; increased ridership (some of which can be directly attributed to the “futuristic” feel of the vehicles); and opportunities for the transit operator to gain recognition as a “pioneer” and an “innovator” within its community. With these benefits, electric and hybrid-electric vehicles can help transit operators achieve the goal of increased ridership while contributing to positive community development.

With the documented successes of electric transit shuttle programs in other areas of the country such as Santa Barbara and Chattanooga and, locally, with the great success of the “Electrowave” operating on Miami Beach, interest in electric vehicle technology is growing significantly in South Florida. The Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) contracted with CUTR to conduct a study to assess the feasibility of using electrically-powered vehicles as the mode of choice for municipal, neighborhood, and other transit circulator services in Miami-Dade County. The county-wide focus and exclusive emphasis on electric vehicles, as opposed to other types of alternative-fuel vehicles, are unique aspects of this study.

**Background**

Public transportation agencies across the United States, including Miami-Dade Transit (MDT), must carefully and continually allocate very scarce resources within their service areas to provide transit services for their populations. As such, MDT, like other agencies, largely focuses on the provision of transit service during morning and evening peak periods and on major corridors within the county. Midday and off-peak trips, and peripheral areas and neighborhoods situated away from main thoroughfares, are usually underserved. MDT operates most of its Metrobus service with conventional full-size diesel vehicles while some routes are served by diesel minibuses.

With some exceptions, local circulator services are not widely offered in Miami-Dade County. However, many other cities and communities within the county are currently studying or otherwise considering the implementation of transit circulator services. These areas all desire to offer a locally-tailored service that will enhance the mobility of residents, employees, and visitors and provide improved access to other transit services in the region.

In addition, these areas have recognized the success of the Electrowave in Miami Beach and have noted the attractiveness of the clean and quiet electric vehicle technology. The operation in Miami Beach has provided a unique case study for other areas in the county that have pedestrian-oriented commercial districts and/or are undergoing redevelopment efforts. Clearly, the electric vehicles are an attractive option to serve areas characterized by outdoor shopping, dining, and other pedestrian activities due to their quietness, lack of dark tailpipe emissions, and significant reductions in air pollution.
smoke and foul fumes, and their overall non-intrusive nature.

Eighteen municipalities and other areas within Miami-Dade County were selected for inclusion in this study. Each area was assessed regarding the characteristics of any circulator service currently offered or the potential characteristics of services being planned or considered, and whether those service characteristics would be compatible with the most beneficial operational characteristics of electric or hybrid-electric vehicles. In addition, opportunities for the sharing or combining of resources among areas were explored.

**Findings**

As a result of the study, a report was generated that categorized the study areas into groups based on the likelihood of successful implementation of electric transit circulator service based on several factors. These include levels of density and pedestrian activity, parking and traffic congestion levels, connections to regional transit services, community redevelopment activities, ridership markets, existing or potential service characteristics, potential availability of funds, local interest in the use of electric vehicle technology, and the proximity of each area to others in the study area, which increases the opportunities for resource sharing.

One of the primary determinants of the feasibility of such a service is how determined a local area is to see it happen. If there is community consensus on a logical plan, it is more likely that local and state officials and private business interests will help support the project. “Grass tops” support from leaders in the community will be vital to the ultimate success of the program. Those leaders can ensure that public managers will help identify and apply for every grant opportunity that is available, and to form partnerships with businesses in the area and other associations to help the service succeed.

The report makes clear that electric vehicle technology is still developing and improving, but it is advanced enough for more local communities to be confident in its reliability. The capital costs of this technology are higher than those of conventional-fueled vehicles, and funding is not abundant. However, many federal, state, and local sources are available, and a well-planned service could generate support from a multitude of sources.

“This is an exciting study for three reasons,” stated Frank Baron, MPO Project Manager and Transportation Systems Specialist for the Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization. “First, there is enthusiasm from local players for implementing community transit services, regardless of technology. Now, work needs to be undertaken to permanently fund more of these services, and to use electric vehicles to operate them. One positive is that several areas in relative proximity to each other interested in circulators have a real opportunity to synergistically partner to achieve EV services. Second, the technology—electric propulsion—is a relatively clean technology. Despite the fact that the power may be derived from fossil-fueled power plants, true air quality improvement on a per-vehicle basis is gained, important for an area that has only recently been judged to be in compliance with national ambient air standards after having been in non-compliance for years. And third, the technology has been locally demonstrated with great success in Miami Beach. A local history of success and experience regarding best practices of both service delivery and administration can only help other similar efforts in Miami-Dade. We hope the findings and recommendations of this study will help implementation of more electric vehicle transit circulators to be established and remain successful in Miami-Dade County in the years to come.”

For more information on this study, contact CUTR Research Associate Victoria Perk, (305) 375-1950, perk@cutr.eng.usf.edu.

For more information about the STEP program, visit the CUTR web site at www.cutr.eng.usf.edu or contact Program Coordinator Amber Reep at reep@cutr.eng.usf.edu, (813)974-9823.
with decreasing air quality and increasing global competition in transportation technologies, there is increased concern about the need to secure our energy future. Consumption of gasoline in Florida in 1999 was over 18 million gallons daily, and petroleum consumption in the state is projected to grow at rate of 1.8% each year over the next 20 years. At this projected rate, our needs will exceed 28 million gallons (671,000 barrels) per day by 2020.

Fortunately, in Florida the work is well under way to improve energy security, establish an environment for energy choices, and strengthen the economic future of the state. Florida’s Clean Fuel Florida Advisory Board was established by Governor Bush in 1999 as part of the Florida Clean Fuel Act to study alternative fuel vehicles, with the belief that expanding their use will enhance the quality of life in the Florida and contribute to its continued economic prosperity.

With the assistance of CUTR, the Board is developing an action plan to remove obstacles to the development of an alternative fuel market in Florida, create a business and consumer environment to support a thriving alternative fuel industry, and recommend strategic investments for the market to grow. The Board recently released a report, “Fueling Florida’s Future,” that outlines its current findings and makes recommendations for the growth of the alternative fuel market in Florida.

**The AFV market in Florida**

Alternative fuels include natural gas (liquid, compressed), propane, electricity, bio-diesel, alcohol (methanol, ethanol), hydrogen, and synthetic fuels. Vehicles that use these fuels are regarded as alternative fuel vehicles (AFVs). According to a survey conducted by CUTR in mid 2000, 5,725 AFVs are currently in use in 25 counties in Florida. More than 50% are private, business, or local fleet vehicles, 33% are federal government, 13% are energy providers, and 3% are State government. Throughout Florida, alternative fuel vehicles are successfully serving their communities and businesses; as indicated in the following success stories.

**Broward County:** Broward County began its Alternative Fuel Vehicle program in 1988, and, since that time, more than 193 AFVs have been introduced into the County’s general-purpose fleet. In FY 2000, general fleet drivers logged more than 600,000 miles operating on an alternative fuel, resulting in fuel cost savings of $22,000, a reduction of more than 140,000 pounds carbon dioxide emissions, and the displacement of more than 41,000 gallons of gasoline. As a result of this success, significant expansion plans are under way.

**City of Sunrise:** Sunrise, in Broward County, has been using alternative fuels since 1993 and is a success story on two levels—AFV operation and alternative fuel provider to other fleets. Currently, the City operates 140 CNG AFVs, the bulk of which are operated by the police department. The City has both dedicated and bi-fuel vehicles and uses approximately 100,000 gasoline-equivalent gallons of CNG annually. The City also partnered with the U.S. Postal Service to provide an overnight fueling site on USPS property, which serves both the USPS and the City. The City facilitated the installation of the station and trained USPS supervisors to operate the fuel dispensers, resulting in the City’s municipal gas utility expanding its market and increasing revenues while allowing the USPS to meet federal compliance.

**Sarasota County:** The Sarasota County Sheriff’s Department has been using LPG since 1978 and has more than 225 bi-fuel vehicles. The Department’s vehicles travel more than 5 million miles per year and consume more than 330,000 gasoline-equivalent gallons of LPG, saving more than $100,000 per year in fuel costs. The program also reduces...
emissions of CO by 6 tons per year, and CO₂ by more than 2 million pounds per year.

**Neighborly Senior Services:** Located in Clearwater, Neighborly Senior Services (NSS) serves the retirement community in Pinellas County, providing adult day care, in-home care, meals and transportation. NSS has been using bi-fuel CNG buses since 1980, operating 47 vehicles, including 27 bi-fuel CNG buses. NSS uses approximately 52,000 gasoline-equivalent gallons of CNG annually and expects fuel savings in excess of $40,000 for fiscal year 2000. Additionally, the organization has reduced annual emissions of CO by 18,000 lbs and NOx by over 1 ton.

**Public Transit Systems:** Transit systems are an ideal application for alternative fuels, since vehicles are centrally fueled, remove single or low occupant vehicles from the roads, and bring new technologies into direct contact with the general public. Replacing one diesel transit bus is an easier challenge than achieving the replacement of 100 light duty vehicles driven by the average citizen. The Miami Beach Transportation Management Association recently expanded its fully-electric transit buses (the Electrowave system) to 11 vehicles and has carried over 2.5 million passengers. It is estimated that the service has eliminated more than 3.7 million vehicle miles in one of south Florida’s most heavily congested transportation areas. In early 2001, the City of Coconut Creek will place into service four 22-seat hybrid-electric/propane transit buses, with service routes connecting with two other transit systems in Broward County.

**Enhancing the alternative fuel market in Florida**
Florida has a number of qualities essential in the creation of an advanced technology vehicle industry and market:

- It is a state dependent upon transportation for its national and international tourists, and its extended geography and flat topography are ideal for many alternative fuel vehicle types.

For significant reductions in pollution levels, a B-20 blend (20% bio-diesel, 80% petro-diesel) is commonly used. A potential market for this may be the Florida School bus system. Florida has the 7th largest school bus fleet in the nation, carrying more than one million school children daily. If it operated on B-20 bio-diesel, the fleet would achieve an estimated 10-ton reduction in hydrocarbon emission and create a $1.5 million market for bio-diesel producers.

Targeting 15% of the incremental growth in petroleum consumption would create a Florida market for over 500 million gallons of fuel annually by 2020. At the projected fuel economies of new vehicles over the same period, this would equate to more than 12 billion miles driven...
using alternative fuels, valued in excess of $750 million in revenues.

**Central and South American Exports:** Florida is in an excellent geographic and economic position to serve the Central and South American market. Volume of exports from the U.S. to Central and South America increased from $932 billion to $956 billion from December 1998 to December 1999. Given the expected population growth of 1.6% for Central and South America and the Caribbean, the number of vehicles in use in those countries will most certainly rise at a high rate. This provides a great opportunity for the alternative fuels industry.

**Alternative Fuel Feedstock:** With more than 24 million acres of farm acreage, Florida has the potential to be a major producer of alternative fuel feedstock. Energy experts see the use of bio-engineered crops for fuels as one of the major economic innovations occurring in the next ten years. New genetic technologies that permit the cultivation of crops to produce fuels such as ethanol will allow regions to effectively grow gasoline and reduce dependence on imported oil.

**Enhanced Community Transportation:** At current population growth rates, Florida adds an average of 100,000 households per year, creating an additional demand for new motor vehicles of almost 200,000 vehicles per year. Opportunities for electric vehicles abound in Florida. Numerous senior citizen, tourist, and master-planned family communities exist throughout the state that lend themselves perfectly to electric or neighborhood vehicles. The potential for low speed, short-range electric vehicles to become a key element of these communities is substantial.

**Recommendations**

In its report, the Board recommended the following actions to enhance the use of alternative fuels in Florida.

- Re-establish the State sales tax exemption for sale or lease of electric vehicles and re-charging infrastructure.

An existing exemption for electric vehicles expired in June 2000. The exemption should be reinstated for the purchase or lease of all electric vehicles for road use, including low speed vehicles, neighborhood electric vehicles, and electric bikes, as well as all dedicated alternative fuel vehicles to communicate the State’s commitment to AFVs without eliminating any long-term revenue source from the tax base.

- Waive the existing requirement for the alternative fuel tax decal.

The decal is currently required for propane and natural gas vehicles at a cost of between $176 and $336 annually as payment in lieu of the State portion of the motor fuels tax. The current decal process is onerous and difficult to enforce. Not requiring the decal would have minimal effects on tax revenues.

- In conjunction with the appropriate State entities, have the Clean Fuel Florida Advisory Board conduct a tax policy study.

An equitable taxation plan should be developed and forwarded to policy makers for consideration in the year 2002 legislative session. The impact of new engine technologies and improved fuel efficiencies on the collection of motor fuel taxes at federal, state, and local levels and the resulting decrease in available funding for highway maintenance and capacity improvements on the state highways should be addressed.

- Appropriate a sum in the FY 2002 budget for clean fuel program development.

An appropriation would allow the State to continue program development and public awareness initiatives that the Board is contemplating and fund continued studies regarding financial, regulatory, and policy incentives for the acquisition and operation of AFVs.

**Moving Forward**

The Clean Fuel Florida Advisory Board’s report forms the basis of an ongoing effort to evaluate the strategic fit of alternative fuels in Florida. In the immediate future, it is important to conduct a more thorough analysis of the economic, social, national security, and environmental consequences of current energy use. Broadening fuel choices will enhance Florida’s competitiveness and help ensure a strong economic future. Through the increased use of alternative fuels, Florida can assure energy security, create new business opportunities, and enhance the environment. Florida can certainly become a leader in these new technologies.

For further information or to get a copy of “Fueling Florida’s Future,” contact CUTR Research Associate Ashley Yelds, yelds@cutr.eng.usf.edu, (813) 974-3850.
CUTR welcomes new team members

Edward B. Bart joins CUTR as a Senior Research Associate specializing in vehicle procurement and maintenance training. Bart previously worked as Director of Maintenance for Volusia County Transit (VOTRAN) in Daytona Beach. He holds a degree in Business Administration from McKendree Business College in Illinois.

Chandra C. Foreman joins CUTR as a Research Associate specializing in urban and regional planning. She previously worked as a Planner for the City of Little Rock, Arkansas. Foreman holds degrees in Economics and Planning from Florida State University.

Mark A. Mistretta joins CUTR as a Research Associate specializing in transit planning and system performance evaluation. Mistretta holds degrees in Geography from USF and Urban Planning from the University of Florida. He previously worked as a Project Manager for LYNX.

Francis Wambalaba joins CUTR as a Senior Research Associate specializing in transportation demand management, transportation management associations, and shuttle planning. Wambalaba worked as a TDM Planner for the Tri-Metropolitan District of Oregon. He holds a doctorate in Urban Studies from Portland State University.