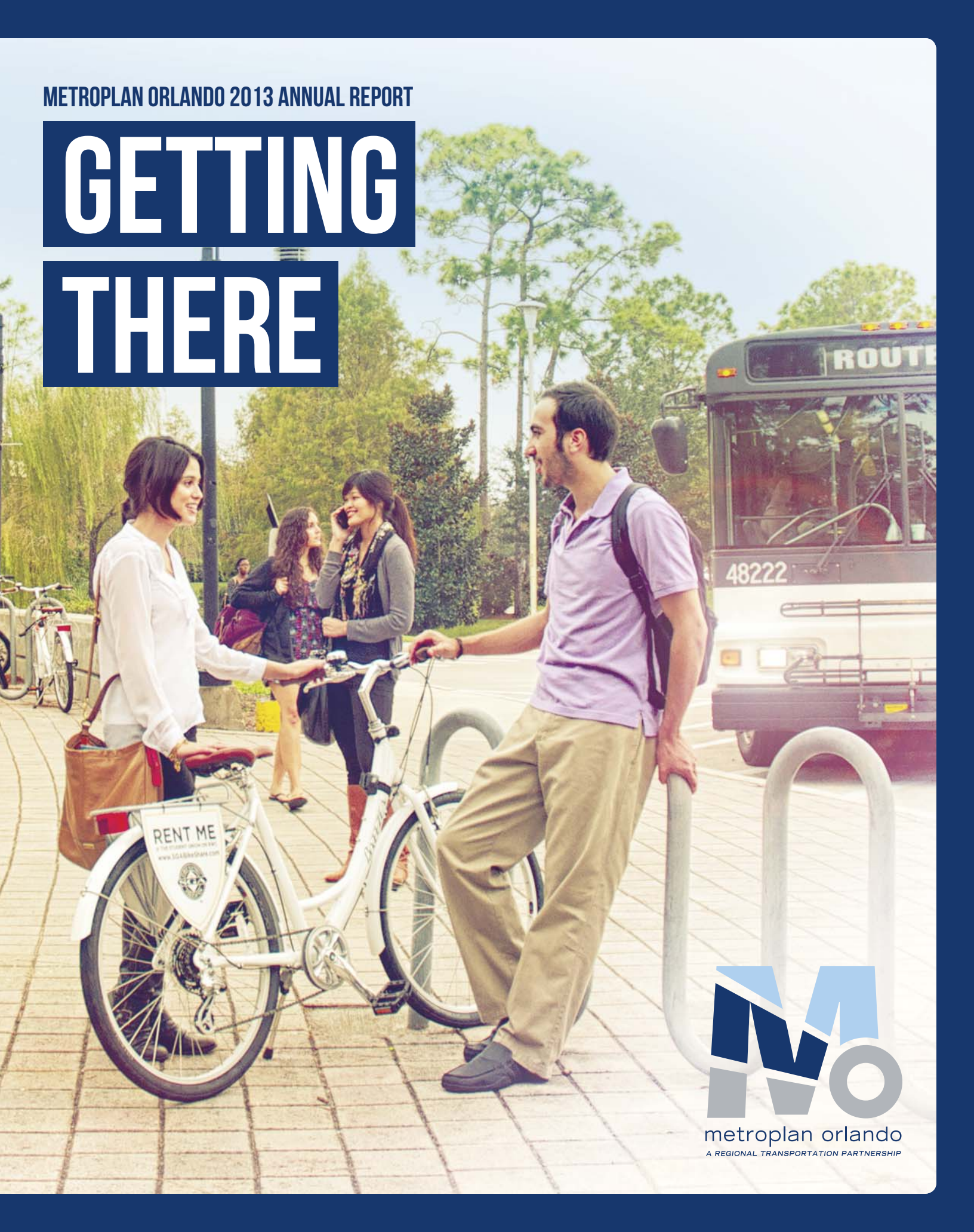


METROPLAN ORLANDO 2013 ANNUAL REPORT

# GETTING THERE





## GETTING THERE

Transportation touches us all. Whether we are in our teen years, golden years or somewhere in between, our transportation system directly affects our quality of life. An inefficient system causes strain on our wallets and stress on our health. An efficient system gives us more time with our families and more economic opportunities.

That's why the work we do at MetroPlan Orlando is so important. For years, elected officials, planners and operating agencies have been busy planning a dramatic transformation in Central Florida's transportation system. Bringing these massive projects to life takes time, and the good news is that we're **Getting There**. The makeover has begun! Central Florida's major investments will make significant progress in 2014, including SunRail, the I-4 Ultimate project, Wekiva Parkway and Poinciana Parkway.

**Getting There**, the theme for this annual report, highlights our focus on providing options for moving you to your destinations. Our survey research shows that the majority of residents would like more transportation choices for their commutes. So while the car has historically been the most popular way to get around in our region, we want to offer additional options such as rail, and a more comprehensive bus, bicycle and pedestrian network.

One of my priorities this year was closing the gaps in our regional trail network, including the Coast-to-Coast Connector. Completing this 275-mile trail, which will join Florida's east and west coasts, will require cooperation across the 10-county mega-region. I'm happy to report that we are working on the gaps in our area and have made excellent progress in coordinating with our neighbors. We hope to gain support from the state legislature and governor soon to fund the remaining 72 miles of trail gaps.

I was thrilled to see our beautiful SunRail trains arrive this year. With comfortable seating, space for wheelchairs and bikes, free Wi-Fi and reliable service, SunRail will offer commuters a much-needed alternative to I-4. This system has been a long time coming and would not have been possible without a remarkable regional effort. Our hard work will continue as we secure federal funding and launch phase two.

This coming year, the MetroPlan Orlando Board will adopt the year 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan. If we want to build a transportation system that our grandchildren will be proud of, we must be prepared to act boldly to bring the vision to life. Together, we are getting there.

Sincerely,

*Daisy W. Lynum*

Commissioner Daisy W. Lynum  
2013 Board Chairman





# GETTING TO 2040



100% of our success  
comes from regionalism



Transportation funding  
is our biggest challenge



The year 2040 plan  
will be approved in 2014







**WE LEAD THE WAY IN PLANNING  
BECAUSE CREATING A BALANCED  
TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM FOR  
2040 BEGINS WITH HARD WORK AND  
REGIONAL COOPERATION TODAY.**

*Efficient. Safe. High-tech. Teeming with travel options. Helping the region's economy flourish. That's what we envision for Central Florida – a transportation system that works for all lifestyles and abilities, whether you're a resident, visitor or business person.*

MetroPlan Orlando was Florida's first multi-county metropolitan planning organization, established in 1977, and we pride ourselves on setting the standard for regional cooperation. We provide a forum where elected officials, transportation experts and citizens can create a multi-faceted transportation system. Together we set long- and short-term priorities for Orange, Osceola and Seminole Counties.

Federal legislation created organizations like ours to put regional transportation decisions in the hands of people most affected by them. MetroPlan Orlando strives to be an innovative leader in the planning process.

## THE PARTNERSHIP

The MetroPlan Orlando Board sets transportation policy and priorities for Central Florida. This 19-member body includes representatives from local governments and transportation operating agencies. Additionally, six non-voting advisors represent our committees and other transportation organizations. (A complete list of board members appears on the inside back cover.) While members represent various interests, their charge is to advance plans that offer diverse travel choices and sustainable communities for all Central Floridians.

Prioritizing transportation projects for federal and state funding is challenging, so board members weigh many perspectives before making far-reaching policy decisions. The advisory committee structure provides diverse input, and citizens who

are interested in particular projects or issues also provide comments.

Our advisory committees represent several specific areas: bicycle and pedestrian advocates, municipalities, transportation disadvantaged representatives, planners and engineers. We also have a committee for interested citizens from outside the transportation industry. Each of these groups reviews transportation plans before the board does. This allows committees to offer input and recommendations to the board prior to items requiring action.

## CITIZEN INVOLVEMENT WELCOME

MetroPlan Orlando is committed to the idea that everyone uses the transportation system, so everyone is entitled to a voice in the process. To that end, we offer many avenues for residents to express their opinions about transportation. Each board and committee meeting includes time for public comment. We travel to community events and provide speakers for organizations and schools. At these events or presentations, we offer updates on projects, information about transportation planning and safety tips. We also survey attendees and answer individual questions.

When it comes to major projects and plans, we host public hearings where citizens can review maps, speak directly with transportation planners and make public comments for the record. Those unable to attend meetings can submit comments through our website, by mail, email or phone.

While we enjoy meeting residents in person to talk about transportation, we realize the most efficient way to reach out across the region is through electronic communication. We maintain high visibility online, with our interactive website and social media outlets, including Facebook and Twitter. Social media lets us connect with residents in a casual format, making it easy for people to share their ideas.

The official MetroPlan Orlando website is our online headquarters. It contains a calendar of meetings and events, as well as agendas and meeting minutes. The site also contains copies of the region's transportation plans, results of research, photo and video galleries, our publications, and information about travel modes in Central Florida.

When we're out in the community, we find that most citizens are concerned about relieving traffic congestion. Ensuring that roads, sidewalks, bike paths and transit corridors connect smoothly across the region calls for an inclusive process. To create various transportation plans, MetroPlan Orlando uses a planning framework that is comprehensive, cooperative and continuing.

## THE LONG-RANGE VISION

The Long Range Transportation Plan provides the future vision for Central Florida and identifies projects for the next 20 years. Projects must be included in the plan to be eligible for federal and state transportation funding. Getting to the year 2040 is the focus of the long range plan under way. The planning process includes two key components: technical analysis and community outreach.

The first step in the technical analysis is developing computer models – tools that help determine future travel demands and how our transportation system can perform. The models work with a land use plan, which examines projected population patterns. By 2040, more than a million additional residents are expected to live in Central Florida.

After the models are complete and needed improvements are identified, planners then turn attention to specific pieces of the transportation system, including transit, freight, management and operations, safety, security, and bicycle and pedestrian facilities.

Federal law also requires that the long range plan be cost-feasible, meaning that it can't just be a wish list. We must be able to pay for the projects contained in the plan. This is challenging because most transportation projects carry a large price tag. At the same time, expected revenues for transportation are declining. The MetroPlan Orlando Board will have to make some tough decisions on which projects to include in the 2040 plan and how to get the best bang for our buck.

MetroPlan Orlando makes an extra effort to connect with the community during the creation of the long range plan. One way we obtain public opinion is through the *Community Conversation* format. At these events, MetroPlan Orlando staff members make presentations to established community, civic and business groups. Outreach efforts are designed to provide information about how a long range plan comes together and challenges in planning for 2040. Most importantly, staff members obtain citizen input, including opinions on critical needs and best ways to pay for transportation improvements.

Feedback from residents is conveyed to the MetroPlan Orlando Board throughout the development of the long range plan to ensure the public's voice is heard in the planning process. In addition to Community Conversations, we also speak with citizens at community festivals and events throughout the three-county area.

We reached 1,786 people – including 450 kids – at 42 events in 2013. Residents list their top three critical transportation needs as: 1) relieving traffic congestion, 2) increasing passenger rail service, and 3) controlling distracted driving. Other major concerns include improving pedestrian safety, increasing bus service and widening roads. An overwhelming majority (87 percent) say we should invest more in the transportation system. Top preferred ways to pay for improvements include: 1) rental car surcharge, 2) sales tax, and 3) tolls.

Another avenue we use to ensure we are hearing feedback from a wide variety of residents is statistically-valid market research. In 2013, we teamed up with the Institute for Social and Behavioral Sciences at the University of Central Florida to conduct a public opinion survey in the three-county area, including 796 telephone surveys and 632 online respondents. We've been conducting this research consistently for more than a decade now, allowing us to track trends in public opinion about transportation issues. As issues are identified, we go more in-depth with focus groups.

The results from the market research align with what we've heard through our community outreach efforts, assuring us that we have a good grasp of the community's sentiments about transportation. According to the survey, 80 percent of respondents – more than ever before – said transportation issues are important to Central Florida. Most feel not enough is being done to address transportation issues and that too little is being spent on transportation. This public feedback will be taken into account by the MetroPlan Orlando Board as the 2040 plan is finalized.

The public will have two major opportunities to provide input and learn more in the spring of 2014 before final approval of the 2040 plan, through a town call meeting and a traditional public hearing. After considering the technical analysis and public input, the MetroPlan Orlando Board will adopt a final plan by August 2014.

## THE SHORT-TERM PLANS

Once the long range plan identifies needed transportation improvements, the Prioritized Project List ranks them. The list is updated annually and determines the sequence of funding for projects, allowing local governments to plan for funding and implementation in their individual communities. Highway, transit, bicycle and pedestrian projects are

included in the list. Once funding becomes available, the project moves to the short-term plan.

The Transportation Improvement Program is the short-term plan that assigns federal and state funding to specific projects. Local projects are also included in the plan for information. Updated annually, the plan sets the schedule for improvements to the region's transportation system – a \$5.4 billion investment in the next five years.

Whether short-term or long-term, bringing the transportation improvements included in these plans to life will take a considerable amount of funding.



**80%**  
**AGREE TRANSPORTATION  
IS IMPORTANT TO THE  
REGION**

**1,032,779**  
**ADDITIONAL RESIDENTS  
EXPECTED BY 2040**



## FUNDING IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE FACING THE TRANSPORTATION INDUSTRY. THE REGION NEEDS RESOURCES BEYOND THE SHRINKING GAS TAX TO DELIVER THE SYSTEM RESIDENTS WANT.

*In the past 20 years, the wear and tear on Central Florida's roads has risen nearly 50 percent – much of this aided by increased fuel efficiency. Consumers can drive farther without stopping at the gas pump as often. This puts more strain on the transportation system, while providing less money than in the past. In the meantime, funding for transportation has begun to decline, with the federal gas tax not increasing since 1993. The bottom line is that the gas tax is a shrinking funding source for transportation.*

### HOW WE FUND TRANSPORTATION TODAY

MetroPlan Orlando puts a lot of effort into its regional transportation plans, but the key ingredient to accomplishing those plans is money. Transportation projects have historically been funded through three piggy banks available to the region - federal, state and local gas taxes. The gas tax is a flat rate, so whether gas is \$1 per gallon or \$5, the amount a driver pays remains the same per gallon. At roughly 42 cents per gallon in combined federal, state and local fuel taxes, Central Florida drivers are getting a deal to drive from place to place. For a person who drives 10,000 miles per year in a car that gets 20

miles per gallon, that's \$210 per year, or just 58 cents per day in gas tax.

Right now, when we shake the fuel tax piggy banks, we hear only a faint rattle. That's bad news for regional projects in line to get funded in the next few years. We must find additional ways to pay for improvements to the transportation system.

Innovative funding options such as public-private partnerships have proved reliable ways to accelerate projects. For example, structuring the I-4 Ultimate project as a public-private partnership will allow it to be built 20 years sooner than if it were being funded solely through traditional methods.

The region has experienced success with building a dependable highway network through toll funding. Under the present structure, however, revenues generated by tolls on Florida's Turnpike or on roads managed by local expressway authorities must be reinvested in the toll road system. While such user fees are attractive for building new roads, the money they produce cannot currently cover obligations on other parts of the transportation system.

Funding uncertainty affects many road projects and makes it difficult to advance transit in the region. Central Floridians are relying more on mass transportation, but those projects have no dedicated funding source. That means LYNX must repeatedly make its case for funding to local governments with no assurance that its needs – a nearly \$128 million operating budget for fiscal year 2014 – can be fully met or that it can provide additional needed services.

### FINDING A SOLUTION

Exactly how we fix the broken funding system hasn't yet become clear, but we know we need a multi-faceted solution. Funding must be addressed in the short term, and a strategy must be worked out for maintaining our transportation infrastructure over time. New solutions should be sustainable, innovative and sensitive to public sentiment.

The Regional Transportation Funding Task Force, a subcommittee of the MetroPlan Orlando Board created in 2009, continues to explore potential dedicated funding sources. The Task Force is supporting a seven-county research effort between the public, private and independent (non-profit) sectors to understand Central Floridians' values and priorities. This information will ensure that local governments keep citizen needs in mind when considering possible funding sources.

### PUBLIC OPINION ON FUNDING

Understanding how the complex world of transportation funding works is a challenge. Through MetroPlan Orlando's community outreach efforts, we find that few citizens, about one in six, understand that the primary method of paying for transportation projects is the gas tax. This means that there is quite a bit of groundwork to lay in demonstrating the need for funding to the public before any new funding sources are pursued.

The good news is that when residents are asked whether government spends too much, too little or just the right amount on transportation, 64.5 percent of residents say government spends too little on transportation. The majority (68 percent) say taxes and fees should be pretty much the same for all, regardless of how much they drive.

Central Florida's transportation system should work for all lifestyles and abilities. MetroPlan Orlando will continue to explore new ways to fund transportation

in Central Florida. Through an inclusive planning process that identifies necessary system improvements and seeks community input, we can overcome the funding challenge together and create a transportation network that meets a variety of needs.



**\$0.58**  
PER DAY PAID IN GAS  
TAX BY AVERAGE DRIVER

**1993**  
WAS THE LAST YEAR  
THE FEDERAL GAS TAX  
WAS RAISED

**64.5%**  
OF RESIDENTS SAY  
GOVERNMENT SPENDS  
TOO LITTLE ON  
TRANSPORTATION



# GETTING MORE OPTIONS



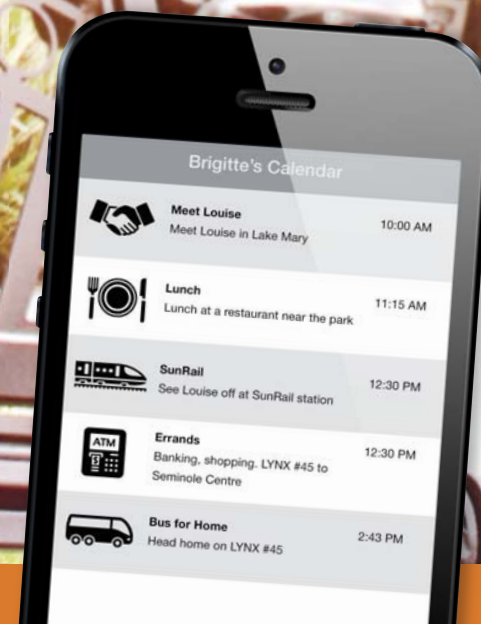
LYMMO expands, and bus rapid transit may be headed for other corridors



SunRail, All Aboard Florida and Maglev are all in the works



Vendors set up bike and car sharing across the area







**ON THURSDAYS, LOUISE AND I WALK  
IN LAKE MARY'S CENTRAL PARK.  
I RIDE THE BUS OVER, AND SHE TAKES  
SUNRAIL FROM SANFORD.**

*It's perfect, because we don't really like to drive much anymore. We can get our exercise, have our visit, even eat lunch at a restaurant nearby. We love places we can get to, and get around in, so easily. Transit in our area really brings people together. Louise and I are proof of that.*

In transit, it's all about connections. Riders connect with transit routes to take them where they need to go. Buses, trains and shared vehicles connect with each other and with businesses and institutions across our region.

Central Floridians have told us for years that they want more choices in transit, and those wishes are becoming reality. In 2013, we started experiencing the next phase of our transit growth – with commuter rail, expanded bus rapid transit and short-term bike and car rentals. We're getting there!

## SUNRAIL

One of the most exciting transportation projects to ever take shape in Central Florida officially launches in 2014. SunRail commuter trains actually moved onto area tracks during 2013 for public education and testing. Residents toured the cab cars and saw locomotives in action, as opening day approached for the phase one between DeBary and Sand Lake Road. Rail safety messages were also shared urging the public to use caution near the railroad tracks.

SunRail has the potential to transform area commutes by letting riders get a jump on the workday with a smooth train ride that includes wireless Internet access, work tables and power outlets available during trips to and from the office.

Even as the first phase of SunRail gets going, officials are hard at work nailing down funding for the second phase, slated to open in 2016,

which will extend the line north to DeLand and south to Poinciana.

Still, SunRail cannot serve public needs in a vacuum. At \$2 per one-way ticket (plus \$1 for every county line crossed) commuting by train is more affordable than by car. But most commutes don't end at the station. Tickets allow seamless transfers between SunRail trains and the LYNX and Votran buses.

A lot of attention in 2013 was focused on the "first and last mile" connections for transit riders. LYNX has charted bus route connections to stations; the popular LYMMO free rapid transit service is expanding; major employers are looking into shuttles and vans; and concessions are starting up for car sharing and bike sharing. The goal is to have a transit network that serves residents and visitors easily and comprehensively.

Let's look at what else was advancing in Central Florida public transit, while SunRail was being brought onto the tracks.

## LYNX

In addition to building connections with the region's new commuter train, LYNX served a variety of needs for more than 29 million area passengers. Besides the well-known bus system, LYNX operates:

- Free LYMMO downtown Orlando circulator
- Road Rangers
- Vans for commuter van pools
- ACCESS LYNX paratransit service for persons with disabilities
- NeighborLink service allowing residents in outlying areas to connect to the larger fixed-route system

The most exciting development among these services in 2013 has been expanding the hybrid electric LYMMO service from one line to three – a joint project between LYNX and the City of Orlando. Dubbed the Orange, Grapefruit and Lime lines, the



expanded routes will serve 22 new destinations including Thornton Park, Parramore, Creative Village and downtown Orlando SunRail stations when launched in 2014. The expansion is expected to increase LYMMO ridership by 4,500 trips per day.

## OTHER TRAIN PROJECTS

As SunRail prepared to launch, two more passenger rail projects started making their ways to reality. One is a high-speed train called All Aboard Florida, to connect Orlando and South Florida. The other is a magnetic levitation train by American Maglev Technologies that might connect Orlando International Airport to the Convention Center, SunRail and Florida Mall. Both projects would be built and operated using private funding, and are requesting to use publicly owned right-of-way.

All Aboard Florida plans a 235-mile route between the future Intermodal Center at Orlando International Airport and downtown Miami – with stops in West Palm Beach and Fort Lauderdale. The train would run mostly on the existing Florida East Coast Industries corridor. The company expects to break ground on the \$1.5 billion project in 2014, making it the first privately owned, operated and maintained intercity passenger rail in the country.

The first phase of Maglev would build a 15-mile fixed-guideway system that could connect SunRail, the airport and several large tourist destinations. This \$315.2 million project would also link to All Aboard Florida. FDOT is advertising for competing bids to lease rights of way in the area, which could clear the way for Maglev.

MetroPlan Orlando is working with our partners to evaluate and advance these public-private partnerships in a way that protects the public's interests and complements the existing transportation system.

## FUTURE TRANSIT

SunRail has been seen as the spine for a potential network of trains and other transit connections in Central Florida. Several plans for long-term additions to the transit system are already under way.

Studies called alternatives analyses are in progress for U.S. 441 between Orange and Lake counties; State Road 50 from the West Oaks Mall to the University of Central Florida; and a corridor connecting Orlando International Airport to International Drive and Medical City. Once these studies are complete, the region will have a better idea of what might work best in each corridor. The MetroPlan Orlando Board will then vote on preferred alignments.

The board approved an alignment for one corridor in 2013 – U.S. 192 in Osceola County. That project would widen the highway to eight lanes between downtown Kissimmee and U.S. 27 and use dedicated bus lanes to provide faster service for more than 4,000 LYNX riders on the corridor. This type of service – bus rapid transit, a cheaper alternative to trains for busy urban roads – would help connect downtown Kissimmee's SunRail station to the major tourist attractions.

Additionally, the cities of Altamonte Springs, Longwood, Casselberry and Maitland are working on a demonstration project called FlexBus. This pilot project will use technology to run an on-demand service that will act like a circulator, connecting riders to fixed-route bus service and SunRail.

## SHARING CARS AND BIKES

Our transit system is growing, but many commuters and visitors still need individual transportation – even if it's just for a few hours. Two types of programs started in 2013 to meet that need.

Central Florida's commuter assistance program, reThink, has long advocated that workers share rides by carpooling, vanpooling or using transit, as well as finding other smart ways to get to work. This year, however, reThink added a choice by helping steer the concept of vehicle sharing.

The region is now home to two car sharing programs – Hertz 24/7, primarily in downtown Orlando, and Zipcar, near UCF. These short-term car rentals help transit riders by providing midday convenience or emergency backup. Potential drivers register with the service and rent vehicles by the hour as needed.

Bicycle rentals offer convenience, as well. A bike share at UCF helps students get around campus for free. CycleHop, which took over the local SunCycles, was chosen as the bike share vendor for Orlando. It is proposing about 30 downtown locations with about 200 bikes to kick off its operation in 2014. The long-term goal is 1,000 bikes at more than 90 hubs around the metro area, with most concentrated in the SunRail corridor.

## TRANSIT AND ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Public transit in general, and SunRail in particular, helps drive economic development. Transit can connect workers with jobs, and many companies looking to expand or relocate are interested in seeing strong transit. Construction, operation and maintenance of SunRail should generate more than 13,000 jobs statewide in the next 30 years.

Real estate growth – called transit-oriented development – near the rail line is also a big boost. Along SunRail phase one, 29 projects are announced or under construction within a 10-minute walk of the stations, amounting to more than 8 million square feet of commercial and residential development – a \$1.5 billion investment!

By getting people to the places they want to live, work and play, transit makes the connections that keep our region strong and vibrant.



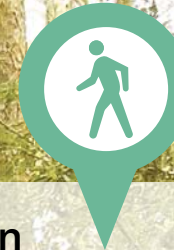
**29,857,130**  
**PASSENGER TRIPS**  
**WERE MADE ON LYNX IN**  
**FISCAL YEAR 2013**

**\$1.5 BILLION**  
**INVESTMENT IN 29**  
**DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS**  
**ALONG SUNRAIL**

**30**  
**BIKE-SHARE**  
**LOCATIONS PROPOSED**  
**FOR DOWNTOWN**  
**ORLANDO IN 2014**



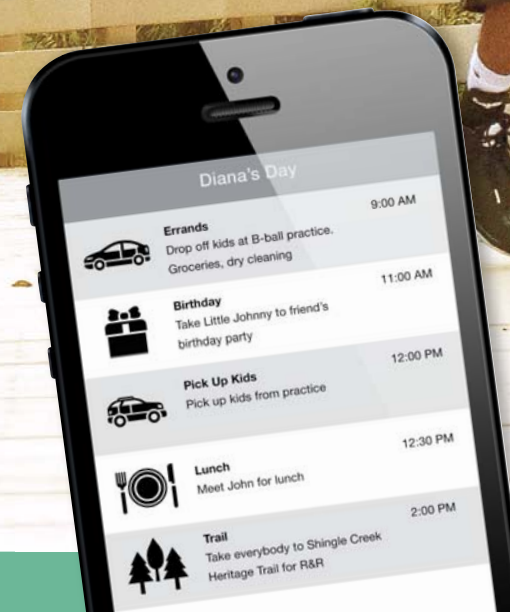
# GETTING ACTIVE



The Best Foot Forward pedestrian safety campaign is increasing awareness



Bikes are an important connection to SunRail and other transit



Region is committed to closing gaps on Coast-to-Coast trail





## WEEKENDS ARE CRAZY AT OUR HOUSE — BASKETBALL FOR THE TEENS, PLAY DATES FOR OUR YOUNGEST, LONG TO-DO LISTS FOR JOHN AND ME.

*Still, we want to unwind from work and school and have some family time. It's great when we can take a break outside. I've been riding my bike more, and I discovered some trails close to our neighborhood where we can all have a good time. When we're walking and biking, things seem less frantic.*

People power is a necessary part of the transportation system. In fact, it makes all other parts possible, since everybody is a pedestrian at some point in the journey.

Beyond that, however, many Central Floridians are increasing their walking and biking trips for convenience, environmental or health reasons. Our region's climate and natural resources are ideal for cyclists and walkers, and we are continuing to improve our infrastructure and safety needs.

The MetroPlan Orlando Board placed a high priority on active transportation issues during 2013. The board expressed support in its legislative priorities for increased pedestrian safety awareness programs and bicycle facility improvements.

### ON THE TRAILS

In addition, Chairman Daisy Lynum identified the Coast-to-Coast Connector as a leadership priority

and organized a spring trail ride in Central Florida to support this project that will connect existing trails. When complete, it will result in a continuous 275-mile multi-use corridor from the Atlantic to the Gulf. The Connector requires closing two gaps in our region – one in Orange and another in Seminole.

The Legislature approved funding in 2013 to close the gaps along the Connector, but the governor vetoed it. Supporters, however, have not given up. The Central Florida MPO Alliance, a coalition of MetroPlan Orlando and five sister organizations, has made Coast-to-Coast a priority and is working with a similar group in the Tampa area to advance the project.

A new group to study safety along our trail system was convened at MetroPlan Orlando in 2013. The Trail Traffic Control Working Group is taking a look at how signage and other features are used to make our trail system more functional.

In addition to trails, MetroPlan Orlando leads in exploring ways cyclists can connect with the new SunRail commuter trains and other forms of public transit. Both SunRail and LYNX provide accommodations for riders who use their bikes, and new bicycle sharing programs will let commuters rent bikes to connect to their destinations.

While the benefits are big, the challenges of making people-powered transportation accessible and safe can often be bigger.

### WALKING SAFER

A good pedestrian system is also critical to transit success. Walking is the most reliable way to make a short connection, but pedestrians need to feel safe when they are navigating the region.

In 2013, MetroPlan Orlando made progress on the Pedestrian Safety Master Plan published in 2012. The plan addresses the physical environment for pedestrians and behaviors necessary to reduce crashes. In the past year, Pedestrian Road Safety Audits were done at four locations with high pedestrian crash rates, resulting in a list of physical improvements to address problems on these road segments.

Best Foot Forward, the community-wide coalition formed in 2012, also continued work on improving pedestrian safety. With a group of partners, including MetroPlan Orlando, the coalition hopes to cut pedestrian deaths and injuries in the region in half within five years.

When the coalition formed, Central Florida ranked as the most dangerous place for walking in the nation. Best Foot Forward is showing progress with a "Triple-E" approach to safety through low-cost **Engineering**, community **Education** and visible **Enforcement**.

Before Best Foot Forward, about 12 percent of drivers, on average, were yielding to pedestrians in crosswalks on Orlando city streets with posted speed limits under 35 mph. After education and enforcement efforts, in which drivers received warnings and some fines, that rate has risen steadily. In 2013, the average yield rate at those same intersections was up to 48 percent. Best Foot Forward has set a goal of 70 percent yield rates on these streets by the end of 2014.

Work remains in educating drivers about yielding to pedestrians on higher speed corridors in Orange

County. On these routes, where posted speed limits are 35 mph or higher, the baseline yield rate for pedestrians in crosswalks was only 1.2 percent before Best Foot Forward. In early 2013, those yield rates had climbed to 5 percent, and the Best Foot Forward goal for 2014 is 25 percent.

Best Foot Forward has also advanced efforts aimed at children by introducing the WalkSafe curriculum in Orange County Public Schools. More than a dozen schools have completed the curriculum, and more than 50 have posted the materials online.

As our transportation system evolves, strong bicycle and pedestrian links will help promote smart and safe growth.



**9.6 JOBS**  
PRODUCED FOR EVERY  
\$1M SPENT ON TRAILS

**36%**  
INCREASE IN YIELDING  
TO PEDESTRIANS ON  
ROADS 35 MPH OR LESS



# GETTING THE WHEELS TURNING



Wekiva Parkway completes  
the metropolitan beltway



Express lanes on I-4  
will give drivers options



Retiming lights on 18 road  
segments saved \$7,168,062







## BABY EMMA'S ARRIVAL OFFICIALLY MADE US A FAMILY, AND WE LOVE DOING THINGS TOGETHER THAT INCLUDE "DOG KIDS" HOLLY AND CHLOE.

*Sometimes, we put everybody in the car and head for a dog park where we can all relax. Emma gets such a kick out of seeing the dogs run free on the pet playground. For Shaloni and me, there's nothing like taking our little family on a road trip – even if it's just across town.*

Roads have long defined transportation in Central Florida, and they continue to be our primary mode of transportation, even as we diversify our offerings. Our mature road system is fast approaching a time when it is "built out," with little room for expensive widening or construction. However, three projects that got off the drawing boards in 2013 can significantly improve traffic across the region.

### REVAMPING THROUGH ROADS

The Wekiva Parkway, which will complete the beltway around Central Florida, broke ground in the summer. Construction is expected to continue on the \$1.6 billion project – a cooperative effort of the Florida Department of Transportation, Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority and Florida's Turnpike Enterprise – through the year 2021.

The 25-mile Wekiva Parkway (S.R. 429) begins near Apopka and loops northward through Lake and Seminole counties to connect with the Central Florida Greenway (S.R. 417). It is expected to reduce congestion on U.S. 441, S.R. 46 and other

local roads. While the new Wekiva Parkway will be taking motorists to the outskirts of the metro area, improvements slated for I-4 will focus on the heart of the city.

The \$2 billion I-4 Ultimate project runs 21 miles from west of Kirkman Road to east of S.R. 434 and will reconstruct 15 interchanges. Plans call for building 56 new bridges – including a pedestrian bridge at Maitland Boulevard – as well as replacing and modifying existing bridges.

The most talked-about feature of the project is the addition of express lanes in the center of the interstate, which introduce optional variable tolling to the area. Express lanes are an innovative way to manage congestion with toll pricing based on congestion in the adjacent non-tolled general lanes. That means tolls will be higher during peak periods, when demand is greater. These types of lanes are used on a portion of I-95 in South Florida, and reports show traffic moves more efficiently for drivers in all lanes.

The I-4 Ultimate project is a public-private partnership between FDOT and a concessionaire, who will invest in the project and assume responsibilities for operations and maintenance. These partnerships, called P-3s, are an increasingly popular way to finance major projects, as federal highway funds become tighter. Construction on I-4 is expected to begin in late 2014 and finish in about six years, 20 years sooner than if the private sector were not involved.

Another transformational road project broke ground in 2013 – the first phase of the Poinciana Parkway. A partnership with Osceola County Expressway Authority, Polk County and AV Homes, this road is scheduled to open in 2015. It will provide much-needed access to the regional transportation system for the growing Poinciana community in southwestern Osceola County.

### MANAGING CONGESTION

Large building projects can't solve all our road challenges, so MetroPlan Orlando uses management and operations strategies to maximize the highway system we have. Such strategies generally use technology to improve safety and efficiency with techniques such as traffic signal retiming, advanced traveler information systems, intersection improvements and parking management.

MetroPlan Orlando recently completed a travel time study after signal retiming along 18 road segments. Signals were synchronized to improve traffic flow, then the corridors were analyzed to determine the economic benefit of the improvements. Overall, the retiming projects were well worth the investment, resulting in a time savings to users of more than 426,920 hours annually and a total cost savings to the region of \$7,168,062.

While MetroPlan Orlando regularly studies travel times in the region, a federal grant made it possible to begin an in-depth study in 2013 on value pricing. This strategy involves pricing access to such things as roadways, bridges or even parking areas to encourage more efficient behavior. While not part of this study, the previously mentioned I-4 express lanes will demonstrate this concept by charging drivers more to use quicker-moving lanes at peak travel times. The value pricing study will continue until late 2014 and will investigate the feasibility of implementing the concept in Central Florida and evaluate possible pricing scenarios.

### SAFETY FIRST

Another important benefit to good management and operations is increased safety, which comes with better traffic flow. Safety initiatives have captured a lot of attention. In 2013, several agencies launched or stepped up safety campaigns, including the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority's Designated Texter initiative and state efforts to control impaired and distracted driving.

The MetroPlan Orlando Board identified distracted driving as a legislative priority, and the Florida Legislature passed a law that went into effect in October making texting while driving illegal. The issue of safety should always be paramount in transportation planning, because our region's most precious cargo – our people – must travel the roads daily.



**4,500**  
FLORIDA CRASHES WERE  
CAUSED BY DISTRACTED  
DRIVING IN 2012

**426,920**  
HOURS SAVED FOR  
DRIVERS LAST YEAR  
FROM SIGNAL RETIMING



# GETTING THE GOODS



The vast majority - 95% - of  
Central Florida's freight moves by truck



Freight movement has a  
substantial economic impact



Everything we eat, wear, and  
buy is transported through the region







## I'M LOVING MY GIRLS' AFTERNOON OUT WITH MY FLOWER GIRL, CAMMIE. THERE'S SO MUCH TO PREPARE AND SHOP FOR BEFORE THE WEDDING!

*My invitations were produced in Miami and my flowers are being shipped fresh from Ecuador. Most importantly, my dress is coming from California. Who knew items from all these places would come together to create the perfect Central Florida wedding? I can't wait!*

All the materials we need for life's big moments and everyday activities will, at some point, join more than 200 million tons of freight flowing in our region each year. About 95 percent of our goods move by truck, with the remaining 5 percent moving by rail, sea and air. Without efficient movement of goods and services, the economy cannot thrive. Freight is the economy in motion.

As the region grows, demand for goods and services will test our transportation system. That's why it's important to plan for transporting things we eat, wear and sell in the same way we plan for how people get around. For more than a decade, MetroPlan Orlando has monitored freight movement throughout area, which includes 56 percent construction materials, 27 percent consumer goods, 11 percent fuels and chemicals and 6 percent other goods.

This past year, our organization embarked upon the most comprehensive freight study we've ever completed to identify the system's strengths and weaknesses, and to support economic development.

The study encompassed seven counties: Orange, Osceola, Seminole, Brevard, Volusia, Lake and Sumter.

The study examined Central Florida's current transportation system, and after interviewing stakeholders in the industry like shippers and truck drivers, identified 50 facilities important to regional freight movement. Specific short-, mid-, and long-term projects were identified to improve these facilities and bottlenecks. This will allow MetroPlan Orlando to focus investment where it will have the greatest benefit, enhancing safety and promoting the region's economic vitality.

Another key recommendation from the study is to establish a regional freight program within MetroPlan Orlando's planning process. This will include integrating freight into training, outreach, data collection, tool development and performance measures. The Freight Advisory Council, which guided the development of the study, will play a key role by providing input from this dual public and private sector group to the MetroPlan Orlando Board. The ultimate outcome of a far-reaching freight program is a balanced transportation system that meets the needs of people and freight.

### ECONOMICS OF FREIGHT

From an economic perspective, domestic and international trading partners were identified, allowing us to understand how our region fits into state, national and global networks. The logistics

industry has a substantial economic impact on Central Florida. For every million tons of freight moved in our area, 155 direct transportation jobs and \$7 million in direct income is created. These are quality jobs with salaries far above the current median salary in Central Florida, making this a desirable industry to draw to the area.

Today, more than 30,000 jobs exist in our seven-county region's freight sector. By the year 2040, freight demand could grow by a conservative estimate of 35 percent, expanding to 42,000 jobs with a direct income of \$1.9 billion. On the high end, demand could grow by 61 percent, expanding to 50,000 jobs and \$2.3 billion in direct income. These economic opportunities can only be realized if our transportation system can accommodate the increased freight movement.

If we don't prepare for freight growth, the cost of doing nothing is considerable – traffic congestion worsens, transportation costs increase and economic competitiveness decreases. When there are more trucks on the roads and facilities are not ready for them, vehicle operating costs rise because trucks are stuck in traffic, resulting in a higher cost of doing business. These increases are passed on to consumers, raising the cost of living and making the region less attractive.

The transportation system's efficiency must be improved to accommodate future freight demand. Enhancing the connections between modes, such as rail and truck or ship and rail, will be a key factor in boosting efficiency and competitiveness for the logistics industry. MetroPlan Orlando will take the results of the freight study and incorporate them into the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan to ensure improvements to the freight system are made consistently over the coming decades.

A wealth of information is contained in the freight study and is available to the public. To learn more from the full technical reports, go to [www.metroplanorlando.com](http://www.metroplanorlando.com) and click on the freight tab.



**56%**  
OF GOODS MOVING  
IN CENTRAL FLORIDA  
ARE CONSTRUCTION  
MATERIALS

**35-61%**  
GROWTH IN FREIGHT  
DEMAND BY 2040

**155 JOBS**  
AND \$7M IN DIRECT  
INCOME GENERATED  
PER 1M TONS OF  
FREIGHT MOVED



# FINANCIALS

## OPERATING FUNDS

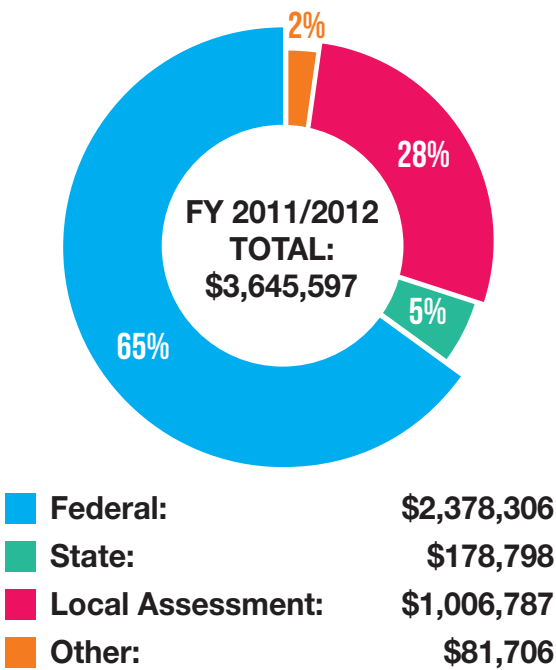
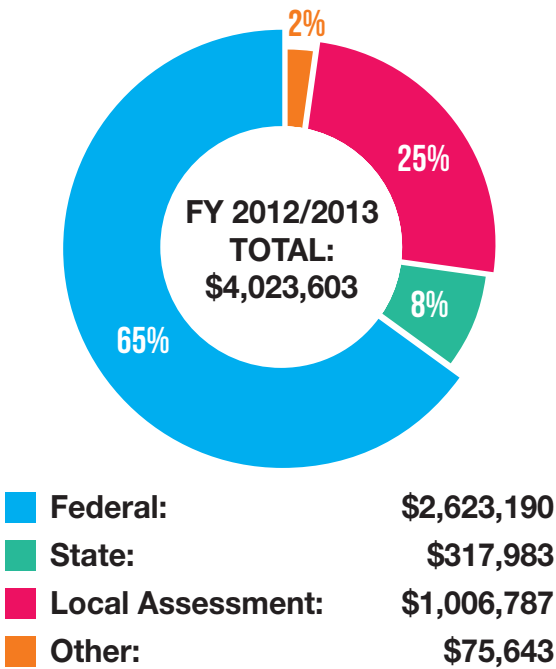
MetroPlan Orlando receives its operating funds primarily from three sources: federal grants, state grants and local funding. Through the continued support of its funding partners and accountable and conservative finance administration, MetroPlan Orlando remains in solid financial condition.

The organization is operated by a staff of 17 employees with expertise in various areas of transportation planning. Staff efforts are guided by the Unified Planning Work Program, a budget and task directive approved each year by the board. Staff performance is also measured continuously to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the organization.

## FUNDING PARTNERS

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA)  
Federal Transit Administration (FTA)  
Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)  
Orange County  
Osceola County  
Seminole County  
City of Altamonte Springs  
City of Apopka  
City of Kissimmee  
City of Orlando  
City of Sanford  
Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority (LYNX)  
Greater Orlando Aviation Authority  
Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority  
Sanford Airport Authority

## WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM



# GETTING TOGETHER

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\*denotes non-voting advisor

## THANK YOU

A heartfelt thanks to all our models and regional partners who helped make the photos in this report possible. Our photos were taken at:

University of Central Florida  
Mateer Harbert, Attorneys at Law  
Lake Mary's Central Park

Shingle Creek Regional Park  
KUA Cumbie Canine Court  
Shear Grace Salon Center





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