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FINAL

**Report on Proceedings
2013 Transportation Summit:
Visioning the Future of Miami-Dade County's Public Transportation**



Transportation**Trust**



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Executive Summary

This report synthesizes the information shared and discussed by panelists and attendees of the *2013 Transportation Summit: Visioning the Future of Miami-Dade County's Public Transportation*. The Summit was sponsored by the Citizens Independent Transportation Trust (CITT) with the support of the County's Mayor Carlos A. Gimenez and the Board of County Commissioners.

The four panels of the Summit were organized in two tracks – a *Financial Planning and Sustainability* track and a *Technology and Infrastructure* track. The participants in the *Financial Planning and Sustainability* track focused on innovative financing opportunities and public-private partnerships (P3s). The *Technology and Infrastructure* track included discussions on transit technologies and mode choice, and corridor development. A final session was dedicated to community visioning in which panelists and audience discussed current transportation challenges and potential solutions to them.

The main objective of this report is to encourage further discussion of the cross-cutting themes covered in the Summit, as a way to feed the momentum gained with the Summit towards visioning transportation solutions. This report focuses on the main topics discussed throughout the event (in particular the Opening Session, Breakouts, and Community Forum), and outlines the major themes that emerged during the addresses, panelist presentations and ensuing discourse. FIU Metropolitan Center staff took notes during the presentations and the Q&A sessions following them, served as scribes during the panels and prepared detailed summaries of each session. All sessions were audio recorded to ensure an accurate account of the participants' points.

The narrative incorporates all material from the event, including notes, presentations, audio recordings and session summaries. Additionally, the report includes references to selected documents that may add context and background, as well as references to comments and questions received after the Summit.

It is clear that the widespread community support for increased transit investment was the most fundamental premise establishing the importance of – and timing for – the Summit. With over 500 in attendance, the Summit demonstrated the significant interest in transportation issues. Moreover, the informative discussions during the panels and in the public visioning session demonstrated that there is significant endorsement of the continued search for innovative solutions. The support and demand for more transit also surfaced through questions that inquired about the efforts of transportation agencies to offer alternative mobility options

and the progress on planned transit corridors. This basic principle of the public's will to address Miami-Dade transportation challenges, underlies the following points summarized as the major themes that emerged out of the Summit.

- ◆ **Improving Public Transit and Creating Livable Communities:** Mobility and access are important for the creation of livable communities, a theme of the Mayor's Address and others. Improvements which create an integrated mass transit system enhance the quality of life of communities. There is broad public support for transit investment.
- ◆ **Transportation Project Financing:** The public learned about opportunities for financing, including Public-Private partnerships (P3s), various types of bonds and federal funding such as loans, loan guarantees and standby lines of credit. Public-Private Partnerships (P3s) alone will not solve all transportation challenges faced by local governments. There are very effective worldwide best practices to address various risk and funding issues.
- ◆ **Technology and Mode Choices:** Miami-Dade County's transportation challenges can be addressed through a combination of solutions which include Bus Rapid Transit (BRT), advanced light rail technologies, commuter & heavy rail systems, automated guideways and other modes of transit. Technological improvements also help create a more efficient transportation system. Investment in transit-oriented development and alternative transportation options, balanced with road capacity increases and technological innovation, appears the most likely path to address Miami-Dade's transportation challenges.
- ◆ **Factoring Economic Development and Community Needs:** The planning and development of transportation improvements should be made in the context of broader economic development strategies and population needs. Well-planned transit corridors which take those factors into account will further encourage and sustain economic development.
- ◆ **Public Outreach and Involvement:** Transparency in planning, financing and development will help transportation agencies in obtaining public input and support for transportation projects. Additionally, transportation agencies may also benefit from greater outreach which informs the public about their vision, rationale, and tradeoffs of transportation projects through a variety of channels, including traditional print and broadcast media as well as social media networks, forums and blogs.

Throughout all sessions of the Summit, the transportation agencies received a consistent message from the audience that there was a need for more and better communication. Multiple commenters asserted their interest in transportation issues and their desire to see

open communication channels to and from transportation agencies through which the public can not only receive clear and consistent information but can also provide feedback to transportation projects.

Miami-Dade's transportation partners and stakeholders face a formidable task; with the 2013 Summit, there is substantial momentum to collaboratively develop and implement practical, timely solutions based on a shared vision of the community and its leaders.