

Seaport Statewide Strategic Visioning and Planning Process

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Northeast and Central Coast Regional Seaports Workshop August 3, 2006, at Port of Jacksonville, 10:00-3:00 PM

“If you do not know to which port you are sailing, no wind is a good one.” - Seneca
“I skate to where the puck will be, not to where it’s been.” - W. Gretsky
“The future ain’t what it used to be. -Y Berra

FACILITATORS’ WORKSHOP SUMMARY

”To create an umbrella strategic Florida seaports vision and plan through collaboration with transportation partners that responds to and reflects the demands of the Florida Seaport business model.”

***Meeting Design and Facilitation:
Charles A. Towsley, PPM, Maritime Directions Inc.
Robert M. Jones & Hal Beardall
Florida State University, Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium***



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Facilitator’s Workshop Summary

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Rick Ferrin, Director of the Port of Jacksonville, welcomed the participants to this regional workshop convened by the Ports Council. Charles A. Towsley, PPM, Maritime Directions Inc., thanked Mr. Ferrin, for hosting. On behalf of the Florida Ports Council and the Ports Directors, Mr. Towsley presented an overview of the Florida Seaports collective mission and the proposed Florida Seaports planning process. He noted this effort was initiated at the June, 2006 joint meeting of the Florida Ports Council and FSTED in response to a recently released May, 2006 report, “Florida Seaports: Conditions, Competitiveness, and Statewide Policies, Draft Final Report” prepared by Cambridge Systematics, Inc. for the Florida Department of Transportation.

He suggested the overall purpose for this strategic planning effort is to create an umbrella strategic Florida seaports vision and plan through collaboration with statewide and regional transportation partners that responds to and reflects the demands of the Florida seaport business model. He reviewed the sequence of regional and statewide meetings that have been and will be convened noting there would be an additional regional workshop in Tampa on August 4 and a users meeting in Ft. Lauderdale on August 15, all leading to a statewide summit in August 30-31 in Tampa.

Mr. Towsley then introduced the meeting facilitators, Bob Jones and Hal Beardall from the Florida Conflict Resolution Consortium, based in Tallahassee at FSU and in Orlando at UCF. Following brief introductions the facilitators noted the perspectives contributing to the workshop review of shared regional perspectives on the business models and key strategic issues included: Port Directors, their staff and technical consultants, FDOT District staff, cargo and cruise port user representatives and rail partners.

Mr. Towsley introduced a list of seaport plans and related partner plans that are part of the context of consideration of a statewide and regional strategic Florida seaports plan. The facilitators invited participant comments which focused on:

- Updates on individual seaport master plans and the opportunity to work more closely and coordinate with FDOT Districts in these updates as well as the need to clarify with FDCA and FDOT the interpretation of the port’s DRI exemption.
- The link between the FDOT and ports planning efforts and the Florida Transportation Commission’s corridor initiative.

The participants reviewed the range of partners and their roles in planning for Florida's seaports and their role in state, regional and local economies. The participants discussed and added to a starter list of potential partners. The facilitators invited participant comments which focused on:

- Metropolitan Planning Organizations and Ports involvement with them in regional planning, TRIP program opportunities, and freight policy issues including a new freight advisory committee for First Coast MPO.
- Federal partners and regulators in the context of transportation planning and funding.
- State and federal security agencies and the need for better coordination.

Workshop participants reviewed and refined draft starter list of trends, headwinds and tailwinds. Global and National trends identified included increasing security costs and demands, limited funds on the national level and insurance costs. Regional trends included focus on location of manufacturing closer to the ports and strained financial resources for infrastructure investment.

Opportunities for Seaports statewide and regionally that participants identified included: possibility of developing more distribution centers in land, greater cooperation of ports in the region, container trade growth, proximity to Latin America and Caribbean, and developing a statewide capacity to market the ports internationally.

Challenges for seaports statewide and regionally that participants identified included: federal and state permit timing and funding for maintenance and new dredging to remain competitive and accommodate larger ships; weight limitations on Florida roads compared with neighboring states, maintaining local truck routes in terms of port access; and security costs, environmental issues surrounding threatened or endangered marine species.

Each Port Director provided an overview of the key components for their business planning models. Participants then reviewed, refined and ranked the importance (from (5) Critically important to (1) less important) of a draft set of shared needs drawn from the seaport business planning models in the region and the Five-Year Plan to Achieve the Mission of Florida Seaports. The facilitators noted a lower ranking on the level of importance may suggest the issue is already being addressed. The shared needs are listed in ranked priority order below in terms of importance of each to the region.

1. **Improve inter- and intra-regional freight and passenger mobility connectivity in transportation corridors.** (*Regional Importance Ranking= 4.7*)
2. **Support waterside navigation improvement that can accommodate dynamics of shipping market vessel changes in a timely manner.** (*Regional Importance Ranking= 4.5*)
3. **Promote Ports as regional economic engines. Retain and stimulate economic development & job growth- ports as economic engines of their local communities regions, state and nation.** (*Regional Importance Ranking = 4.4*)
4. **Encourage public-private partnerships that maximize financial resources and collaboration between ports, the state and the private sector industry, local government and communities.** (*Regional Importance Ranking = 4.4*)
5. **Ensure a safe, secure, sustainable and cost effective logistics chain as part of a truly intermodal transportation system for the transport of people and goods through seamless connections while ensuring a safe, secure, sustainable and cost effective logistics chain for transport of people and goods.** (*Regional Importance Ranking = 4.3*)

6. **Improve throughput of cargo on port at landside terminal and cargo handling systems. Port capacity improvements to enhance throughput of cargo on port at landside terminal and cargo handling system upgrades.** (*Regional Importance Ranking = 4.3*)
7. **Address port user needs. Provide market sensitive facility and service costs to port users to retain and expand business opportunities.** (*Regional Importance Ranking = 4.3*)
8. **Promote regional cooperation to maximize use of resources and create synergies to benefit both public and private sector freight and passenger interests throughout Florida.** (*Regional Importance Ranking = 3.9*)
9. **Promote competitive market assessment, port diversification and rationalization regarding highest and best use. Ports are faced with significant challenges in sustaining growth and diversifying their business base.** (*Regional Importance Ranking = 3.9*)

Participants then reviewed, refined and ranked their level of agreement (*from 5=Strongly Agree to 1=Disagree*) of a draft starter list of guiding principles that could inform the development of the seaports strategic plan.

Substantive Planning Principles

1. In order to strengthen the state's overall network of seaports that handle varied commodities and serving different trade lanes and passenger/cruise service, the Florida seaport strategic plan should reflect the input of the state's 14 deepwater seaports and the demands of the Florida seaport business model. (*Regional Agreement Ranking= 4.5*)
2. To sustain a Florida seaport system as a competitive international trade network that fosters economic development, constant market vigilance and investment flexibility will be required. (*Regional Agreement Ranking= 4.3*)
3. The Florida seaports must find and build into the strategic plan the appropriate balances commerce, global competition and mobility with security. (*Regional Agreement Ranking= 4.4*)
4. The Florida seaports must find and build into the strategic plan the appropriate balance between mobility and the seaport impacts on the environment and community. (*Regional Agreement Ranking= 4.3*)

Planning Process Principles

1. The development of the seaport strategic plan should be a collaborative effort directly involving and engaging the state's 14 deep water ports and all levels of government, private sector users and owners of Florida's trade and transport system, both cargo and passenger interests and all modes of transportation. (*Regional Agreement Ranking= 4.2*)
2. The Seaports and their partners should engage in a process to build understanding and consensus on the needs, policies and strategies to ensure Florida's competitiveness in the global market. (*Regional Agreement Ranking= 3.8*)

Mr. Towsley thanked the participants for their participation and input and Jaxport for hosting the meeting. He reminded them of the August 30-31 Seaport Summit in Tampa and encouraged them to let other users and partners know of the opportunity to provide input through the online survey and workshops. The facilitators noted the participants would be notified when the workshop summary is posted on the Ports Council website.