



Strategic Business Plan 2014-2018

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Strategic Business Plan

Organizational Overview

MetroPlan Orlando is the metropolitan planning organization for Orange, Osceola, and Seminole Counties. MetroPlan Orlando provides a forum for effective dialogue and decision-making to accomplish the ultimate goal of providing an efficient and effective transportation system in Central Florida.

Also known as the Orlando Urbanized Area Metropolitan Planning Organization, MetroPlan Orlando is one of 26 MPOs in the State of Florida and was one of the first multi-county MPOs in the state. With guidance from a 19-member governing Board consisting of local elected officials, and transportation operating agencies, and with input from its advisory committees, MetroPlan Orlando is responsible for fostering relationships and providing a forum for representatives, to review, prioritize, and approve investments in our region's transportation network. Federal and state laws mandate the adoption of four key planning and programming documents: (1) Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), (2) Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), (3) a Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and (4) Prioritized Project List. These planning documents are ultimately used by the Florida Department of Transportation as part of the overall transportation planning process. The process for developing these plans and programs is required to consider all modes of transportation and to be a *Continuing, Cooperative, and Comprehensive* transportation process.

In order to continue to advance the organization's mission, which is *to provide leadership in transportation planning by engaging the public and fostering effective partnerships*, MetroPlan Orlando's leadership saw the need to update its strategic plan to ensure the organization remains on the right track.

Organizational Chart

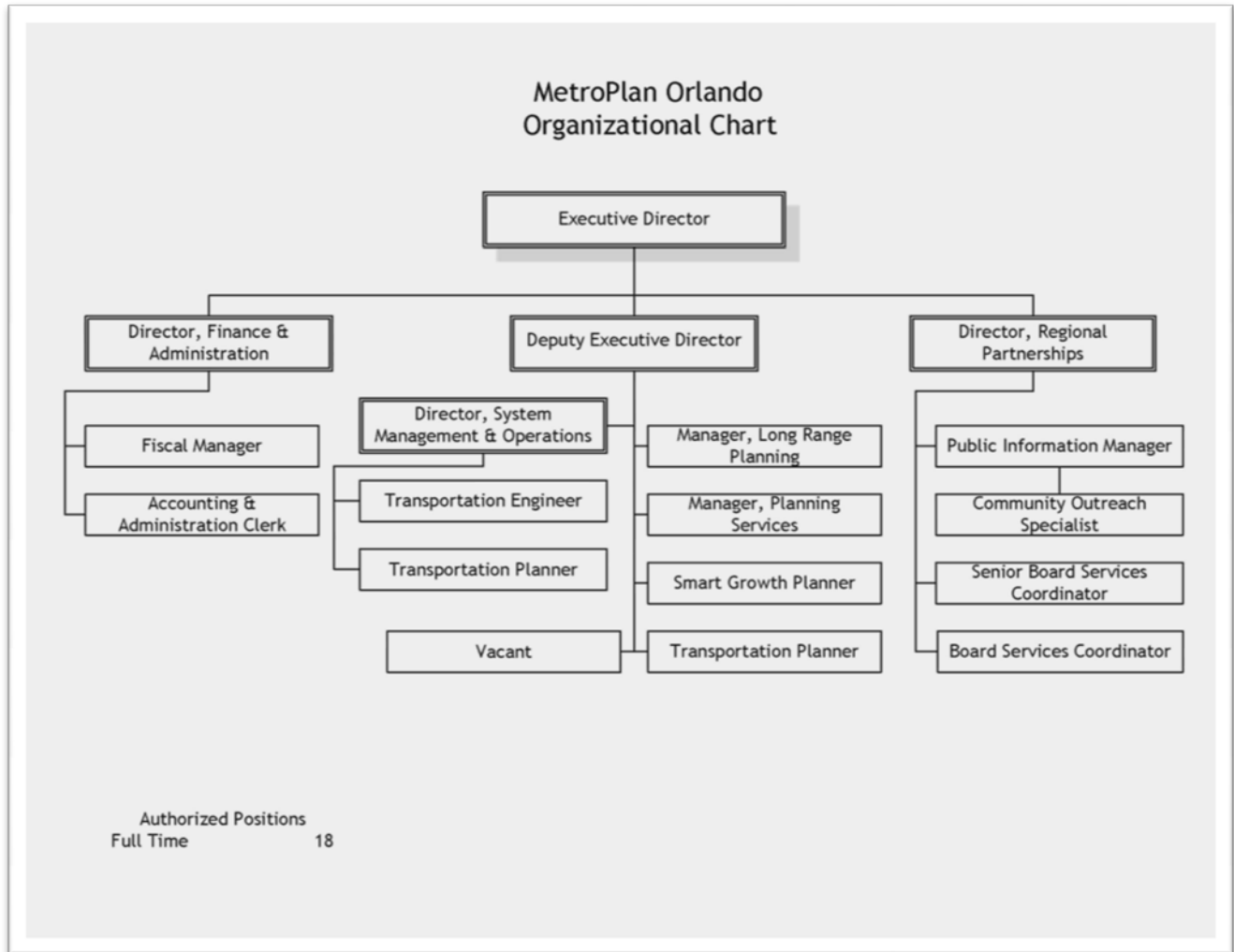


Figure 1

Strategic Business Plan Methodology

The six-month strategic planning process began by establishing a steering committee which consisted of board members and executive leadership who provided oversight to the strategic planning process (Fig. 2). The process included one-on-one interviews with key stakeholders and a final round of group surveys which resulted in the identification of the organization’s essential strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

The strategic planning process also identified the following formal and informal mandates. Formal mandates are those legal restrictions that govern the organization. Federal, state, and local mandates apply to funding received from each respective source. The U.S. Department of Labor governing legislation and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity provide guidelines concerning an employee’s rights. Additionally, performance standards for employee performance are also applicable formal mandates. The Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and the Prioritized Project List (PPL) are required by federal and state laws. Processes used for public involvement and community engagement must adhere to both federal and state guidelines. In addition to funding mandates, several financial mandates also apply to the organization. These include state and federal auditing requirements and applicable accounting guidelines such as General Accounting Standard Board (GASB). The informal mandates consist of expectations placed on the organization by its stakeholders.

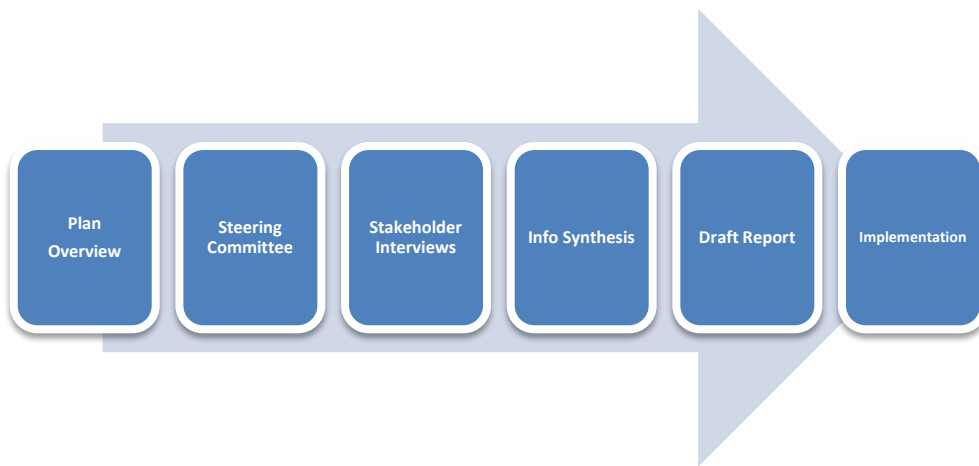


Figure 2

Stakeholders

As part of the stakeholder identification process, stakeholders were placed into three tiers. Tier-one stakeholders include MetroPlan Orlando Board members, advisory committee members, employees, SunRail Commission members, and the Florida Department of Transportation. These stakeholders are directly involved in the MetroPlan Orlando decision-making process. Tier-two stakeholders participate in the MetroPlan Orlando decision-making process to varying degrees and maintain a high stake in the outcome, but are indirectly involved in the decision-making process. These stakeholders include local chambers of commerce, US Department of Transportation (USDOT), Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Federal Transit Administration (FTA), the Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC) and the Central Florida MPO Alliance. Tier-three stakeholders include state legislators, congressional delegation members, colleges and universities, community-based organizations, and the media. Orange, Osceola and Seminole County residents and those who visit the region are also seen as third tier stakeholders. Significant consideration is given to tier-three stakeholders during MetroPlan Orlando's decision-making process and it is important for MetroPlan Orlando to recognize the needs of these stakeholders as they seek to fulfill its mission and realize its organizational vision.

Strategic Vision Statement and Mission Statement

A Strategic Vision Statement is an inspirational end point toward which recommended goals and objectives are directed. MetroPlan Orlando operates with both an organizational vision and a regional transportation vision. While each serves to inspire different ends, they are inextricably woven and it must be understood that the regional transportation vision cannot be achieved if the organizational vision is not realized.

The 2003 Organizational Vision, as approved by the MetroPlan Orlando Board was:

Within five years, to be regarded as the premier MPO in the nation.

During the interview process, stakeholders were asked to opine on the relevance of the previously adopted vision statement. The following vision statement was subsequently adopted by the MetroPlan Orlando Board in October 2013:

A leader in transportation planning committed to excellent customer service, effective partnerships and an engaged/informed public.

This statement works in tandem with the regional transportation vision statement which was revised in 2012 as part of the preparation for the development of the Year 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan process. The regional transportation vision is

A regional transportation system that safely and efficiently moves people and goods through a variety of options that support the region's vitality.

Organizational Values

In order to ensure a quality product and environment for MetroPlan Orlando's stakeholders, the public, and ourselves, we pledge to subscribe to the following values which encompass the collaborative, cooperative and inclusive nature of our business:

To be *reliable, honest, consistent* and *dependable* professionals.

To recognize the *importance of our work* to the region.

To recognize that *we are stronger as a region* than we are as individuals.

To be *accountable* to our collective actions and consequences by being *results-oriented*.

To be sure *all voices are heard and respected* in our work.

To be *fair* and *impartial* with members of our regional partnership.

To improve our flexibility and effectiveness by being *open-minded* and *team-oriented* improves.

To *remain current in our knowledge* and use of tools and technology.

To gain respect by maintaining professional *integrity*.

To provide *superior service* to our region.



SWOT Analysis

A SWOT analysis was conducted to identify the organization's *strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats*. One-on-one interviews were conducted with a total of 80 tier one stakeholders during this process. Results of the interviews were coded into broad themes and presented to the MetroPlan Orlando Board, advisory committees, and staff via survey for ranking in order of importance. The following are strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats identified by the stakeholders:

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff and Organizational Leadership • Communication/Information Sharing/Data and Reports • Regionalism/Collaboration/ Partnerships • Forum for Discussion/Problem Resolution • Diversity of Board/Committee Membership/ Multidisciplinary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Board Membership/Representation • Funding • Facilitation of Board/Committee Meetings • Flawed Planning Process • Parochialism/ Politics • Lack of Authority/No Regional Transportation Authority • Lack of Public Awareness/ Understanding
OPPORTUNITIES	THREATS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use More Innovative Funding Strategies • Legislative Involvement • Education and Awareness • Better Use of Meeting Technology • More/New Management and Operations Technologies • Strengthen Interagency Coordination and Partnerships with Counties and Cities • More Context Sensitive/ Multimodal Solutions • More Regional MPO Coordination • Joint Meetings/Board and Committee Retreat 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Funding • State or Federal Legislation/Changes • Politics • Inequity/ Dissatisfaction • Breakup of Partnership • Lack of Understanding • Potential Consolidation • Competitiveness • Growth of Region/ Increased Demand • Fragmented Planning Environment • Uncertainty of Success of SunRail • Changes in Society/ Technology

SWOT Definitions

STRENGTHS

- **Staff and Organizational Leadership**

MetroPlan Orlando staff members are seen as experienced and knowledgeable professionals that are: familiar with the MPO processes, responsive and helpful in quickly providing information, good at maintaining relationships with agencies and members through communication. In addition, strength in leadership and upper level management was seen as a guiding force to MetroPlan Orlando's staff and membership.

- **Regionalism, Collaboration, and Partnerships**

The three-county makeup of MetroPlan Orlando was seen as an essential strength in that it fosters regional cooperation among members. In addition, the collaborative nature of partnerships with other agencies and cooperation with local governments brings multiple groups together for coordinated transportation planning.

- **Forum for Discussion and Problem Resolution**

The MetroPlan Orlando Board and Committee meetings were seen as a strength that: brings everyone together to discuss regional issues, keeps members informed, enables valuable input and advising, and provides opportunity for comment and explanation. The forum for discussion that MetroPlan Orlando provides allows members to respectfully resolve regional problems.

- **Communication, Information Sharing, Data and Reports**

MetroPlan Orlando was noted for having strong communication efforts through community engagement and outreach. In addition, members share information, research and ideas with each other and community leaders while providing data that ultimately support decisions.

- **Diversity of Board and Committee Membership/ Multidisciplinary Focus**

Finally, the strength of MetroPlan Orlando's diversity in membership allows inclusive input from a wide body of stakeholders who are involved in many aspects of planning and represent a variety of agencies and municipalities.

WEAKNESSES

- **Board Membership/Representation**

Concern with the makeup of the MetroPlan Orlando Board include the size of the Board (too large) and that representation of the members in leadership roles are disproportionately county elected officials.

- **Funding**
Lack of alternative funding options is seen as an impediment to the implementation of the transportation plan.
- **Facilitation of Board/Committee Meetings**
Board and committee meetings are often too long and/or held too often. Time is wasted on small details and issues that are localized versus regional issues.
- **Flawed Planning Process**
The planning process is seen as broken or flawed. The planning process takes too long. It is complicated and difficult to understand. It's also fragmented, unclear, and bureaucratic. The process is often circumvented, as seen in the number of adjustments made to the plan. Many times these adjustments have gone directly to the Board without benefit of committee input. A fragmented planning process also leads to the overall planning process being perceived as flawed.
- **Parochialism/ Politics**
As noted above, many localized issues tend to bog down the regional aspect of the work of MetroPlan Orlando. Dialogue at some committee meetings is often dominated by a few voices leading to feelings of inequity and lack of reciprocity. Projects are not proportionately included in the prioritized project list. There is a perceived lack of political will to address the tough issue of alternative funding options.
- **Lack of Authority/No Regional Transportation Authority**
MetroPlan Orlando lacks authority to implement and there is no regional oversight or umbrella organization that is responsible for implementation the plan.
- **Lack of Public Awareness/ Understanding**
There is a lack of public value for the organization because of the lack of public awareness and understanding of the role MetroPlan Orlando plays in the overall transportation planning process.

OPPORTUNITIES

- **Use More Innovative Funding Strategies**
Several opportunities for MetroPlan Orlando to pursue increased and innovative funding were identified. These funding opportunities are: public-private partnerships, local funding options, tolls and taxes, additional FDOT and other available grants, specifically those for multimodal programs.
- **Legislative Involvement**
The opportunity for increased legislative involvement was identified as a way to advocate for: changing bond rules, additional local or regional dedicated funding options, increased

flexibility in the use of MPO funds, general adjustments to both state and federal transportation legislation.

- **Education and Awareness**

The need to expand education and increase awareness of MetroPlan Orlando's role, mission and work was identified as an opportunity. This opportunity can be pursued externally through increased efforts to educate the general public on transportation issues, transportation-related funding and MetroPlan Orlando. Internally, an opportunity exists to continue to educate board and committee members, as well as city and county staff, through training sessions, workshops, best practices lectures and additional orientations for committee members.

- **Better Use of Meeting Technology**

The use of the following technologies was seen as a way of improving MetroPlan Orlando's meetings and information sharing: video conferencing, webcasting and archiving both board meetings and informational presentations, as well as continuing to improve the website and social media efforts.

- **More/New Management and Operations Technologies**

One area of technology that was specifically mentioned as an opportunity by stakeholders is transportation system management and operations or intelligent transportation systems (ITS). While MetroPlan Orlando currently participates in TSM&O and ITS activities, there is an opportunity to increase investment and pursue further research in these efficient traffic demand management technologies.

- **Strengthen Interagency Coordination and Partnerships with Counties and Cities**

An opportunity exists to strengthen the coordination between all the various planning agencies such as: FDOT, Expressway Authorities, SunRail, LYNX, East Central Florida Regional Planning Council, and all of the counties and their cities.

- **More Context Sensitive/ Multimodal Solutions**

Several responses indicated an opportunity to expand investment and emphasis on context sensitive or multimodal solutions that promote alternative transportation such as biking, walking and transit, in addition to appropriate roadway design.

- **More Regional MPO Coordination**

Another opportunity is the increased coordination with surrounding MPOs such as: Lake-Sumter MPO, Volusia County TPO, Space Coast TPO, Polk TPO, Ocala-Marion TPO as well as the West Central Florida Metropolitan Planning Organizations Chairs Coordinating Committee.

- **Joint or Group Meetings**

Several respondents saw an opportunity to increase coordination between various committees and/or more efficiently use local staff time by having joint or group committee meetings.

Threats

- **Lack of Funding**

Funding uncertainties as it pertains to declining sources of revenues for transportation projects is a threat. Uncertainty beyond the current MAP-21 legislation at the federal level, coupled with the lack of local and state support for implementation of additional funding sources is a threat to the overall transportation program.

- **State or Federal Legislation/Changes**

Previous discussions regarding changes to the structure of metropolitan planning organizations or consolidation with other agencies is of concern. Funding decisions related to large-scale projects made at the state FDOT level usurps the overall planning process (i.e., Wekiva Parkway, I-4 funding plans).

- **Politics**

There is a perceived lack of political will to address the tough issue of alternative funding options as well as a resistance to planning ideas. Local revenue options remain unimplemented because of parochialism. Party politics seems to influence the lack of desire to allow local options beyond what is currently available.

- **Inequity/ Dissatisfaction**

There is a feeling of inequity and lack of reciprocity among board members and some committee members feel as though projects are not proportionately included in the prioritized project list.

- **Breakup of Partnership/Potential Consolidation**

Conversations regarding members who wish to start their own MPO pose a potential threat as well as potential consolidation discussions that include the MPO being made part of a larger regional transportation authority.

- **Lack of Understanding**

Lack of understanding of the planning process and the overall transportation plan on the part of the board and committee members is seen as a threat. The public's lack of awareness and understanding of the overall transportation planning process also makes it difficult to create public value as well as public support for revenue decisions needed to meet transportation demand.

- **Competitiveness**
As funding declines, competitiveness for funding of projects becomes more prevalent.
- **Growth of Region/ Increased Demand**
The high rate of population growth and continued sprawling development patterns are threats because they increase demand and require expensive and inefficient transportation systems.
- **Fragmented Planning Environment**
Several respondents identified the wide range of groups responsible for transportation planning (LYNX, FDOT, Expressway Authorities, MetroPlan Orlando, and City/County Planning Departments) as a threat due to complications in coordination and potential competition over the same funding sources.
- **Uncertainty of Success of SunRail**
Uncertainty surrounding the success of SunRail threatens the transportation planning process. If the project succeeds, the public perception and trust of the organization will grow, however if the project should fail, the credibility of the organization suffers.
- **Changes in Society/ Technology**
Societal changes such as an aging population and resistance to strategies which make more use of technology are threats.

Strategic Issues

An assessment of the results of the SWOT analysis offers the opportunity for identification of critical strategic issues that challenge the ultimate realization of the organization's overall mission. Further review assisted in the development of goals, objectives and strategies to address the issues. Following are the four issues which emerged from this process. These issues must be addressed in order for MetroPlan Orlando to continue to flourish into the future.

1. What can MetroPlan Orlando do to address the regional transportation funding needs?
2. How can MetroPlan Orlando ensure maximum organizational effectiveness and an optimal planning process?
3. How can MetroPlan Orlando ensure relationships and partnerships are maintained or strengthened and new ones formed?
4. How can MetroPlan Orlando serve as a resource for increased public awareness and education?

Goals, Objectives and Strategies

Goal 1: Seek ways to increase regional transportation funding

Objective 1 Ensure all Board and Committee members are knowledgeable about the regional funding challenges

Strategies:

1. Develop regional transportation funding presentation
2. Research and present case studies on innovative funding strategies
3. Explain consequences of not increasing regional transportation funding

Objective 2 Better understand currently available transportation funding options

Strategies:

1. Review all available funding options
2. Review funding restrictions that apply to each
3. Develop recommendations for new sources of funding
4. Pursue more federal and state discretionary grant opportunities

Objective 3 Ensure investments in alternative modes of travel

Strategies:

1. Review investment strategy for Surface Transportation Program (STP) funds
2. Identify innovative methods for funding alternative modes of travel
3. Develop recommendations for reallocation of funding formula

Objective 4 Expand work of the Regional Transportation Funding Task Force

Strategies:

1. Assist with conducting Regional Market Research/Values Study
2. Broaden opportunities for business and civic organizations to play a more prominent role
3. Develop action plan that will lead to increased transportation funding

Goal 2: Maximize organizational effectiveness and optimize planning process

Objective 1 Reduce number of Board/Committee meetings held each year

Strategies:

1. Review Board/Committee meeting calendars to establish a timeline for required product approvals
2. Utilize technology for presentations prior to meetings to reduce the number of presentations made at each meeting
3. Formalize an emergency approval process to ensure time-sensitive items are addressed

Objective 2 Improve effectiveness of current committee process

Strategies:

1. Evaluate all advisory committees and subcommittees for purpose and need
2. Explore possibility of eliminating or combining committees
3. Establish Leadership Council consisting of Board Chair/Vice Chair, Executive Director/Deputy Executive Director and Chair/Vice Chair of Advisory committees to meet quarterly

Objective 3 Improve project evaluation methodology for projects included in the Long Range Transportation Plan and Prioritized Project List

Strategies:

1. Examine best practice methods used by other MPOs
2. Finalize development and implement use of new project assessment tool
3. Strengthen transportation systems management and operations program

Objective 4 Place more emphasis on Long Range Plan implementation

Strategies:

1. Review/evaluate available staff resources
2. Review/revise staff job descriptions to better align with responsibilities
3. Add new staff position(s) where needed
4. Evaluate Board reporting systems to ensure accountability beyond approval of the long range plan
5. Identify impediments to implementation of long range plan
6. Review process for developing, evaluating, prioritizing and advancing transit projects
7. Utilize in-house staff teams for planning studies, where possible

Goal 3: Strengthen partnerships

Objective 1 Enhance interagency coordination

Strategies:

1. Establish Executive Director Roundtable with partner agencies
2. Conduct FDOT/D5 leadership and liaison quarterly reviews
3. Assign staff liaisons to transportation agency board meetings, city/county mayors/managers meetings and Tri-County League of Cities meetings

Objective 2 Expand outreach to business and civic organizations

Strategies:

1. Arrange transportation program for general membership or leadership of chambers of commerce
2. Ensure transportation session is incorporated in chamber leadership programs
3. Identify and engage civic organizations that can serve as regional partners in support of transportation

Objective 3 Preserve MetroPlan Orlando's regional partnership

Strategies:

1. Consider advancing a legislative proposal for a change in state statutes to allow for an increase in the number of voting Board members
2. Review the current MetroPlan Orlando regional partner funding formula; propose changes for consideration by the MetroPlan Orlando Board as needed
3. Ensure transportation planning process reflects an awareness of needs throughout the three-county area
4. Track the impact of transportation investment decisions so that funds controlled by MetroPlan Orlando are used in an equitable manner throughout the region

Objective 4 Assume a leadership role on statewide issues

Strategies:

1. Remain active with the Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC)
2. Strengthen ties with the Florida Transportation Commission members and their staff
3. Explore interest in resurrecting the Florida Urban Transportation Coalition

Objective 5 Build relationships with academic institutions

Strategies:

1. Work with the University of Central Florida and Rollins College to assist with strengthening their graduate planning programs
2. Partner with universities to generate additional federal/state research funding
3. Contract with public universities, where appropriate, for technical support
4. Offer graduate or undergraduate internships each year

Goal 4: Leverage legislative assets

Objective 1 Strengthen ties with Congressional delegation and staff

Strategies:

1. Take active role in assisting national transportation-related organizations, FDOT/Central Office, our Congressional delegation and with development of next federal transportation bill
2. Identify and utilize existing relationships between MetroPlan Orlando Board and members of our Congressional delegation to assist with federal transportation matters
3. Invite members of our Congressional delegation to attend MetroPlan Orlando board meetings to provide periodic reports
4. Establish relationships with Congressional staff members in both the district and DC offices

Objective 2 Strengthen ties with State Legislative Delegation and staff

Strategies:

1. Conduct transportation briefings for newly elected members of our legislative delegation
2. Present MetroPlan Orlando's board-approved legislative priorities at state legislative delegation public hearings throughout the region
3. Ensure transportation priorities are emphasized at annual Central Florida Legislative Delegation meeting hosted by the Central Florida Partnership
4. Invite members of our legislative delegation to attend MetroPlan Orlando Board meetings to make periodic reports
5. Establish relationships with legislative staff members
6. Identify existing relationships between Board members and members of our state legislative delegation

Goal 5: Increase community awareness of transportation issues

Objective 1 Increase public outreach to general public, business community, the independent (non-profit) sector, and the media

Strategies:

1. Partner with city and county public information officers to disseminate transportation information through various channels
2. Engage Citizens Advisory Committee members to take an active role by either arranging transportation-related programs in their community or by becoming active members of the speakers' bureau
3. Prepare universal presentations for use by members of the speakers' bureau
4. Engage the business community by working with local Chambers of Commerce
5. Establish formal ties with independent sector (non-profit) organizations in the region
6. Work with local media outlets to provide transportation-related news stories or transportation-related PSAs
7. Pitch stories to trade organization publications
8. Establish a regional PIO consortium and host quarterly meetings
9. Host annual State of Regional Transportation Summit

Objective 2 Identify opportunities to use of multi-media platforms for education and access to transportation information

Strategies:

1. Review and update MetroPlan Orlando website
2. Position MetroPlan Orlando as the regional transportation planning expert by consistently posting current information on social media, such as research, plan details and industry news
3. Strengthen relationships with partners by interacting with them on social media
4. Solicit community feedback on transportation issues by posting questions and opportunities to comment via website and social media
5. Use social media as a tool for education and information

Implementation

Goal 1 - Seek ways to increase regional transportation funding

Objective Number	Objective Description	Responsible Party
Objective 1	Ensure Board members are knowledgeable about regional funding challenges	Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director
Objective 2	Better understand currently available transportation funding options	Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director
Objective 3	Ensure investments in alternative modes of travel	Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director
Objective 4	Expand work of the Regional Transportation Funding Task Force	Executive Director, Director of Regional Partnerships

Goal 2 - Maximize organizational effectiveness and optimize planning process

Objective Number	Objective Description	Responsible Party
Objective 1	Reduce number of Board/Committee meetings	Executive Director
Objective 2	Improve effectiveness of current Committee process	Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director
Objective 3	Improve project evaluation methodology for projects included in the Long Range Plan and Prioritized Project List	Deputy Executive Director, Director of Systems Mgmt/Ops, Transportation Planning Manager, Manager of Planning Services
Objective 4	Place more emphasis on Long Range Plan implementation	Deputy Executive Director, Transportation Planning Manager, Manager of Planning Services, Director of Finance & Administration

Goal 3 - Strengthen regional partnerships

Objective Number	Objective Description	Responsible Party
Objective 1	Enhance interagency coordination	Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director, Director of Regional Partnerships
Objective 2	Improve outreach to business and civic organizations	Executive Director, Director of Regional Partnerships, Public Information Manager
Objective 3	Preserve MetroPlan Orlando regional partnership	Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director
Objective 4	Assume a leadership role on	Executive Director, Deputy

	statewide issues	Executive Director, Director of Regional Partnerships
Objective 5	Build relationships with academic institutions	Executive Director, Deputy Executive Director, Director of Systems Management & Operations

Goal 4 - Leverage legislative assets

Objective Number	Objective Description	Responsible Party
Objective 1	Strengthen ties with Congressional Delegation and staff	Executive Director
Objective 2	Strengthen ties with state legislative delegation and staff	Executive Director, Director of Regional Partnerships

Goal 5 - Increase Community Awareness of Transportation Issues

Objective Number	Objective Description	Responsible Party
Objective 1	Increase public outreach to general public, business community, independent sector and the media	Executive Director, Director of Regional Partnerships, Public Information Manager
Objective 2	Improve use of multi-media platforms for education and access of transportation information	Director of Finance & Administration, Director of Regional Partnerships, Public Information Manager