



Broward Partners Group
Meeting Highlights
Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization Board Room
100 West Cypress Creek Road, Suite 850, Fort Lauderdale, FL
June 9, 2014, 10:00am – 12:00pm

Highlights of the meeting are summarized below to capture the input received from participants in the fourth meeting of the Broward Partners Group. Input is not verbatim and these highlights are not intended to be quotes, rather they are to represent the ideas shared by participants. Our study team will use this input as a guide in developing content for public educational and outreach materials. The meeting format was designed to be interactive and provide a forum for participations to share their ideas and respond to specific questions.

Visions of the Future We Want

After a brief introduction and progress update by Chris Ryan, Jill Quigley explained that Speak Up Broward was in the process of developing scenarios for the future based on different levels of investment in Broward’s transportation system and different options for funding these investments. The Speak Up Broward team is also creating a MetroQuest interactive survey to present the information to the public and gather feedback about the future of our transportation system, how it should be improved, and how we could pay for these improvements.

Next, Brandie Miklus provided an overview of the MetroQuest website. She explained how it functioned and the type of information that would be included. A group discussion then followed:

- What’s the significance of the information you will collect, and what are we going to do with it?
 - The comments and demographic information will be used to gauge the public’s opinions about the issues presented in the MetroQuest. The user will learn things and provide information that will help inform future decisions.
- Are you going to be able to tell which part of Broward the user is from?
 - Yes, potentially. One of the demographic questions at the end will ask for the person’s ZIP code, but they aren’t required to answer any of those questions.
- Use caution when asking people what they want from a transportation system without asking what they want their community to look like. For example, transit can’t meet the demand of sprawl no matter how much money you invest. People should understand that land use is a factor in transportation decisions too.

- How do we get people to the site?
 - We have several ongoing outreach efforts that will be used to make people aware and direct them to the MetroQuest site. We can also share the link via email or add it to different municipal, county, or transportation agency websites. Our outreach efforts include a Speakers Bureau, a mini grant program for community organizations, street team events, a social media presence, and a televised/online e-Town Hall series.
- Do you plan to ask what types of transportation people currently use and where they live? That information is important in shaping people's attitudes about transportation and the future.
 - Yes. Both of those will be part of the demographic questions at the end of the survey.
- What's the timeframe for this? Are people going to know how far into the future these investments are being planned?
 - The timeframe is from 2015 to 2040, the same as the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan, Commitment 2040. It is important to explain that these investments are being planned for that far into the future, but also that the process is continual. Some of these investments would begin, and are needed, in the next 5 to 10 years.
- Where has MetroQuest been used before?
 - There are multiple examples as it is a popular tool that has been used all over the country. It has been used in Toronto and Washington D.C. most recently in a similar manner to the way Speak Up Broward will be using it. We can send out the links to other MetroQuest sites after the meeting.
- How do you capture the attention of the average citizen with this?
 - We have a large social media presence and plan to go out to different public events and spread the word. We also have money to buy advertising for several different media types including print, radio, television, and the internet.
- Can we use this to show the public what we currently have in terms of a transportation system to give them an idea of how the money is currently being spent?
 - The MPO is working on something similar to this, but it probably couldn't be accomplished through this MetroQuest. We are very limited on the amount of content that can be included without overwhelming people. The Speak Up Broward website includes a page devoted to this information at a very introductory level. The MetroQuest will encourage people to visit the website to learn more.

Paying for the Visions

Next, Jill Quigley and Jeff Stiles went over the investment scenarios and funding options in more detail, explaining the different infrastructure and financial elements associated with each one. They noted that the public would not see any of the financial information used to create the three scenarios because of its complexity. It was simply used to set parameters so that the scenarios would be as realistic as possible. Another group discussion followed:

- Does the local roads category include major roads (state arterials)? Maybe you should point this out so that people are aware.
 - Yes, the local roads category includes the state arterials.

- The current Commitment 2040 Cost Feasible Plan (CFP) only includes capital cost and isn't enough for operating and maintenance (O&M). I worry that because these scenarios are based on the 2040 CFP they will mislead people by making them think we can afford to invest in more capital projects when the reality is we can't afford the O&M for what we have now. We are showing a \$400m deficit over the next 10 years.
- The 2040 CFP is still being developed. How can you use it?
 - The total amount available won't change, although the allocation could. For our purposes with future scenarios, we are more concerned with the totals and the types of improvements that could potentially be funded with them, not the exact projects that will be.
- The CFP isn't even enough to sustain BCT, much less make improvements.
 - The public won't know totals for scenarios or whether it's the CFP. They will just know that we don't have enough.
- You can't have a conversation with the public without giving them the full picture. It's misleading.
 - Without providing overwhelming levels of financial detail, we will have to explain that there's more needed to maintain the status quo, and that the CFP (Scenario #1) means decline.
- You need to be sure and explain that the consequences of the baseline scenario (CFP) are decline, not maintaining the status quo.
- You have to frame the problem with the baseline, and show a need to act.
- You should show that the baseline funds aren't being mismanaged, but there simply are not enough.
- You don't want the baseline to look like progress.
- We need to show that, in order to maintain what we currently have in our transportation system, we'll have to spend more in the future.
- Can you share the results of the MetroQuest on social media?
 - You can share the MetroQuest site on social media and encourage others to participate, but it won't share your results. There is an option to compare your results to others who have taken the survey within the MetroQuest.
- What percentage of total transportation funding in Broward is represented by these numbers? It could make a difference if it's a small amount because the results wouldn't be as useful.
 - We don't know the exact answer to that, but it's much closer to 100% than it is 0%.
- You should decide what people want in the future from a transportation system before adding the funding element to the equation. If you establish what people want and then develop a following, it becomes easier to work out the funding issues because everyone is aware of what public opinion is. That's how successful referendum initiatives happen.
- It's important to find what the people want. You can then present what the public wants to the parties that control the funding sources, and say, "here's what the people are asking for." This way you aren't planning the future for them.

- Will local match options be mentioned in MetroQuest? Should people know that this money could actually be more than just the revenue projections because they could leverage more in federal funding once a local match is available?
 - This is a good suggestion.
- Because of the privacy issues associated with tracking vehicles, people won't like the Mileage Based User Fee (MBUF) funding option.
- How do you explain the impact for each of these funding options? For example, on a city basis some may be opposed to the sales tax as a funding option if all the revenue goes to the County and none is guaranteed to their city.
 - We have to be careful how much detail we include in MetroQuest. While this is a legitimate concern that we've heard during our outreach efforts, we cannot get into this level of detail or the MetroQuest site will become too cumbersome.
- What about increasing the gas tax as a funding option? It seems more likely to be happen before a MBUF could be implemented.
- You should include the gas tax because that is what people are using today to pay for the transportation system.
- It would be nice to gauge public opinion on raising the gas tax.
 - If we don't add the gas tax as a funding option we can always use MetroQuest to prompt the user for an answer and/or comment related to the issue.
- Do we want to explain what Commitment 2040 is? Will the MetroQuest user know that the baseline scenario is the 2040 CFP? How much should we tell them about it?
 - MetroQuest will explain everything that they need to understand about how the scenarios measure up against what we currently have to spend on transportation in the future (2040 CFP).
- This MetroQuest tool should keep a sharp focus. You should stay mindful not to explain or ask the public for too many different types of information. Think about what you want from them, and only ask for that information. Only give them enough information to provide the informed feedback that you're looking for.
- Maybe you should only include the funding option slider tools to gauge public opinion and demonstrate the revenue potential of each one, but not ask the users to balance the budget deficit that results from the scenario they've chosen.

After the discussion concluded, the Speak Up Broward team thanked everyone for their attendance and continued input on the development of the project so far. The partners will be notified when a demo version of the MetroQuest site is ready to be tested before becoming available to the public.