SHALL WE DANCE? ACHIEVING CORRIDOR MANAGEMENT THROUGH INTERGOVERNMENTAL COOPERATION AND COORDINATION

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INTRODUCTION

The Florida Transportation Plan directs the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to maintain the efficiency, capacity and safety of the state highway system. In 2003, the Florida Legislature formally established the Florida Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) and provided for its development and implementation. The SIS is composed of facilities of statewide and interregional significance and is intended to efficiently serve the mobility needs of Florida's citizens, businesses, and visitors and help Florida become a worldwide economic leader. As the backbone of the state's interregional transportation system, the SIS will provide the primary means for long-distance movement of residents, tourists and goods. FDOT has also adopted a systems management goal for the Florida transportation system aimed at applying corridor management strategies to extend the life and improve the operation of the existing system. Such strategies are of particular importance in light of constrained budgets and escalating transportation improvement costs.

In recognition of the safety and operational benefits of access management, several corridor access management plans have been or are currently being prepared by FDOT Districts in coordination with local governments and metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs). These plans address median openings, auxiliary lanes, and typically call for the provision of alternative access via service roads, supporting street networks, shared driveways, and inter-parcel connections.

Despite the increasing importance of comprehensive corridor management at the state and local government level, questions remain regarding effective methods for developing and implementing corridor management plans. Of particular importance is the need for further insight into how best to coordinate FDOT and local government policies and procedures to accomplish alternative access and other important corridor management objectives. Obtaining answers to these questions is important to managing land development and access on the SIS as well as the remainder of Florida's State Highway System (SHS).

This paper documents a study prepared for the FDOT regarding success stories in implementing comprehensive corridor management. The emphasis is on policy and regulatory strategies for comprehensive corridor management that can be directly applied by communities alone, or in coordination with state transportation agencies and MPOs.

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Policy and Planning in Corridor Management

The cases reviewed for this study indicate that corridor management in Florida takes on a variety of forms tailored to the policies and desires of the affected local governments and each respective FDOT District. Some local governments have worked independently or with FDOT to create individual local ordinances, others have worked with FDOT to prepare corridor management plans, while still others combine these approaches. Alternatively, most FDOT Districts have pursued corridor management through project development and access permitting, but some Districts have pursued the development of corridor access management plans in coordination with local governments. The impetus for developing corridor access management plans in these Districts appears to have come largely from the local government level in the context of an impending roadway improvement project or development pressure.

In Florida, specialized corridor access management plans for state highways may be developed in conformance with the procedural requirements of Rule 14-97.004(5), Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.) (Rule). The Rule provides for the development of corridor access management plans by the FDOT, in cooperation with affected local governments, for specific segments of the state highway system. These plans allow for site-specific access management classifications based on engineering analysis, special circumstances of the roadway, and adjacent land use characteristics. When completed, the Rule requires plans to "specify the highway, termini, and the specific standards for connections, medians, intersections, and signals that shall apply."

The Rule establishes the following procedural requirements. The Department must formally notify the affected local governments and abutting property owners prior to adoption of the plan and hold a public hearing. After consideration of public input, "the Department shall, in cooperation with the affected local government, finalize the plan." When the plan is adopted, through signature of the District Secretary, then the Department must notify each of the affected local governments that it has been adopted.

Upon adoption, the plan would serve as the official set of access management standards for that section of the state highway system and would guide District connection permitting decisions accordingly. In practice, this process is highly interactive with the FDOT, local governments and affected property owners participating. The corridor access management plan has been slowly gaining local government attention in Florida as communities begin to see it as a way to reduce traffic congestion, improve safety and maximize roadway capacity.

The FDOT has had success in restricting the number and location of new median openings and closing nonconforming median openings during reconstruction projects, as well as controlling driveway connection spacing using the Florida State Highway System Access Management Classification System and Standards (Rule 14-97, F.A.C.). However, the case examples reveal that corridor management plans offer benefits not available through reconstruction projects and access permitting alone. For example, corridor management plans provide the ability to integrate land use and transportation plans for the corridor and thereby to locate and design access features so they provide the most safety and operational benefits in light of actual characteristics of the corridor. They also create an opportunity for local governments to work proactively with the FDOT to create alternative access throughout the corridor, and provide an opportunity for proactive public involvement in those decisions.

Perhaps the greatest benefit of developing a corridor access management plan is a stronger ability to control connections or access points on the corridor. Connection spacing objectives are often

difficult to achieve as existing property lines and lot size dictate driveways in many cases. FDOT is constrained in its ability to accomplish alternative access through the driveway connection permit process, due to lack of authority over land use and transportation decisions beyond the right-of-way of the state highway system. In addition, 1992 amendments to the Florida Access Management statute have been interpreted as constraining the ability of the Department to "deny reasonable access" to the state highway system, unless the Department can demonstrate a significant safety or operational problem. This provision is as follows:

> *Florida Statute 335.181*
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> *(2) It is the policy of the Legislature that:*
>
> *(a) Every owner of property which abuts a road on the State Highway System has a right to reasonable access to the abutting state highway but does not have the right of unregulated access to such highway. The operational capabilities of an access connection may be restricted by the department. However, a means of reasonable access to an abutting state highway may not be denied by the department, except on the basis of safety or operational concerns as provided in s. 335.184.*
>
> *(b) The access rights of an owner of property abutting the State Highway System are subject to reasonable regulation to ensure the public's right and interest in a safe and efficient highway system. This paragraph does not authorize the department to deny a means of reasonable access to an abutting state highway, except on the basis of safety or operational concerns as provided in s. 335.184. Property owners are encouraged to implement the use of joint access where legally available.*

FDOT District permitting officials indicated that the statutory changes have limited their ability to deny access to nonconforming lots, even where secondary access to an off-state system roadway is available. In such cases, a District will often permit a driveway onto the state system in the absence of an official corridor access management plan or local government frontage road ordinance which requires alternative access.

Internal and Intergovernmental Coordination

Implementing comprehensive corridor management requires proactive coordination within and between governmental agencies. For example, access permitting and corridor management planning are handled by different offices and divisions within the FDOT. Therefore, issues that arise in the planning process, as well as decisions made in coordination with stakeholders, need to be communicated to those in the District responsible for access permitting on the corridor. These factors make internal coordination important.

An additional concern regarding future coordination within the state on the issuance of connection permits is the current trend toward outsourcing maintenance and operation of the state highway system to the private sector. Because FDOT access permitting is housed in District maintenance offices, it has been slated for potential outsourcing as well. It will be important for FDOT to maintain an active approval role in all connection permitting decisions and for District staff to carefully communicate planning activities to all involved in the access permitting process.

Under the statewide access management program, FDOT will not issue a final access permit without evidence of development approval from the local government. FDOT Districts also have

a general, informal understanding that local governments will not issue a building permit without a valid connection permit from the FDOT. This avoids situations where developers insist on a driveway permit based on site plans/building plans already permitted by local governments.

Although FDOT establishes minimum standards for median openings and access connections on the state highway system, these decisions are still highly influenced by existing conditions and development pressures. Corridor access management plans are providing FDOT Districts and local government staff with a tool to proactively address those pressures, while benefiting developers by providing greater predictability as to planned access locations. An added benefit of a corridor-specific plan is increased communication and coordination between the local government(s) and the appropriate FDOT District.

Although FDOT District field offices do the majority of driveway permitting, each District has a consistent number of cases that must be decided by the District Access Review Committee or Variance Committee. These committees are made up of various District representatives, such as the Traffic Operations Engineer, the Design Engineer, the Maintenance Engineer and/or a member of the Planning Office. Each District Access Review Committee meets regularly to review disputed access issues within that respective District. Developers requesting a major deviations from access management standards may present their case before this Committee followed by FDOT staff who presents their recommendation. The Committee then renders an opinion, which may be to approve, approve with conditions (i.e. right-in only) or to deny the request.

Coordination issues may also arise in the evaluation of site impacts during access permitting. For example, developers may complain about feeling blindsided by FDOT requirements for mitigation of site access impacts after spending months working out access compromises with a local government. To address this issue, Districts are taking a variety of steps to work with local governments to minimize developer confusion. FDOT District 2 established a task team, made up of representatives from the District and the City of Jacksonville, which developed a formal process to spell out expectations from both the FDOT and the City early in the development process. This Planned Unit Development/Site Impact Analysis & Review Process, still in draft form at the time of this writing, includes a coordination process, guidelines for submittal of traffic studies, and driveway connection permit application guidelines.

Another example is in FDOT District 4, where a written Permit Application Procedure has been in place since 1995. District 4 also has an informal website to assist developers with the process. The process begins with a 25-minute Pre-application Review meeting to establish:

(1) *The category and general location and design of VACs [Vehicular Access Connection],*
(2) *whether or not a traffic engineering study is required, and*
(3) *whether or not approval of the VAC permit request may be contingent upon the findings of the District Variance Committee* (*1*).

To prevent scheduling problems, these meetings are held back-to-back on Thursdays only. Key to the success of the Pre-application Review concept is the documentation of the meeting that is provided to the applicant outlining comments and findings from the meeting. The documentation states that the Pre-application Finding is not a permit and expires after one year.

CASE STUDIES

Effective corridor management is implemented throughout Florida using a variety of strategies. Our study revealed the use of corridor management plans, a frontage road ordinance, and intergovernmental agreements. A key element of these strategies is alternative access. Many communities have developed corridor management plans and programs that involve the provision of service roads, shared driveways, and inter-parcel or inter-roadway connections that reduce the need for individual sites to have direct, driveway access to a major arterial. Below is an overview of three case studies illustrating the state of corridor management planning practice in Florida.

U.S. 19 in Hernando County, Florida

U.S. 19 traverses Hernando County, which was ranked as the second fastest growing county in the U.S. during the late 1980's. At that time, visionary members of the Hernando County Commission took note of the rapid development and resulting traffic congestion on U.S. 19 to the south and were compelled to take action. County officials teamed up with the Florida Department of Transportation to draft a frontage road ordinance to establish frontage roads along several state roads.

In May 1986, Hernando County adopted Ordinance 86-8 establishing frontage roads not only for U.S. 19, but also U.S. 301, U.S. 98, U.S. 41, C.R. 485 and S.R. 50. The ordinance places responsibility for frontage roads on "the person or entity responsible for increasing the traffic demand upon the arterial system by either building a new building, expanding the capacity of an existing building, changing of the approved use, or subdividing real property to create additional building lots"(*2*). The frontage road requirement is triggered when development causes the daily trip generation to increase by more than 10 trips as determined using Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) *Trip Generation*.

The ordinance outlines circumstances where developers are required to install frontage roads at their expense and where funds are to be provided to the County for the construction of the frontage road with construction occurring at the County's discretion. It also establishes that any driveway permits directly connecting to the arterial are considered interim and will be revoked when the frontage road is constructed.

According to staff, the frontage road concept was envisioned in segments (*3*). At the time, the Florida Department of Transportation was requiring one-quarter mile intersection spacing, so the county mimicked this practice requiring construction of one-quarter mile segments of frontage road (*3*). This practice created a logical segment size that related to intersections on the facility. The Board approved a frontage road concept map early in the process; these were aerial photographs with conceptual frontage roads highlighted in marker. Today, the Highway Network Map 2025 in the comprehensive plan illustrates the frontage road locations.

The frontage road ordinance is implemented on a day-to-day basis through the Hernando County Zoning Regulations and the Facility Design Guidelines as applied to each building permit application. The property owner is required to obtain a county driveway permit prior to applying for the state permit. The Hernando County Zoning District Regulations require a 125 foot front yard setback along specific roads in order to accommodate the frontage roads. In commercial areas, the first developer can choose whether to locate the frontage road in the front of the property or to the rear; later developers must follow suit.

If a property is developed in a location where no adjacent properties are developed, the developer must show the future frontage road location on the site plans; interim access is granted directly to the state facility. At such time, adjacent properties are developed providing frontage road access off of the state facility, the interim driveway permit is revoked and the property owner must build the required access road. Frontage roads held in private ownership must be maintained by the property owner in accordance with County road maintenance standards; alternatively, the property owner may dedicate the frontage road to the County to include the private frontage road in the County roadway maintenance system.

The FDOT worked with Hernando County in developing the frontage road ordinance in 1986 and remains a partner in implementing the ordinance. In accordance with Rule 14-96, F.A.C., each developer must obtain a permit to access the state highway system consistent with the standards outlined. The FDOT may issue a Notice of Intent to Approve or Deny a request for access (*4*). In Hernando County, the FDOT reviews each request to determine if the property abuts a highway where frontage roads are required. If it does not, the request is processed pursuant to the Access Management Rule. If it does and a frontage road exists, access is permitted on the frontage road only. If the property abuts a highway where a frontage road is required but does not yet exist, an interim permit is issued that includes conditions requiring the property owner to move the driveway connection to the frontage road when it is constructed. Such permitted connections must be shared access connections with adjacent properties. In addition, the permit conditions are recorded with the deed to the property so they bind any future owners if the property is sold.

The FDOT District 7 Permits and Contracts Engineer for Hernando County has regular communication with the both the County Engineering Department and the Transportation Planning Coordinator. FDOT requires each developer to submit a site plan acceptable to the local government then checks with the County to ensure that each of them is reviewing identical plans from the applicant. Any site plan or development proposal received by one of the parties is shared with the other as soon as possible to avoid attempts by a developer to pit one agency against the other.

Today the County continues to see results from its 18-year-old frontage road ordinance. In fact, the frontage roads have become such an accepted practice that some developers show frontage roads in their plans along facilities where they are not required. Exaltant Drive, the longest frontage road connecting two signalized intersections and extending to a third intersection, has been in place for nearly 18 years.

The gradual construction of frontage roads is evidence of the ordinance's success; however, the frontage road system creates new challenges. For example, traffic stacking at frontage road intersections with U.S. 19 has become a problem. As a result, the county changed its spacing requirement of 125 feet from the edge of pavement on the arterial to the edge of pavement on the frontage road to 300 feet, to create an adequate stacking distance. Another issue is the difficulty in connecting frontage road segments. Because the frontage roads often do not connect, the county may connect them using a zigzag pattern (*3*).

Because no funds were earmarked to acquire additional right-of-way or build gaps in frontage roads or to provide enhancements like turn lanes or sidewalks where necessary, lack of funding is an ongoing issue (*3*). Another issue is the lack of a specific frontage road plan or map which staff believes would actually help to guide development (*3*). A waiver of frontage road requirements to non-profit organizations, such as churches, is another issue identified (*3*). This practice contributes to costly gaps in the system and can compound the very problems the frontage roads

were designed to mitigate, such as congestion problems from daycare centers, schools, and mid-week evening activities.

Hernando County staff has drafted an access management ordinance that addresses some of the issues identified. Although the draft ordinance has made little progress toward adoption, the discussion of access management issues has served to further educate county staff regarding the benefits of access management and, thus, increased implementation of existing requirements.

University Parkway in Sarasota and Manatee Counties, Florida

University Parkway to the west of Interstate 75, bordering Sarasota and Manatee counties, is a major arterial in a nearly built-out area that serves as a gateway to both counties. Formerly a two-lane road known as County Line Road, University Parkway today is a six-lane facility with full signalized intersection locations 1/2-mile apart. University Parkway is 5.5 miles in length and meanders along the line between Sarasota and Manatee counties in southeastern Florida.

While these counties have spent over two decades guiding all aspects of development along this important roadway corridor, this discussion will focus on those aspects directly related to access. Although University Parkway is not a state road, the methods used to control access to the facility are transferable to any roadway within any jurisdiction. Methods of control, ultimately contained in each county's development control tools, directly result from a series of interlocal agreements between the counties.

In the early 1980's, the governments of Sarasota and Manatee counties could see that the land and, therefore, the incomplete and partially paved road between the two counties was ripe for development. In addition, it was apparent that because the road meandered in and out of each county that the involvement of both counties was crucial not only to the construction of the roadway but to its successful operation as a major arterial.

In October 1982, Sarasota and Manatee counties entered into an Interlocal Agreement "assigning . . . maintenance responsibilities . . . and providing for restrictions to direct access to University Parkway by adjoining land uses…" (*5*). A second Interlocal Agreement followed shortly thereafter on June 14, 1983, providing for an overall plan for the construction of improvements to University Parkway. These Interlocal Agreements were the beginning of an evolving process for guiding the development of the University Parkway corridor

In 1988, the Sarasota Board of County Commissioners adopted Sector Plan 87-01-SP specifically related to the University Parkway/Lockwood Ridge Road Village Activity Center. The Sector Plan outlined specific access allowed to the Activity Center including, "one full-movement intersection and two right-turn in/right-turn out driveways along Lockwood Ridge Road – all located within 880 feet of the intersection" (*6*). The Sector Plan also required the dedication of right-of-way for the future extension of 59th Street which would serve as access to parcels to the east of the Activity Center (*6*). This was the first sector plan specifically implementing the access restrictions set forth in the 1982 Interlocal Agreement.

In December 1991, the counties adopted another Interlocal Agreement regarding the reconstruction of University Parkway as a six-lane facility from U.S. 301 to Interstate 75. The Agreement established specific guidelines for access requiring both counties to "maintain the function of University Parkway as a controlled access facility through enforcement of the access

limitations . . . and through their respective Comprehensive Plans, Land Development Regulations or Codes, and other appropriate regulations…"

The Interlocal Agreement also required the preparation of a corridor study to be prepared by Sarasota and Manatee county staffs. The corridor study would address future land use, transportation and related infrastructure and service needs, access control, signage, level-of service, capacity allocation, impact fee credits, architectural and landscaping design concepts, environmental and drainage systems, and development impacts and mitigation requirements. Only five amendments have been made to the Interlocal Agreement adopted in 1991 to implement changes resulting from the corridor studies.

In 1992, the Sarasota County Board of County Commissioners officially adopted the Boundaries and Criteria Report as the precursor to the corridor study establishing the Primary Study Area for the pending corridor study to encompass a five and five tenths (5.5) mile segment approximately one quarter mile wide on each side. Of particular importance to managing access to the corridor, the Boundaries and Criteria Report acknowledged that, as a major arterial, University Parkway would need to move large volumes of traffic, and in order to accomplish that traffic movement, direct access to the roadway must be limited. Access to land uses would have to be provided off of the major arterial at key locations. To that end, the Report specified a Transportation Impact Area beyond the Primary Study Area. Various study issues were also identified in the Report, including to, "Develop criteria to provide adequate and coordinated access and circulation to serve existing and future land uses within the Primary Area" (*7*).

With the December 3, 1991 Interlocal Agreement and the subsequent Boundaries and Criteria Report complete, the counties simultaneously worked on the construction of University Parkway as a six-lane facility and the corridor study to guide its development. Construction of the roadway was completed in early 1993 with access being controlled by the 1991 Interlocal Agreement.

Each jurisdiction carried out corridor studies for their respective sides to University Parkway. In January 1994, Manatee County completed the University Parkway Corridor Study which "generally set forth the development plans and actions required for the coordination of development within the University Parkway Corridor" (*8*). Findings and subsequent solutions included identifying locations within the study area where alternative access would be needed and identifying potential facilities as well as the provision of bicycle and pedestrian facilities including bike lanes and sidewalks (*8*).

In April 1994, Sarasota County completed the University Parkway Corridor Plan – West (UPCP – West) that encompassed the 2.4 mile segment from West University Parkway/Old US 301 and the western boundary of Cedar Creek subdivision (*6*). At the time the UPCP-West was being written, Sarasota County staff was in the process of developing access management standards for the entire county. In the meantime, access management standards for class three arterials developed by the FDOT and spelled out in Rule 14-97, F.A.C. were used as a guideline (*6*).

Staff's review of the existing development patterns and lot depth along the roadway resulted in a determination that construction of a service road was not feasible resulting in specific recommendations for access providing "for internal access easements and widely spaced marginal access points . . ." (*6*) Application of these standards would require an amendment to the Interlocal Agreement to ease congestion problems at the Lockwood Ridge Road intersection. Perhaps the most important feature of the UPCP- West was the establishment of standard conditions for development approval.

Three years after the UPCP-West was adopted the University Parkway Corridor Study – East was adopted establishing a plan for this segment of University Parkway including future land uses. The plan provided for temporary driveways to be permitted "where no other legal and reasonable means of access to University Parkway could be developed." (*9*) The plan also provided for the protection of the extension of two access roads through the use of "internal access easements and widely spaced access connections."

One drawback to Sarasota County's University Parkway Corridor Plan occurred when the plan was split into West and East portions; some properties were not included in either plan, essentially, because it was assumed that there would be no change in use for those properties. Additional driveways resulted from this unfortunate omission.

To implement the corridor plans, Sarasota County reviews all development applications against the University Parkway Corridor Studies while Manatee County has incorporated provisions directly into its Land Development Code. Per joint recommendations to "allow each County to determine the possible impact, if any, on the roads and/or resources within the other County" the responsible staff members keep in regular contact regarding any development plans along the facility (*9*). Although development within the Primary Study Area has occurred more slowly than the counties had anticipated, positive changes are occurring over time.

U.S. 98 in Polk County, Florida

US 98 between SR 60A in Bartow and East Main Street in Lakeland is a 4-lane divided highway with an abandoned railroad right-of-way running adjacent to the east side of the highway. The access management needs and requirements of US 98 vary significantly within the study area. From SR 60A in Bartow to the Polk Parkway (SR 570), US 98 is part of the Florida Intrastate Highway System (FIHS), which requires higher access management standards than does the remainder of the study corridor. South of SR 570, with the exception of approximately a one-mile segment through Highland City, adjacent land is predominantly vacant. North of SR 570, adjacent properties along the US 98 study corridor are generally developed with commercial, industrial or residential land uses.

In 2001, as development pressures began north of the long-established city limits of Bartow on US 98, local government officials saw the need to take action to prevent access and congestion issues along the previously undeveloped corridor. The Polk County Transportation Planning Organization (TPO), the metropolitan planning organization for the region, drafted a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in response to the TPO Board's recognition of the need to provide orderly and efficient access to a portion of US 98 that led to a Corridor Access Management Plan.

This MOU, signed by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), the City of Bartow, the City of Lakeland, and Polk County establishes the basis for the widening of US 98 to six lanes, provision of transit service, and development of a multi-use recreational trail along the corridor. These improvements are detailed in the Polk County 2025 Long-Range Transportation Plan. The MOU also outlines state and local objectives that can be met for the roadway through land development and subdivision regulations. Finally, the MOU discusses Florida Statutes in relation to corridor management. Section 337.273, Florida Statutes, provides that local governments may designate a transportation corridor for management by including the corridor in the transportation element of the local comprehensive plan, and may thereafter adopt a corridor management ordinance that includes criteria to manage the land uses within and adjacent to the corridor.

The MOU established four areas of cooperation:

1. The intention of each local government (the City of Bartow, the City of Lakeland and Polk County) to amend their respective comprehensive plans designating US 98/Bartow Road from SR 60 to East Main Street (in Lakeland) as the US 98 Transportation Corridor pursuant to Section 337.273, Florida Statutes;
2. The FDOT would develop and adopt a Corridor Access Management Plan (CAMP);
3. The local governments agreed to amend their respective land development regulations to implement the CAMP; and,
4. All land development and permitting activities within the corridor will be reviewed by a committee comprised of representatives of all parties prior to the adoption of the CAMP.

A Steering Committee consisting of appointees from each party was formed to oversee the development of the CAMP following the adoption of the MOU in December 2001. The CAMP was developed through a lengthy process that included a review of national and Florida examples, a review of local comprehensive plans; meetings with the public, and workshops with staff from each party. Issues causing delay included lack of agreement between property owners regarding proposed median openings and a need for technical assistance on how to implement service road requirements in the plan. The document was adopted in accordance with Rule 14-97.004(5), F.A.C. by the FDOT on July 6, 2004.

Although FDOT's preference is to adopt a series of maps as the actual plan, local government Steering Committee members pushed for inclusion of additional implementation details. Key to the usefulness of the final document is a series of tables that provide convenient references regarding median openings and driveway connections that do not meet standards. In addition, the CAMP included recommended policies for local government comprehensive plans. These proposed policies address substandard driveways and joint access, as well as, provision for service road right-of-way.

The CAMP requires that all nonconforming driveways be closed at the time of redevelopment and further states, "…when parcels are too narrow to provide a driveway connection that meets the minimum spacing standards, cross-access easements should be required such that a shared use (joint use) driveway connection that meets the standards can be implemented." Access to US 98 is provided via interim driveway connections to be removed at such time "the service road system is sufficiently developed to provide individual developments with access to and from US 98." In establishing future service roads on the west side of US 98, the CAMP requires two-way traffic movement, a minimum 450-foot separation from US 98 at intersections and a minimum 40-foot roadway separation (between service road and US 98).

With its adoption in July, 2004, all parties moved forward to update appropriate plans and policies to implement the US 98 CAMP. The City of Lakeland made changes to the Transportation Element of the local comprehensive plan and included access management standards in local land development regulations (LDRs). Although Lakeland had begun developing access management standards prior to the commencement of the US 98 CAMP, they found that the discussions surrounding the CAMP provided much-needed education on the topic to both elected officials and the general public. Polk County has incorporated the CAMP into their US 98 Selected Area Study and adopted appropriate LDRs. The City of Bartow implemented the first frontage road along the east side of US 98. The frontage road, an extension of Wilson Avenue which parallels US 98, provides access north to a hospital and a car dealership.

CONCLUSION

A major barrier to effective corridor management is the often cited disconnect between land use and transportation planning. Yet through intergovernmental agreements, joint planning, and coordinated review and permitting, the FDOT, MPOs, and local governments are accomplishing lasting solutions to seemingly insurmountable transportation and land use problems.

The case studies reviewed for this research reveal that significant steps have been made in Florida and other states toward more comprehensive approaches to corridor management. They also offer numerous lessons. Key among these is the importance of proactive planning and state and local coordination in accomplishing corridor management objectives. Comprehensive corridor management clearly cannot be achieved without transportation *and* land use solutions and therefore requires both state and local government involvement.

The corridor access management plans discussed in the case studies are an excellent tool to facilitate such coordination. Through this process FDOT and local governments work together on a common plan for improving the safety and operation of the primary roadway. The planning process generally begins with a cooperative agreement indicating mutual support for development of a corridor management plan, and proceeds with a detailed evaluation of transportation and development issues and needs. A plan is then developed through extensive stakeholder involvement and education on needed changes in access and development. Such changes may involve medians, signal location, auxiliary lanes, site access, land use concepts, and improvements to the supporting roadway network.

As established in state access management policy (Rule 14-97.004(5), F.A.C.), the final plan must be ratified through a formal adoption process and signed by the FDOT District Secretary. It is also adopted by each participating local government. Once adopted, the corridor access management plan provides an official basis for future permitting and roadway improvement decisions. The plan also serves as a vehicle for changes to land development regulations needed to implement corridor management, such as subdivision controls and service road requirements.

These corridor access management plans can help overcome limitations of the FDOT access permitting process. Specifically, FDOT has no authority at present to review and influence decisions related to subdivision of land along state highways, and access permitting staff indicated they generally cannot deny access to lots of record under separate ownership that do not conform with access spacing standards – even if alternative access is available. Exceptions exist where a corridor access management plan is in place to guide state and local permitting or where a local government has enacted the necessary policies and ordinances to require alternative access, as in the Hernando County example.

Local service road ordinances that implement state access management standards can also provide a basis for FDOT to incorporate alternative access conditions in the access permit and facilitate proactive coordination in development review and access permitting. In the case study of Hernando County, however, the lack of a comprehensive corridor management plan to identify the desired location and design for service roads on state highways was identified as an impediment to accomplishing a continuous network and has also resulted in design problems in some locations.

Corridor management planning can also lead to multi-jurisdictional partnerships for tackling more sweeping corridor management issues. An added benefit of the planning process, noted in

the case studies, was that it educated stakeholders on the importance of corridor management and helped staff and officials better understand how best to refocus their policies or practices to achieve lasting solutions to identified problems.

Ultimately, the defining characteristic of a successful corridor access management plan is the level of cooperation achieved among affected property owners and agencies involved in managing the corridor. The planning process can be a vehicle for effective stakeholder involvement, which can reduce the potential for adverse community impacts and increase public support. Where a state highway is involved, local government cooperation is necessary to accomplish needed changes to land use and subdivision practices and street networks. It is best, therefore, if the cooperation and agreement of each local government is secured at the onset and that each participating agency commits to assisting with public involvement for the plan.

A continuing impediment to corridor management on the SIS and other important highways is the lack of adequate local street networks. Examples abound in Florida of where local governments have allowed land division and development along important state highways without new collector and local streets. Local traffic in these areas has contributed to traffic congestion on major roadways due to a poorly connected street network off the arterial system. Today many communities now realize the importance of access management and yet it will be difficult to correct past mistakes through (re)development alone. Local governments will need to incorporate some improvements to local street networks into their capital improvement plans and programs or identify other funding mechanisms.

Through corridor access management planning, local governments can evaluate the need for improvements to their street network along major roadways, and identify gaps and needed connections or parallel relievers. They can also adopt policies and regulations requiring new development to contribute to the local street network or obtain alternative access. Many (real-world or workable or effective) examples of local government ordinances and policies can be found in the appendices of this report. Another resource on street network standards for Florida local governments is the report Model Regulations and Plan Amendments for Multimodal Transportation Districts (*10*).

The construction of service roads or interconnecting streets is often difficult for local governments, however, due to a lack of funding sources. Although a few programs exist in Florida to support capital improvements, (i.e., County Incentive Grant Program, Economic Development Transportation Trust Fund), funding is extremely limited. Regardless of state funding possibilities, local governments must also look to other sources and the private sector to accomplish this important corridor management objective. The Florida Legislature has provided local governments with a number of options to be used for major capital improvements including gas taxes, sales taxes, and impact fees. It is incumbent on local government to exercise these options to accommodate local transportation needs. Although some local governments have exercised these options to obtain funding for necessary transportation expenditures, many still have not.

It is also within the purview of local government to require new development to pay a fair share of improvement costs. Through such vehicles as impact fee and concurrency ordinances, developers can be required to make fair share contributions to the alternative access system as a condition of development approval. In addition, impact fee credits can be provided to facilitate private contributions to the network.

In sum, corridor management will be increasingly important for the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) and other important highways in Florida, particularly in light of funding constraints and rapid growth. The SIS provides the primary means for long-distance movement of residents, tourists and goods and includes intrastate highways that are essential to the state's economy—these highways must be effectively managed. Effective strategies for comprehensive corridor management are also critical for non-SIS arterials which, although important to local and regional transportation, are of less priority for state funding. The FDOT, DCA, MPOs, regional planning councils and local governments in Florida would benefit greatly from the development of corridor access management plans for SIS/FIHS roadways and other important arterials, as well as specific guidance for developing effective corridor management plans.

REFERENCES

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2. *Ordinance 86-8*. Hernando County, Florida. Adopted May 6, 1986.
3. Meeting with Hernando County staff, April 13, 2004.
4. Meeting with Florida Department of Transportation, District 7 access permitting staff, April 13, 2004.
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6. *University Parkway Corridor Plan-West.* Adopted by the Sarasota County Board of County Commissioners, April 5, 1994.
7. *Boundaries and Criteria Report for the Sarasota County and Manatee County University Parkway Corridor Study* (Corridor Study No. 92-01-SP), adopted by the Sarasota County Board of County Commissioners, July 28, 1992.
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10. K. M. Williams and K. E. Seggerman, *Model Regulations and Plan Amendments for Multimodal Transportation Districts*, National Center for Transit Research/Center for Urban Transportation Research, 2004.