Florida League of Cities
Center for Municipal Research and Innovation
Research Article Journal | 2015 Edition

Through the **Partners in Municipal Research (PMR)** program, the **Center for Municipal Research & Innovation** serves as a link between Florida's public policy researchers and municipal governments, bridging the gap between academics and public policy makers and administrators. The PMR program currently has 14 participating researchers at eight research institutes in the southeast region. One component of the Partners in Municipal Research program is a regular research column in the League's *Quality Cities* magazine from our research institute partners. The following is a compilation of those articles published in 2015.

Begun in 2011, the Florida League of Cities' Center for Municipal Research & Innovation is the central source for local government research at the League. Through the center, Florida's city officials have access to municipal resources and data as well as a number of programs and publications, including two annual research symposiums, a statewide research forum for our research partners, regular research articles in the League's *Quality Cities* magazine and a quarterly e-newsletter.

The cornerstone of the center's research is the annual CityStats survey covering municipal operations, budgets, policies and services. The CityStats survey forms the basis for the online Find A Peer City database tool and the annual State of the Cities report. Contact Research Analyst Liane Schrader with the center for more information.

Florida League of Cities Center for Municipal Research and Innovation
P.O. Box 1757, Tallahassee, FL 32302-1757
www.floridaleagueofcities.com/ResearchMaterial.aspx

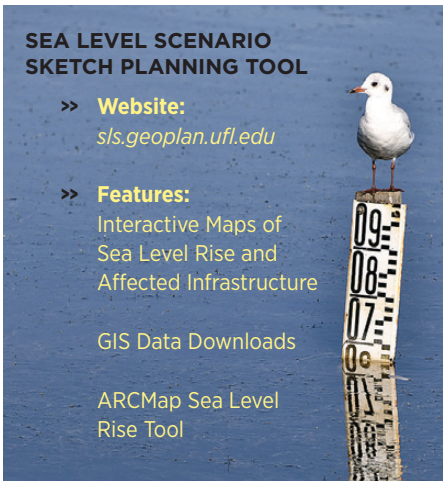
PLANNING

Sea Level Scenario Sketch Planning Tool Available

Assessing sea level change on transportation infrastructure

by Crystal Goodison and Alexis Thomas
University of Florida GeoPlan Center

According to a U.S. Census report, an estimated 75 percent of Florida's 19.5 million population live in coastal counties. Many Florida roadways and transportation infrastructure are low-lying, making them vulnerable to flooding, storm surge and inundation from sea level rise. With Florida's economy dependent on the transportation system's ability to move people and freight, considering the effects of sea level rise will be important to protecting our infrastructure investments and economic stability. While the effects could be decades away, it will take time to develop adequate data and tools to assist during the planning process.



The University of Florida GeoPlan Center, with funding from the Florida Department of Transportation, developed a sketch planning tool to help identify transportation infrastructure potentially vulnerable to inundation from sea level rise. The tool uses the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers sea level change methodology to project future sea level rise. The methodology includes the use of local data to generate projections of relative sea level rise, projections for multiple scenarios of sea level rise, and the ability to revise calculations based on the latest available data and trends.

In Phase One of the project, GeoPlan used the Corps of Engineers methods to generate statewide and regional projections of sea level change at three rates (low, intermediate and high) in 10-year increments (from 2040 to 2100) using data from NOAA tide gauges and five tidal datums. GeoPlan also compiled a statewide Digital Elevation Model.

The Sea Level Scenario Sketch Planning Tool includes three components (accessible at *sls.geoplan.ufl.edu*):

1. **Map Viewers:** The viewers help visualize where, when and how much inundation and potentially affected transportation infrastructure under various sea level rise scenarios.
2. **GIS Data Layers:** Layers for download include regional and statewide inundation layers and affected transportation infrastructure layers for various sea level rise scenarios and time periods.
3. **Sea Level Rise Inundation Surface Calculator:** A tool for ArcMap that allows the user to create GIS layers of inundation under various sea rise level scenarios using Corps of Engineers methods and NOAA tide gauge data.

During Phase Two, which is ongoing, GeoPlan has been testing the use of the sketch planning tool with two Federal Highway Administration Climate Resiliency Pilots (Hillsborough and Broward Metropolitan Planning Organizations) and others (Satellite Beach and Monroe County) that are engaging in sea level rise and adaptation planning. GeoPlan has gathered feedback on data and tool enhancements needed to facilitate their planning processes. In addition, GeoPlan is researching ways to incorporate storm surge models with storm level rise effects and the resulting inland flooding.

The sketch planning tool provides for a preliminary assessment of when, where and how much inundation and at-risk transportation facilities will occur under various scenarios of sea level rise. GeoPlan will continue improving the tool and data with the hope that the sketch tool can assist planners and decision makers by providing them the best available data for their planning processes.

Crystal Goodison is a data manager and Alexis Thomas is interim director for the University of Florida GeoPlan Center. QC

RESOURCES

The Need for Affordable Housing Continues to Grow

Shimberg Center helps cities address this challenge

by Anne L. Ray
Shimberg Center for Housing Studies

From skyrocketing home prices to foreclosures and vacancies, in the last decade, Florida's cities faced a rollercoaster ride as they tried to plan for their residents' housing needs. Even as our state's housing markets return to something close to normal, Florida cities still have a need for homes that seniors, working families and others of modest means can afford.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING GAP INCREASES

A new Rental Market Study Fact Sheet from the Shimberg Center for Housing Studies at the University of Florida finds that Florida's affordable housing gap grew throughout both the housing boom of the early 2000s and the economic stresses of recent years.

In 2000, 411,008 low-income renters in Florida paid more than 40 percent of their income for rent and utilities. This number increased to 577,242 in 2007 and to 715,032 in 2013. This represents a 24 percent increase in households in need just from 2007 to 2013, even though the total number of households in the state grew by less than 2 percent.

With the dip in housing prices from their 2007 peak, why have affordable rental housing needs continued to grow?

City Government Research

The **Florida League of Cities** will be publishing research columns in *Quality Cities* that focus on resources and data to help city officials lead their local governments.

The League's **Center for Municipal Research and Innovation** is becoming a leading source for local government research in Florida. These regular columns are being written by the center's research institute partners through its new **Partners in Municipal Research** program.

Visit *www.floridaleagueofcities.com/ResearchMaterial.aspx* to read about the institute partners, their research and for data and statistics relating to municipal government. Visit *http://publications.flcities.com/qc/201501/#?page=48* to read a recent research column on a sea level scenario sketch planning tool available through the **University of Florida GeoPlan Center.**

- **More households are renting.** In the wake of the foreclosure crisis and with homebuyer credit tight, Florida's homeownership rate fell from a peak of 71 percent in 2007 to 65 percent in 2013. The drop was most acutely felt by younger households and families with children.
- **Rents are up, renter incomes are down.** Median rent rose from $896 in 2000 to $972 in 2013, but median renter incomes fell from approximately $36,000 in the 2000-2007 period to just over $32,000 in 2013. (All figures in 2013 dollars.)

The new fact sheet updates figures from the 2013 Rental Market Study. The Shimberg Center produces the study every three years on behalf of the Florida Housing Finance Corporation. The study describes county-level housing needs throughout the state and focuses on the affordability gap for elderly households, homeless individuals and families, persons with disabilities, farmworkers and commercial fishing workers.

ONLINE RESOURCES AVAILABLE

To help cities plan for their residents' housing needs, the Shimberg Center also produces the Florida Housing Data Clearinghouse *(http://data.shimberg.ufl.edu)*, a free online source of local housing supply and demand data. The clearinghouse is organized around the data that local governments need to include in the housing element of the comprehensive plan, including home prices and values, demographic projections, and locations of affordable housing developments.

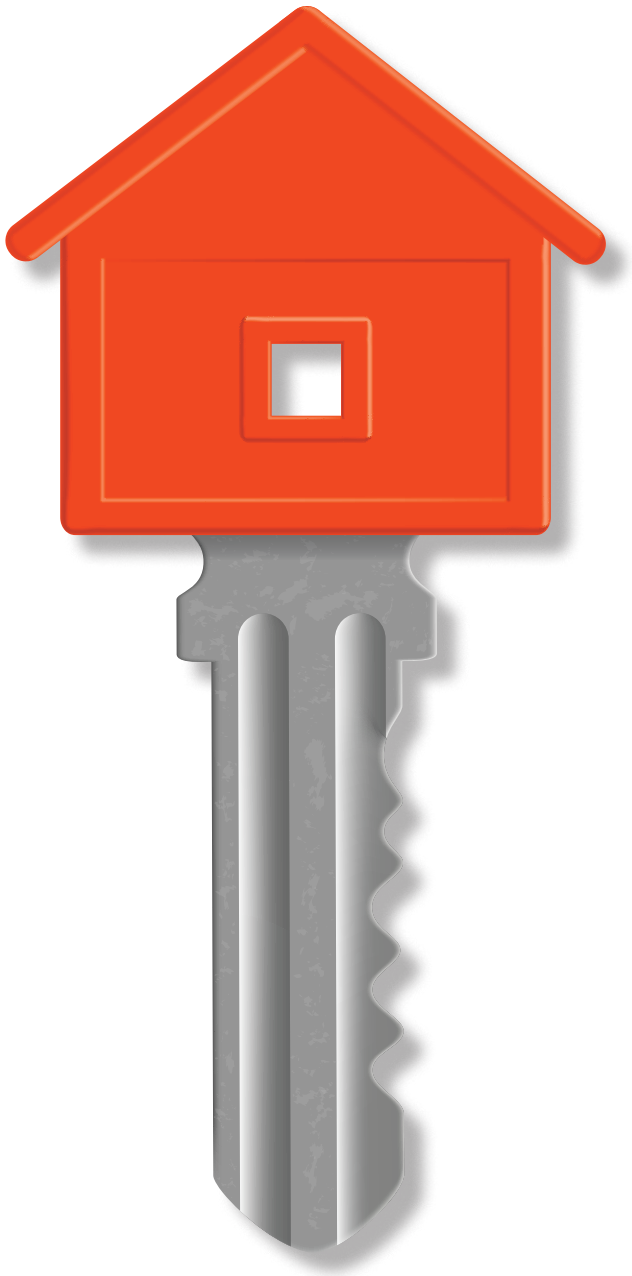
The "Tools for Planning" *(http://flhousingdata.shimberg.ufl.edu/TFP_introduction.html)* page provides data specifically tailored toward comprehensive plans and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Consolidated Plans. Shimberg Center staff are available to walk users through the website and to produce custom data reports upon request.

The center can also help cities make the connection between housing and other quality-of-life issues for residents. Its Housing Suitability Model *(www.shimberg.ufl.edu/fl_housingSuitableModel.html)* uses geographic information systems (GIS) tools to evaluate housing locations in terms of their transportation connectivity, access to jobs and services, and socioeconomic diversity. The center is also studying how to make affordable housing greener *(www.shimberg.ufl.edu/green_and_healthy_housing.html)* by improving indoor air quality, using sustainable building practices, and retrofitting for energy efficiency.

Anne L. Ray is manager of the Florida Housing Data Clearinghouse. Contact her at (352) 273-1195 or *aray@ufl.edu*. QC

VISIT:

www.shimberg.ufl.edu for more Information. All Shimberg Center reports, including the Rental Market Study Fact Sheet, are available at ***www.shimberg.ufl.edu/publications3.html.***
Twitter: ***@ShimbergCenter***



TRENDS

State of the Cities Report

A year of incremental growth

by Vinny Kuntz

Cities put a high value on quality-of-life services such as recreation and provide basic services like trash collection and some level of water service. About 91 percent of Florida cities have municipal parks, 65 percent provide water services, 85 percent offer solid waste collections and a third have municipal cemeteries.

What's past is prologue, and such context can help guide city officials to a brighter future.

The Florida League of Cities' newest *State of the Cities* report provides such context. It's the 2014 version of the annual go-to snapshot of Florida cities that gives municipal officials crucial information needed to make well-informed decisions.

Cities must strike a balance when weighing fiscal, social, economic and environmental needs. It's important to identify trends and conditions that help promote prosperity and well-being among residents. If leaders can pinpoint a trend early enough, it's easier for them to plan for changes and take advantage of positive developments – and guard against negative outcomes.

The stakes are high: Cities rank among our country's most important engines of economic growth and opportunity.

The new *2014 State of the Cities* report is the League's third, and it's based on four years of information collected by the organization's Center for Municipal Research and Innovation.

Most information in the report is from the center's 2011-14 CityStats Surveys. Each survey consists of about 40 questions about municipal operations, budgets, policies and services. In 2014, surveys were collected from 293 of Florida's 410 municipalities, equaling 71 percent of all cities and 68 percent of the total statewide municipal population.

The new report's main takeaway: Florida cities showed incremental growth in 2014. Cities experienced moderate population increases that mirrored growth of Florida as a whole. The cities also saw an incremental rise in revenues, which allowed for small increases in municipal full-time employment.

The Florida League of Cities is the only organization in Florida compiling and presenting data in such a way, said **Liane Schrader,** analyst at the League's Center for Municipal

Research. The center is the League's main source of local government research and resources. It serves as a link between Florida's public-policy researchers and municipal governments and bridges the gap between academics, policy makers and administrators.

The 2014 report gives a holistic view of Florida but also provides key information to officials at the local level, according to consultant **John Dailey.** He is president of JDA Strategies and works closely with Schrader on the State of the Cities project.

"It gives a good idea of what is going on locally," Dailey said.

The State of the Cities report and other League resources can be used by cities and others in their research into things such as best practices and budget development.

The 2014 report gives the following overview.

Municipal budgets, which are affected by changes to revenue sources such as property taxes, state funding and revenues from services and fees: Property taxes make up an average of 17 percent of revenues for the state's cities. Since the recession began in 2008, municipal property tax collections have decreased statewide by about 14 percent.

Municipal employees: The number of workers needed in each city depends on each municipality's population as well as the level and number of services provided. Two-thirds of Florida municipalities have populations of less than 15,000 with an average staffing level of one employee to every 93 citizens. Overall, about two-thirds of Florida cities were able to give modest raises to their employees in the 2013-14 fiscal year, and the remaining third held staff pay steady.

Economic development: Efforts to improve the business climates within cities are important. In Florida, nearly 60 percent of cities offer economic development incentives to encourage business, and more than half of cities larger than 5,000 people used a community redevelopment agency.

Municipal populations: Between 2011 and last year, cities experienced population growth of 3.25 percent, slightly higher than the state average. Currently, more than 9.8 million of the state's 19.5 million-plus residents live in a city. Florida's top three cities by population growth 2011-14: **Jacksonville** followed by **Miami** and **Tampa.**

Municipal services: Cities put a high value on quality-of-life services such as recreation and provide basic services like trash collection and some level of water service. About 91 percent of Florida cities have municipal parks, 65 percent provide water services, 85 percent offer solid waste collections and a third have municipal cemeteries.

Public safety is among the highest priorities for cities. In Florida, about half of cities with populations below 5,000 depend on other jurisdictions for fire service and law enforcement protection. Overall, 66 percent of Florida cities provide their own police services and 55 percent have their own fire departments.

To see the *2014 State of the Cities* report, go to *www.floridaleagueofcities.com/Assets/Files/2014StateoftheCities.pdf.* For more information, contact the League's research analyst, Liane Schrader, at (850) 222-9684 or *lschrader@flcities.com,* or visit the center's web pages at *www.floridaleagueofcities.com/ResearchMaterial.aspx?CNID=5931.*

Vinnie Kuntz is a freelance writer. QC

LOOK TO THE LEAGUE FOR RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The **Haines City Commission** became curious recently about which election method was used by most Florida municipalities. City Clerk **Linda Bourgeois** began reasearching the answer to that question.

Her first step: contacting the Florida League of Cities to discover what its research arm had in its database. The League's Center for Municipal Research and Innovation didn't have the exact answer, but it gave Bourgeois a key launching point.

"The League is a valuable resource," Bourgeois said. "It gave me the start I needed."

The League gave her a list of Florida's 400-plus cities and each municipality's population and form of government. She was able to take that information and use it as a springboard to her own research.

Bourgeois found that in a random sample of Florida cities (169), the plurality method (person with most votes wins) was employed by 58 percent. In 17 cities with populations similar to Haines City, the majority method (winner garners 50 percent-plus of votes) was used by 71 percent.

INFORMATION REQUESTS

Of all information requests received by the Center for Municipal Research and Innovation:

- **19 percent** were from the League's lobbying staff in their advocacy efforts
- **81 percent** were for out-of-house research. Of those,
  - **63 percent** were for municipalities
  - **18 percent** were for research institutes

TYPES OF RESEARCH REQUESTED BY LEAGUE MEMBERS

- Millage rates
- Forms of government
- Elections and term limits
- Economic development incentives
- Fire services, department structure and fees
- Revenues and expenditures
- Population ranges vs. various services and policies
- Police services
- Mayor, commission, manager, clerk and finance director salaries
- Solid waste services

SOCIAL MEDIA

Our Citizens 'Like' Us!

Now what do we do?

by Michelle K. Gardner
John Scott Daily Florida Institute of Government at the University of Central Florida

Since 2008, I have been speaking at luncheons, conferences and meetings encouraging local governments to use social media to engage and educate their citizens.

Today, most local governments have at least a Facebook page, and many use twitter. Does your city engage its citizens on social media? The key word here is *engage*. If 1 out of 10 of your city's population like you on Facebook, then 10 percent of your residents have reached out. Are you connecting with them and responding to their participation? Are you engaging the conversational platform?

Due to confusion about public records laws, lack of proper planning and inconsistent management, social media spaces are created then many either remain stagnate or just contain Internet links leading back to the city's website.

Social media is about engagement. It is about the push of information and the pull of feedback.

The combination of pushing information and pulling in your citizens creates the level of engagement you want for your social spaces. If your Facebook page just pushes out links to your newsletter, council agendas and repeats information from your website and emailed content, you are not engaging or encouraging your citizens, or giving them new information. Social media is a platform that supersedes traditional media and allows a direct connection with residents.

Proper planning transforms social media from stagnant into engaged. The trend has been for one person with previous knowledge to be tasked with the creation and support of the social media space. However, very little forethought on the front end may create a space the city has little control over. If that person leaves employment with the city, the page will deteriorate or worse, become hacked, because it is not being properly maintained. Planning out your city's social media strategy and creating a social media policy prior to engaging a platform prevents this scenario and leads to a strong social media presence.

Consider these engaging ideas:

- Establish a Facebook or twitter question and answer with a particular agency. Have a member of that city department (sanitation, recreation, water, etc.) host a 30-minute Q&A on Facebook to address citizen questions.
- Encourage citizens to send questions for council members through social media, and then post the replies or link to the video content where the discussion occurred.
- Ask citizens to post public pictures with a specific #hashtag, e.g. #SpringYourCityName, #NameofPark, #CityNameArtFest, or #CityNameFixThis for public works reports.

Finally, create a social media team and brainstorm with them to come up with ideas that are situational and relevant to your city. At its core, engaging citizens through social media creates a two-way line of communication that helps educate residents about their city government and encourages their input.

Michelle K. Gardner is a coordinator for the John Scott Daily Florida Institute of Government at the University of Central Florida, which is one of six IOGs tasked with providing training, technical assistance and applied research, and public service for Florida local governments. For more information, contact her at (407) 882-3960 or *michelle.gardner@ucf.edu*, or visit the IOG website at *iog.ucf.edu*. QC

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Several articles on social media, including one on legal issues and another on developing a social media policy, were published in the January/February 2012 issue of *Quality Cities* (see *http://publications.flcities.com/qc/201201/#?page=0*).

In addition, the Florida League of Cities is developing social media resources for its members. Once complete, notices of their availability will be published in the magazine and newsletter (FLC eNews).

EMPLOYMENT

Severance Pay

An important feature in employment contracts

by Jennifer Connolly
University of Miami

In 2011, Florida **Gov. Rick Scott** signed legislation limiting severance pay for public sector employees to 20 weeks of compensation. This change in state law impacted Florida municipalities, which were previously able to independently determine the size of the severance packages offered to their employees.

While some have celebrated the 20-week limit, research shows that severance protection serves a valuable function in local governance.

Severance is a key tool cities use to recruit talented employees, including city managers. A new city manager can significantly impact the direction the municipality takes for years to come. Cities seek to hire the best manager for the position, and having more discretion to determine the severance package offered to an incoming city manager could help cities attract quality applicants.

For a city manager considering a position in a city with instability, severance entices him or her to take the job by signaling protection from the personal financial harm that would result from termination.

I recently researched the employment contracts of nearly 300 city managers working in California, a state in which severance is capped at 18 months (nearly four times the Florida limit). Nearly 70 percent of the California city manager contracts I examined included severance protection. The average guaranteed payout in the event of termination was approximately 30 weeks or $116,000.

Severance clauses protect managers from political uncertainty and competitive council elections, both of which pose significant career risk. My analysis shows that the more competitive municipal elections are, the more severance protection city managers receive. For example, the analysis shows that a city in which nine candidates ran for three council seats in the last election can expect to pay nearly $34,000 more in severance than a city in which only four candidates ran for three seats, all else equal.

Cities that pose a career risk to incoming managers due to poor economic conditions also agree to significantly higher severance packages. According to my research, a city with 12 percent unemployment agrees to about $28,500 more in severance than a city with 9 percent unemployment, all other factors equal.

Severance is often thought of as a golden parachute that rewards poor performance. My research suggests that it is just the opposite.

City managers have to balance politics with good management. When entering cities with competitive political environments or with fiscal and economic stress, the job is more difficult and a manager faces a much greater deal of career uncertainty. However, these cities are still able to recruit and hire quality managers by providing protection from termination.

Jennifer M. Connolly is an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Miami and teaches courses in the Master of Public Administration program. She completed her Ph.D. in Public Management and Policy from the Price School of Public Policy at the University of Southern California. The research for this article was completed while she was at USC. QC

EXPENDITURES

The Great Recession

Cities stand firm in their policy approach

by Richard L. Levey, AICP

The Great Recession of 2008 was the deepest economic downturn in the United States since the 1950s and the longest since the Great Depression of the 1920s. While the effects of the downturn are still being realized in Florida, a "new normal" for local governments is quickly taking hold.[1]

Data showing the change in local government expenditures from pre- to post-recession are emerging, but they have not yet been analyzed and interpreted to determine whether the 2008 recession caused a shift in local government policy. However, recent research highlights some interesting aspects about how local governments in Florida responded to this period of extreme fiscal stress.

THE *CITY LIMITS* TYPOLOGY

Local government expenditure data were analyzed for two time periods, each of which included three fiscal years. The pre-recession period is fiscal years 2006 to 2008 and the post-recession period is fiscal years 2009 to 2011.

Expenditure data was aggregated in policy groups based on the following typology developed by Paul Peterson in his book *City Limits:*

Developmental Policies, which enhance the economic interests of the local economic base and support competition with other local governments, such as economic development, streets and highways.

Redistributive Policies, which benefit lower socio-economic and working class groups by addressing substandard conditions in the community, such as health and human services, and housing.

Allocational Policies, which are neutral in their effect on the local economy as they are uniformly delivered throughout the community, such as police, fire rescue and sanitation.

The central premise of the *City Limits* typology is that local governments are driven to improve their status through enhancements to three stratified systems – economic, social and political. Of the three, the economic system – the city's market position in the national, state and regional economy – drives local government policy decisions and how a city or county expends its resources.

FINDINGS

From pre- to post-recession, Florida cities increased their proportional share of developmental spending and reduced their allocational spending, while Florida counties exhibited the opposite tendency. Counties reduced their developmental spending and increased their allocational and redistributive expenditures.

This finding supports prior research that found that cities, more so than counties, tend to adopt policies that are supportive of economic development and that expand the economic base of the community. The results indicate that cities maintain this policy approach even during times of extreme fiscal stress.

For the variable "form of government," analysis found that the council-strong mayor cities increased developmental policy spending from pre- to post-recession. In contrast, council-manager cities and council-weak mayor cities kept expenditures proportionally consistent throughout the recession, resulting in no shift in policy. All forms of county government reduced developmental expenditures and increased allocational and redistributive spending from pre-to post-recession.

Also, population density was found to be a significant variable when measuring the influence of several factors in local government behavior. Higher densities correlated with increases in developmental spending. Density is most closely associated with highly urbanized areas, further supporting the view that cities, not counties, favored developmental spending from pre-to post-recession.

CONCLUSIONS

Cities in Florida spend proportionally more on developmental activities (economic development and infrastructure) than do counties on a per-capita basis. This study found that as a result of the Great Recession of 2008, cities shifted their proportional expenditures further in favor of developmental policies when considering all spending.

This research confirms that cities, when compared with counties, place a greater emphasis on developmental policies, even in the face of significant fiscal pressures as was experienced during the Great Recession.

Richard L. Levey, AICP, recently received his Ph.D. in public affairs at the University of Central Florida's College of Health and Public Affairs. He may be contacted at *rlevey@knights.ucf.edu* or (407) 408-4442. QC

Endnote

[1]Lawrence L. Martin, Richard Levey and Jenna Cawley, *"The 'New Normal' for Local Government,"* 2012.

STATISTICS AND TRENDS

Research Symposiums

Bringing academic research to life for public administration practitioners

by Liane Schrader, CAE
Florida League of Cities

The Florida League of Cities' **Center for Municipal Research and Innovation** is the central source for local government research at the League.

An informal setting for those who deal with city issues day to day to dig deeper into those issues with the researchers who study them day to day . . . that is the goal of the Center for Municipal Research and Innovation's Summer and Fall Research Symposiums.

Each research symposium brings together public administrators, elected officials and the academic community for a free half-day session focusing on a specific local-government issue. Experts from state and national agencies, as well as the center's partner research institutes, present statistics and trends. They discuss how this research can be used to affect decision making in a municipal government setting. The interactive session format gives elected officials and city staff ample opportunity for questions and dialog with the presenters.

The transportation articles that begin on page 32 are a follow up to those questions and conversations initiated at the center's summer research symposium, titled *"Planes, Trains, Ports and Highways – What Keeps Florida Moving?"*

Symposiums are held twice a year in conjunction with the League's annual and legislative conferences. Past topics have included water issues and innovations, innovative technologies, municipal finance, economic development, strategic plan implementation and online land-use planning tools. Presentations from previous symposiums are posted to the center's website at *www.floridaleagueofcities.com/ResearchMaterial.aspx?CNID=12963*.

Liane Schrader is research analyst for the Florida League of Cities. Contact her at (850) 222-9684 or *lschrader@flcities.com* if you have questions about the center or research symposiums. QC

Research Partners

Through the **Partners in Municipal Research Program,** the League's **Center for Municipal Research & Innovation** serves as a link between Florida's public policy researchers and municipal governments, bridging the gap between academics and public policy makers and administrators. The research institutes listed below are participants in the Partners in Municipal Research Program.

School of Public Administration
Florida Atlantic University

Metropolitan Center
Florida International University

Public Administration Department
Florida International University

Jerry Collins Local Governance Research Laboratory, Askew School of Public Administration
Florida State University

LeRoy Collins Institute
Florida State University

Florida TaxWatch

Institute for Public and Nonprofit Studies
Georgia Southern University

Center for Public and Nonprofit Management, School of Public Administration
University of Central Florida

Doctoral Program, Public Affairs, College of Health and Public Affairs
University of Central Florida

John Scott Dailey Florida Institute of Government
University of Central Florida

Florida Resilient Communities Initiative
University of Florida

Shimberg Center for Housing Studies
University of Florida

Political Science Department
University of Miami

Center for Urban Transportation Research
University of South Florida

Department of Government & International Affairs
University of South Florida

SCIENCE OF CITIES

FSU Local Governance Lab

Advancing understanding of city decisions for future development and services

by Aaron Deslatte
Northern Illinois University

At Florida State University, a team of scholars is attempting to unlock many of the causal mechanisms that influence local government policy actions and outcomes.

Over the last decade, ongoing research programs at FSU's **Local Governance Research Laboratory** have studied economic development, boundary change, service delivery, network governance, energy and sustainability. Collectively, the work has given rise to an emerging consensus that the rules local governments embed in their charters and ordinances, along with the relationships between localities, are shaping a wide range of public policy outcomes in predictable ways.

Dr. Richard Feiock, the Jerry Collins Eminent Scholar and Augustus B. Turnbull Professor of Public Administration at FSU's Askew School, directs the lab and is considered one of the world's foremost experts on local governance.

"The Local Gov Lab produces the top scientific research on local government, but the questions we investigate are grounded in our interactions with the local government management community rather than the academic community," Feiock said. "For example, the National League of Cities, ICLIE-USA, and International City/County Management Association are partnering with us and other universities to study urban infrastructure's impacts on local sustainability.

"In Florida, we work closely with the Florida League of Cities as well as individual cities," Feiock added. "We are now working closely with the City of Tallahassee on an NSF [National Science Foundation] supported study of residential energy usage."

The lab is unique in that its individual programs began with informal working groups of faculty, students and visiting scholars. Although the issues studied are diverse, they share a common focus on the role of formal and informal institutions in shaping local governance process, policy and performance. Graduate students are assigned to one of the lab's research programs. Visiting faculty can be affiliated with the lab when they are engaged in research projects that will contribute to these programs.

And the work has been noticed. The NSF announced last August that FSU would share in $12 million to build a research network of scientists, industry leaders and practitioners exploring how to build more sustainable cities. Feiock received $500,000 of that total to conduct nationwide surveys of city governments, investigate energy and transportation collaboration within urban regions, and support research on the innovative energy efficiency programs at the **City of Tallahassee.**

All told, the lab's research has generated almost $2 million in external research grants focused specifically on local governance, including six NSF research grants as well as awards from Lincoln Institute for Land Policy, Aspen Institute, IBM Center for the Business of Government, and the Fulbright Scholar Program. In addition to the research programs, the lab supports symposia and a distinguished lecture series.

Aaron Deslatte is an assistant professor in Department of Public Administration within the School of Public and Global Affairs at Northern Illinois University. QC

GO TO:
http://localgov.fsu.edu/ for more information on the FSU Local Governance Lab.

A Q&A with FDOT Secretary Jim Boxold

Jim Boxold became secretary of the Florida Department of Transportation effective January 2, 2015. Prior to his appointment, he served as the department's chief of staff.

We asked Secretary Boxold to answer the following questions about Florida's transportation system, which we thought would be of interest to municipal officials throughout the state.

Q. Why is it important for municipal elected officials to serve on Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) and play a role in the transportation planning process?

A. We wouldn't be able to keep building Florida's transportation system without working with our local government partners. These partnerships and the MPOs play a big part in the prioritization and completion of transportation projects. Florida is now the third largest state in the country and is projected to welcome about an additional 6 million residents by 2040. With all of these people moving to Florida, the state's regions have engaged in a long-range visioning process to identify what Floridians desire for the future. The MPOs have been key partners in transportation solutions that connect people to jobs, businesses to their customers, and our visitors to all that the Sunshine State has to offer. By participating in the MPO process, local officials can help determine which projects are a priority and be a part of a new era for innovative ideas.

Q. How does Florida compare to other states as it relates to transportation?

A. Florida leads the nation. The U.S. Chamber has ranked Florida as having the best transportation infrastructure in the country, and we are lucky to have a governor and Legislature that have backed record funding for transportation. With this leadership and support, only about 25 percent of our transportation budget comes from the federal government. The department's financial stability is due largely in part to our strategic investments. These investments include the use of public private partnerships (P3s) to deliver transportation mega projects like the PortMiami Tunnel, 595 in South Florida and the I-4 Ultimate in Central Florida. These projects have received several national awards and other state DOTs are using them as the model to start their own P3 programs. FDOT's continued investments are positioning Florida competitively not only on a national scale, but globally as well.

Q. As more money is being invested into Florida's ports, what is the state doing to invest in the infrastructure surrounding the ports to support the growth?

A. Florida's ports move over 100 million tons of freight annually, representing over $85 billion in commerce and positioning the state to compete in a global market. But this also means that we have to be ready to support growth around the ports. To do just that, we are making strategic investments surrounding our ports that support end-to-end trips, which are commonly referred to as the first/last mile. The department has collaborated with local governments and the private sector to create innovative solutions such as the **PortMiami Tunnel, Eller Drive (Fort Lauderdale), I-4/Selmon Expressway Connector (Tampa), I-294 at Heckscher Drive (Jacksonville)** as well as smaller scale operational improvements. These network upgrades not only move freight traffic directly onto the interstate more efficiently, but also reduce trips on local roads.

Q. What does the future of Florida's transportation look like?

A. We want to continue providing our residents and visitors with more transportation choices. The future transportation network is integrated, embraces technology and ensures the safety of all users. To accomplish this will require strong partnerships, embracing advancements in technology and a willingness to rethink the way we design and engineer roads. At FDOT, we are striving to build a transportation system that creates the most enjoyable experience for our travelers and positions Florida as a global leader.

INFRASTRUCTURE

Freight and Passenger Transportation

Investing wisely opens doors to economic development

by the Office of Freight, Logistics, and Passenger Operations
Florida Department of Transportation

One-hundred years ago, the Florida State Department of Roads, predecessor of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), had six employees, was responsible for 4,721 centerline miles of surface roads, and managed a state maintenance budget of $16,411. In fiscal year 2014-2015, the FDOT received the largest appropriation of budget authority in department history at just over $10 billion, it has 5,786 employees and managed more than 120,000 centerline miles of roadways.

Florida has the infrastructure workforce, partnerships and focus on freight to allow businesses to be successful in our state. The FDOT is committed to investing in the state's ports and improving the mobility of goods and services throughout Florida.

INVESTING FOR A GROWING POPULATION

Over the past century, there was a very strong relationship between the size of Florida's population and economy, and the number of vehicles on the road, the number of miles traveled and the amount of fuel consumed by drivers. The state's population has surged from 4.9 million in 1960 to 19.5 million in 2014 according to the Bureau of Economic and Business Research, and it recently surpassed New York as the third largest state.

This relationship has been changing during the past several years: vehicle-miles traveled peaked in 2007 and has not yet returned to the pre-recession high; the number of registered motor vehicles has rebounded but is roughly where it was prior to the recession; and fuel consumption is also below its high. The FDOT continues to monitor these trends to establish if this is a short-term cycle driven by the economy or the beginning of a long-term shift in travel behavior.

Boasting extensive multi-modal infrastructure, powerful trade networks and one of the largest talent pools in the country, Florida offers the total package for all facets of the logistics industry. As we think of economic development investments, a basic principle to consider is that Florida will compete with other states and nations if we continue to invest wisely in transportation.

INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS

The state's gross domestic product has increased even more rapidly than population, from $15 billion in 1960 to $800 billion today, ranks as the fourth largest among the 50 states and would be the 18th largest in the world if Florida were a single nation.

Though we don't yet know the precise composition of our future economy, we do know it will likely be more diverse and require a more complex mix of transportation modes and services to remain competitive. Changes in the state's industry mix will affect demand for moving both freight and people. For example, global trade relies heavily on seaports and airports and connections to the major rail lines and truck corridors; high tech tends to rely on long-distance travel by skilled workers and reliable, efficient delivery of small packages.

In 2014, $153.2 billion in merchandise trade entered or exited the United States through Florida's Customs Districts, the third highest level ever recorded in the state. The FDOT's goal is to make Florida the dominate gateway for U.S. trade through investments in trade and transportation infrastructure. An inefficient transportation system makes companies and government less competitive, raises prices for consumers and adds other costs, such as missed business opportunities. It is important to move people and freight in complete end-to-end trips, placing emphasis on proactive planning and operational performance, flexibility and reliability.

STAKEHOLDER AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT INVOLVEMENT

By increasing visibility through partnership and community engagement activities, the FDOT is creating awareness and educating the public on the importance of its investments. The FDOT's modal system plans are done in close coordination with many state, regional and local entities in the public and private sectors. These events include:

- Florida Transportation Plan Visioning Summits;
- Freight Mobility and Trade Plan Forums;
- Strategic Intermodal System Policy Plan Workshops;
- Regional Listening Sessions; and
- Transportation Data Symposiums.

These are just a few of the ongoing events hosted by FDOT to gain a wider perspective and make a commitment to encourage public participation in its funding strategies. Florida is making the correct investments because we are actively involving and listening to stakeholders.

For more information, call the Office of Freight, Logistics, and Passenger Operations, Florida Department of Transportation, at (850) 414-4500 or visit *www.dot.state.fl.us/multimodal/*. QC

TRANSIT TRENDS

Automobile Travel

The impact of changing demographics and technology

by Steven E. Polzin, Ph.D.
Center for Urban Transportation Research

We are entering perhaps one of the most transformational periods in transportation since the advent of the personal automobile.

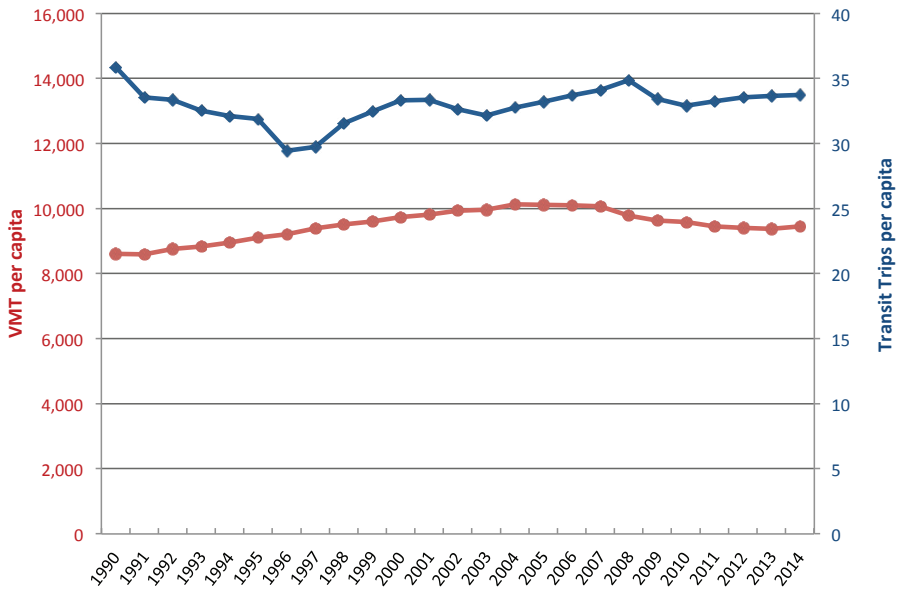
Much of the past century in transportation has been significantly shaped by the proliferation of personal mobility. Households added first one, then additional automobiles to a point where only 9.1 percent of households – comprising 6.5 percent of the U.S. population – are without personal cars. The vast majority of travel, including more than 85 percent of commuting, relies on personal vehicles. This trend coincided with growing household incomes as more of the population joined the labor force. This contributed to changing time-use patterns and travel increases in concert with the suburbanization of the population.

AUTO TRAVEL DECLINES

As the new century arrived, many of these trends were beginning to change. Labor force participation peaked. The shift from alternative modes to auto-based travel had played itself out. The large and active baby-boom generation was moving out of its peak travel years, and core urban populations were stabilizing and no longer a powerful source for suburban growth.

By 2004, vehicle travel per capita had peaked. Shortly after, total growth in travel slowed from historical norms, then declined until 2014. As shown in Figure 1, there is growing evidence that historical trends had been broken.

Figure 1. Annual Vehicle Miles of Travel and Transit Trips per Capita in the U.S.



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CHANGING MOBILITY PREFERENCES

As the first decade of the 21st century continued, transportation planners and analysts were recognizing a variety of factors that were changing travel behavior. Many concurrent factors – from economic recession to skyrocketing fuel prices to growing substitution of communications for travel via e-commerce, distance learning, and web meetings – complicated analyses. The millennial generation was showing less interest in and/or ability to avail themselves of automobiles for travel. Many were seemingly content to substitute social media and perpetual electronic connections in lieu of the zeal for auto ownership and use that their parents had possessed at similar ages.

As the first decade in the 21st century came to an end, the transportation planning community – with the help of demographers and social scientists and the attention of the general media – began exploring the magnitude of changes that were afoot. It has become increasingly clear that economic, demographic and technology changes are altering travel and are poised to influence future demand for transportation.

A NEW GENERATION, NEW BEHAVIORS

Analysts are now anxiously collecting and analyzing data to be in a stronger position to understand future transportation needs and impacts. This perfect storm has produced a near decade with no growth in travel demand and resulted in transportation planners revisiting forecasts for future travel, both the total demand and the demands for travel by various modes. Of particular interest is the impact of millennials and new technologies.

Millennials are that segment of the population that would now be considered young adults. The intense interest in this group is a result of its size – the offspring of the large baby boom generation and immigration, and the fact that millennials are exhibiting behaviors that are meaningfully different than prior generations. This group of young adults is moving toward their peak travel years as they age and hence will shape much of the transportation demand and policy

that will drive future transportation plans and programs.

Numerous analyses have documented some clear differences in this generation. In general, a far larger share pursue advanced education, reside in urban areas, postpone marriage, postpone having children and postpone household formation. Many of them live at home, incur significant education debt, delay obtaining a driver's license and vehicle ownership, use technology more and – not surprisingly given these characteristics – travel less. In addition, many in this generation have been impacted by the significant economic slowdown.

ADDRESSING FUTURE DEMAND

The collective consequences of these conditions have led transportation planners to attempt to interpret what this means for future travel demand. Several key questions arise out of these considerations, including:

- What factors explain the differences and what share of the differences are the result of the current economic climate versus longer term, more fundamental changes in social demographic conditions and behaviors?
- Will this age cohorts' travel behavior differences persist as they age?
- Will subsequent generations retain these travel behavior traits?

While there isn't concurrence on answers to these questions, evidence is accumulating to help in addressing them. Significant evidence suggests that the millennial generation is aging toward more traditional household and travel characteristics at a slower pace than prior generations, but the vast majority of this generation will move toward more traditional travel. However, even modest changes in the share of the population that chooses to remain in urban environments and retain an interest in using alternative modes can produce a meaningful difference in overall travel demand.

THE IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY

In addition to demographic changes and the uncertainties they bring, new technologies including those that have allowed communication as a substitution for travel (e.g., e-commerce and distance learning), as well as navigation systems, real-time transportation information systems, new technologies enabling the emergence of transportation network companies (TNCs) like Uber, and the prospect of automated self-driving vehicles collectively stand to significantly influence future travel demand. While these technologies have the capability of reducing travel demand, they also influence the cost and convenience of travel. They can stimulate roadway travel, particularly if the longer-term future has empty TNCs or automated vehicles shuttling between passenger trips. It's premature at this time to predict the net impact on transportation demand.

THE FUTURE

Coupled with demographic and technology uncertainty, travel is strongly tied to the economy. The collective uncertainty in demographic trends and behaviors, technology impacts and economic considerations makes it a particularly challenging time to speculate on future travel demand. The consensus estimates suggest slower travel demand growth going forward tied more closely to population growth. Planners and policy makers should be watching these trends closely and can influence them to some extent by virtue of the quality and range of travel choices they provide.

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