

# Journey to 2050: Community & Environment Webinar

(Note: The following questions were answered live and summarized with the assistance of ChatGPT V2)

**Q** *How can new development prioritize walkability and green spaces over car-oriented housing plans? And how can we ensure transit options are better considered in new developments?*

**A** Much of the onus relating to ensuring new developments include walkable green spaces will require local government agencies to update and improve land and building development codes to include these requirements. While home builders consider developing land and neighborhoods attractive to buyers, they are often only subject to the minimum requirements laid out in local land use related plans and policies. As local jurisdictions approve new developments, they should work with developers to ensure that they are building with walkability and accessibility in mind. This can include making sure the developers include sidewalks in their plans, this can also mean reducing or eliminating parking minimums, so new developments are not stretched over a wide area.

**Q** *What are the plans to build a network of bicycle infrastructure that connects residents to public transit, businesses, and schools?*

**A** MetroPlan Orlando recently developed an Active Transportation Plan focused on evaluating existing bicycle and pedestrian networks and identifying opportunities for enhancements or expansion. The Active Transportation Plan emphasizes connectivity to public transit stops, businesses, schools, essential services, and jobs. The results were incorporated directly into the 2050 MTP as part of the Active Transportation Needs Assessment, which guides the next 25 years of transportation improvements.

**Q** *How can we bring bus rapid transit (BRT) to Orlando, specifically on Colonial Drive?*

**A** BRT on State Route 50 (Colonial Drive) is identified in the 2050 MTP Transit Vision Plan as a high-priority corridor. However, implementation depends heavily on funding. While the vision is in place, significant capital investment and long-term operational funding are required to make it a reality.



**Q** *In high-density, high-poverty areas with negative health indicators, how is walkability being prioritized so that daily needs like grocery shopping or commuting can realistically be done on foot or by bike?*

**A** Local and regional planning is increasingly prioritizing walkability and accessibility. While these areas may be dense, they often lack infrastructure that supports daily needs. There are multiple health indicators, and each have different causes, so there are several ways to address the root. Strategies can include mixed-use zoning, adoption of complete streets policies, and investments in sidewalks, bike lanes, and safe crossings. MetroPlan Orlando has also incorporated walkability into the long-range plan through efforts like the Active Transportation Plan and Complete Streets Policy.

**Q** *While funding for BRT is secured, are there smaller steps that can be taken, such as bus-priority traffic signals?*

**A** Yes, there are smaller steps that could be taken. Interim improvements such as signal priority for buses and 'queue jumps' can improve transit performance. These require funding and coordination between road owners and transit providers like LYNX, but they can be implemented before a full BRT is established.

**Q** *What is the current state of planning for increased SunRail service to the airport?*

**A** SunRail is conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study known as the Sunshine Corridor, which is evaluating options for expanding service to the airport. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) or SunRail are the best sources for up-to-date information on this effort.

**Q** *What is being done to coordinate different transportation types or modalities?*

**A** The 2050 MTP development process included individual, mode-specific needs assessments—covering active transportation, transit, complete streets, technology improvements, and more. After assessing each mode, needs were reviewed and opportunities to consolidate separate, modal needs into single, cohesive projects were identified and reviewed with local agencies. This approach supports complete streets planning and streamlines future implementation if/when funding becomes available for individual transportation projects.



**Q *How are you coordinating with the new Transportation Mobility Advisory Committee (TransMAC)?***

**A** We have coordinated extensively with our three counties (Orange, Osceola, and Seminole), 20 cities and towns, LYNX, SunRail, FDOT, and other partners throughout the 2050 MTP's development. We've held MTP-specific technical workshops every two months for the past year and a half, all of which are recorded and available on our YouTube channel, to deep-dive technical topics to guide the MTP's development. Additionally, we meet with these agencies through MetroPlan Orlando Board and Advisory Committee meetings and one-on-one discussions to ensure collaboration throughout the planning process.

**Q *What exactly does MetroPlan Orlando do in relation to county public works and FDOT?***

**A** The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) provides oversight, policy direction, and establishes technical standards statewide. MetroPlan Orlando, as the metropolitan planning organization (MPO), coordinates regional transportation planning across multiple counties and cities, working to align federal transportation funds with regional priorities. City and county governments implement local infrastructure and services within their own boundaries, including transportation, zoning, housing, public works, and local roads. MetroPlan Orlando brings these partners together, along with our transportation operating partners (ex. LYNX and SunRail) to create a unified transportation vision and plan for the region through the 2050 MTP.

**Q *What is being done to handle the large and growing volume of traffic in southern Kissimmee and Poinciana?***

**A** Traffic growth in these areas, as well as across the three-county region, was incorporated into the 2050 traffic forecasts used to develop the MTP. The forecasts help identify current and future growth areas and guide the development of transportation improvements through 2050.

**Q *When developing strategies to enhance access to health services, was the growing use of virtual and home-delivered care considered?***

**A** Yes. Virtual care and mobile health services were included in the health component of the 2050 MTP. While these trends are expanding, many residents still report missing medical appointments due to unreliable transportation. The plan recognizes that while virtual care helps, reliable transportation remains essential for healthcare access.



**Q *What can be done about maintenance and design issues with overgrown or poorly maintained bike lanes?***

**A** Maintenance is managed by local governments. Residents should contact their city or county public works department directly to report issues. Larger design improvements or projects may take longer to be addressed through planning or other project development processes.

- Orange County Public Works
  - Phone: (407) 836-3111
  - Online: <https://www.ocfl.net/Home/311HelpInfo.aspx>
- Osceola County Public Works
  - Phone: (407) 742-7500
  - Online: [Report a Road Problem - Osceola County](#)
- Seminole County Public Works
  - Phone: (407) 665-7623
  - Online: [Customer Service Request Form| Seminole County](#)

**Q *How will the plan address the growing impact of extreme heat?***

**A** Extreme heat was a key environmental hazard considered in the resilience section of the MTP. As part of our resilience strategy, we encourage policies that explore heat mitigation measures such as continuous tree canopy coverage and shade structures along transportation corridors. These strategies support active transportation options like transit, walking, and bicycling. We also encourage investment in infrastructure to improve transit stations and reduce risks of heat-related illnesses. On a local level, LYNX is finalizing its Bus Stop Design Guide, which includes guidance on improvements and tree canopy considerations.

**Q *What steps are being taken to minimize the environmental impact of the transportation plan?***

**A** MetroPlan Orlando created a database of environmental resources to help avoid impacts in project planning. Most transportation needs identified in the 2050 MTP are within already developed areas or existing rights-of-way. We also consult environmental stakeholders and develop mitigation strategies if impacts are unavoidable.



**Q** *What measures are in place to protect natural habitats and green spaces during implementation of the transportation plan?*

**A** Avoidance of impacts is the preferred strategy, but mitigation measures are also in place. Nearly every transportation improvement project includes funding for environmental evaluation. If a project may cause impacts, FDOT's Environmental Screening Tool is used early in planning to minimize or avoid them whenever possible.

**For more information**

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