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CUTR assists Transportation and Land Use Study Committee [May 1999]

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CUTR assists Transportation and Land Use Study Committee

For the past six months, CUTR has been working closely with the Transportation and Land Use Study Committee (TLUSC), which was created by the 1998 Florida Legislature to "evaluate the statutory provisions relating to land use and transportation coordination and planning issues, and [to] consider changes to statutes, as well as to all pertinent rules associated with the statutes.

The Committee comprised 25 members, representing diverse constituencies, who were appointed by Florida DOT Secretary Tom Barry, Jr., and Florida Dept. of Community Affairs (FDCA) Secretary Jim Murley. Committee members included local elected officials, private development companies, land use attorneys, transportation agencies, and community planning representatives. The Committee was chaired by Ben Starrett of FDCA, with Ysela Llort, FDOT's State Transportation Planner, serving as Vice Chair.

CUTR hosted the Committee's kickoff meeting, which was held in August 1998. CUTR Deputy Director Ed Mierzejewski was asked to present a comprehensive overview of federal and state statutes and rules related to transportation and land use planning. His presentation provided a basis for a common understanding of current requirements and practices. CUTR also provided staff support to Committee members during the course of seven two-day meetings held at various locations around the state.

On January 15, 1999, the committee submitted its report to Governor Jeb Bush, Senate President Toni Jennings, and House Speaker John Thrasher. The report cites a number of recurring themes that evolved during its deliberations and that guided its decisionmaking:

- Florida must have true multi-modal planning and transportation systems.
- Regional mobility should not adversely affect community livability.
- Transportation is essential to economic vitality.
- Better land use planning will lead to better transportation.
- Development in the right place at the right time with the right form should be rewarded.
- One size does not fit all.
The report includes 40 distinct recommendations for consideration by the Legislature and by local and state planning officials, including:

- The Legislature should amend Florida Statutes to allow local governments to create Multi-Modal Transportation Districts in local comprehensive plans.
- The Legislature should authorize an alternative Smart Communities planning process and should provide financial incentives for communities that participate.
- The Legislature should exempt public transit facilities from transportation concurrency requirements and should broaden the definition of projects that promote public transportation, as applied in local comprehensive plans.
- FDOT and FDCA, in partnership with MPOs, RPCs, and local governments, should commence an extensive land use and mobility planning process on the Florida Intrastate Highway System.
- The Legislature should direct FDOT to establish the Florida Intrastate Transportation System as the primary means for the movement of people and freight in the state.
- The Legislature should fully fund the construction of the high-priority, limited access FIHS in the next 20 years through a dedicated increase in state gas taxes.
- FDOT and MPOs should reward communities that have used their full available funding capabilities, such as local option gas tax, substantial transportation impact fees, and the infrastructure surtax.

The Committee's complete report can be viewed and downloaded from the FDOT website, under the heading of "Land Use."

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