



MEMORANDUM

AGENDA ITEM #VI.B

DATE: MAY 19, 2025

TO: COUNCIL MEMBERS

FROM: STAFF

SUBJECT: CORRESPONDENCE



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March 17, 2025

Mr. Jared W. Perdue, P.E.
Secretary, Florida Department of Transportation
605 Suwannee Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0450

Subject: Thank you for FDOT's Support of the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority / Next Steps Moving Forward

Dear Secretary Perdue:

On behalf of the South Florida and Treasure Coast Regional Planning Councils (SFRPC / TCRPC) governing boards and South Florida's County Administrators, thank you for your leadership and support of the South Florida Regional Transportation Authority / Tri-Rail and counties over these many years. We would like to recognize the great leadership of immediate-past District Secretary Stacy Miller (FDOT VI), District Secretary Steve Braun (FDOT IV), and their respective staff for their collaborative work with South Florida's stakeholders and partner agencies.

The Florida Department of Transportation's financial support is critical to the continued operation and enhancement of the Tri-Rail regional commuter rail system. As conversations begin later this month to explore the funding framework of the SFRTA / Tri-Rail in the future, the SFRPC / TCRPC as well as the "Tri-Counties"¹ request that the FDOT continue to work closely in collaborative conversations with its South Florida partners. We respectfully request that you please engage with Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties on any budgeting exercises held on the state level that may impact the three counties and their respective budgets.

The SFRPC / TCRPC met in Joint Session on Friday, February 28th to discuss issues of regional importance to Southeast Florida. Few issues are of more importance to Southeast Florida's residents, economy, and future

¹ Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach

mobility than the continued operation and enhancement of the SFRTA's Tri-Rail system. The importance of the SFRTA / Tri-Rail to Southeast Florida was underscored by attendance at the meeting by Broward County Administrator Monica Cepero, Palm Beach County Administrator Verdenia Baker, as well as Sean Adgerson, Deputy Director and COO of Miami-Dade County Transportation & Public Works, who attended on behalf of Miami-Dade County Mayor Daniela Levine Cava. Everyone present at the meeting expressed their great support and appreciation of FDOT and its partnership with the counties and the SFRTA. Council Members acknowledged Executive Director David Dech's great leadership at the SFRTA and, along with the County Administrators, emphasized the value of the SFRTA and the critical role that Tri-Rail plays in enhancing mobility, reducing congestion, supporting economic growth, and improving the quality of life for residents and businesses across South Florida.

SFRTA Executive Director Dech updated the SFRPC / TCRPC on the work of the SFRTA and ongoing improvements that are underway or planned to enhance and potentially expand the Tri-Rail System. Following the presentation, there was additional discussion regarding an upcoming meeting in March between FDOT Districts IV and VI, SFRTA, and Miami-Dade, Broward, and Palm Beach counties, where participants will discuss potential alternative dedicated local funding sources and development of a possible funding framework plan that will, over time, reduce the state from its current levels of shared state / counties / SFRTA responsibility for operation, maintenance, and dispatch of the South Florida Rail Corridor pursuant to Florida Statutes 343.58.

The SFRPC / TCRPC Council Members and County Administrators expressed their great concern at the prospect of FDOT ceasing its financial support in the foreseeable future given the resulting significant and escalating SFRTA related expense to the Tri-Counties in upcoming fiscal years, particularly without a viable funding plan. At the same time, escalating expenses, increasing obligations, and reduced funding across all categories have created a growing financial crisis for the region's counties, all while counties are also experiencing economic uncertainty.

In closing, projected regional growth in South Florida and the state cannot be accommodated without the SFRTA / Tri-Rail. South Florida relies on Tri-Rail for maintaining mobility and growing economic vitality as part of a robust multi-modal transportation system. Tri-Rail is the primary, if not sole, means of transportation for many students, elderly, workforce, and domestic and international tourists who use Tri-Rail to travel to and from South Florida's airports and local transit systems to destinations across the region. South Florida is fortunate to have the SFRTA and important Tri-Rail infrastructure which would be impossible to replicate today. Shutting down Tri-Rail for lack of funding is not a prudent or cost-effective option, particularly given the high cost of expanding and maintaining highway and road infrastructure that would soon become further congested.

South Florida's elected leaders and policymakers recognize that South Florida needs Tri-Rail and increased transit-oriented development that can support the system over time, however it will take collaborative partnerships and time to develop a feasible funding plan and funding sources, including continued FDOT funding. The Tri-Counties, SFRTA, and the SFRPC / TCRPC look forward to continued collaboration with the FDOT to find a mutually beneficial solution that will support the SFRTA / Tri-Rail into the future and

contribute to the economic well-being of the State of Florida, the Tri-Counties, all of Southeast Florida and its residents. We thank you again for your long-time support and in advance for your continued support and assistance. Please do not hesitate to contact us or Executive Directors Isabel Cosio Carballo (SFRPC) and / or Thomas Lanahan (TCRPC) if we can provide you with additional information or otherwise be of assistance.

Sincerely yours,



Michelle Lincoln
Chair, SFRPC
Mayor Pro Tem, Monroe County



Anthony Bonna
Chair, TCRPC
Councilman, Port St. Lucie

cc The Honorable Daniella Levine Cava, Mayor, Miami-Dade County
The Honorable Anthony Rodriguez, Chair, Miami-Dade County Board of County Commissioners
The Honorable Quentin "Beam" Furr, Mayor, Broward County
The Honorable Maria Marino, Mayor, Palm Beach County
The Honorable Ana Maria Rodriguez, Chair, Miami-Dade County Legislative Delegation
The Honorable Marie Woodson, Chair, Broward County Legislative Delegation
The Honorable Joseph "Joe" Casello, Chair, Palm Beach County Legislative Delegation
Jimmy Morales, Chief Operating Officer, Miami-Dade County
Monica Cepero, County Administrator, Broward County
Verdenia Baker, County Administrator, Palm Beach County
David Dech, Executive Director, South Florida Regional Transportation Authority
Steven C. Braun, P.E., District Secretary, FDOT District IV
Daniel Iglesias, P.E., District Secretary, FDOT District VI
Stacy Miller, P.E., Immediate-Past District Secretary, FDOT District VI
Aileen Bouclé, AICP, Executive Director, Miami-Dade TPO
Greg Stuart, Executive Director, Broward MPO
Valerie Neilson, AICP, Executive Director, Palm Beach County TPA
Isabel Cosio Carballo, MPA, Executive Director, SFRPC
Thomas J. Lanahan, Executive Director, TCRPC