



*Interconnected, Multimodal Transportation Solutions:
A Roadmap for Florida's Future*

Executive Summary

Transportation infrastructure is core to Florida's quality of life and growth. I have released a Jobs plan in which I propose methods to dramatically improve Florida's economic climate, including lowering the cost of doing business in the state, reducing unnecessary regulations, lowering tax burdens, and attracting more diverse and stable industries to Florida. Yet without a reliable, safe and interconnected transportation system, our goals for economic growth and job creation cannot be accomplished. Today, Florida's transportation workforce is experiencing among the highest unemployment rates in the state; it is time to reverse this trend. My transportation platform is based on a few core principles which touch upon all modes – roadways, seaports, freight rail, aviation, and rail and bus transit.

- 1. Protect Transportation Funding:** Dollars derived from transportation activities should be used for transportation purposes, in order to build a better future and create much-needed construction jobs.
- 2. Modernize Financing for Infrastructure Improvements:** Florida's methods for financing major infrastructure projects must be rebuilt and must be more innovative to ensure Florida is competitive with other states in providing for major commerce-related improvements.
- 3. Increase Florida's Share of Port Traffic:** From direct seaport improvements to creating more interconnected rail, air and roadways, Florida must do everything possible to capture increased trade and job growth that will come with the 2014 widening of the Panama Canal.
- 4. Reduce Congestion and Increase Mobility Options:** Congestion is one of the biggest threats to Florida economy and quality of life; aggressive action must be taken to alleviate congestion for Florida commuters, visitors and businesses. This includes moving more freight via rail versus trucks and building new, strategic transportation corridors.
- 5. Commit to Public Private Partnerships:** Public private partnerships are a mutually-beneficial way for Florida and private companies to solve problems that neither can solve on their own, at lower cost to the state and with significant benefit to job growth in the state.
- 6. Insist on Safety:** With 3,000 deaths on Florida roads each year, all efforts must be taken to create safer road conditions for passengers, bicyclists and pedestrians.

For more than three decades, I have been honored to serve our nation and the people of Florida as an officer in the United States Navy, in Congress, and most recently as Florida's Attorney General. These are tough times, and we need strong leadership to get our economy back on track. I am proud to stand on my record of service and humbly ask for your support as I work to continue serving the State of Florida.

Sincerely,
Bill McCollum

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➤ **The Big Picture:**
Sustainable and Innovative Financing for Multimodal Projects

The Florida Department of Transportation has identified over \$53.2 billion in un-funded needs by the year 2030 just to keep up with projected traffic demands in Florida's highest priority projects alone, with similar needs on the rest of the system. Unfortunately, Florida's current system for funding transportation is no longer aligned with advances in technology and future demands. While it is good for Floridians and the environment that motor vehicles have become increasingly fuel efficient, this means that each vehicle on the road is contributing proportionally less to transportation revenue while road congestion and demands for mobility are increasing. The good news is that the return on investment for transportation funding is extraordinary: every dollar invested has an economic multiplier between \$5 and \$7 in benefits to the state, and this ratio is considerably more favorable for certain projects such as seaport improvement. As Governor, I will look for innovative financing methods, for both small and large projects, to ensure viable, long-term solutions.

- ***Enhance Florida's Strategic Intermodal System to achieve coordinated goals***

The Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) was created by the Legislature in 2003 following an extensive public/stakeholder involvement process. The SIS is a statewide, interconnected network of high-priority transportation facilities, including major highway, air, space, water, rail, and bus facilities. Facilities on the SIS are designated based upon objective activity based and economic criteria, such as vehicle miles traveled, cruise passengers, freight tonnage, aviation enplanements, and so on. By law, at least 50% of all new discretionary highway capacity funds must be allocated to the SIS. As Governor, I will maintain a commitment to SIS, and will look for ways to improve Florida's strategic and focused approach to transportation planning and funding. At the same time, I will work as a partner with regional entities and local governments to address their needs and ensure that state and community objectives are well aligned.

- ***Protect transportation funding***

The State Transportation Trust Fund (STTF) should be used solely for transportation purposes. Since 1998, \$3.3 billion has been diverted from the STTF, and new revenues from increased tag and title fees were not added into the transportation pot. My opposition to raiding the STTF goes beyond a philosophical position. It is based on the fact that transportation dollars are essential to support and create thousands of jobs, and provide significant returns on investment for Florida taxpayers. According to the Federal Highway Administration, last year's proposed reduction in STTF would have resulted in the loss of over 16,000 jobs. I publicly opposed the Legislature raiding the Fund as Attorney General, and will not tolerate such a raid when I am Governor. I implored the Legislature in my letter to Speaker of the House Larry Cretul that sweeping the STTF would compound the challenges we face. More than ever, Florida must focus transportation funds on our highways, bridges, railways, airports and seaports—to build a better future and to create much-needed construction jobs.

- ***Provide tax exempt financing opportunities for strategic infrastructure projects***

The federal government provides states with tax-exempt Private Activity Bonds (PABs) to attract private investment for projects that have a public benefit. Florida's 2010 federal allocation of PABs was \$1.6 billion and the state legislature has a lot of discretion in how to use these bonds. I believe that PABs can be focused to leverage private investment into infrastructure projects that produce high paying, long term jobs. As Governor, I will work with the legislature to apply these bonds where they will provide the greatest return on investment, specifically in projects that are important to economic development.

- ***Create the Florida Infrastructure Tax Credit to better leverage transportation funds and maximize private investment in state projects***

Florida's current method for financing major infrastructure projects can be dramatically improved to increase Florida's competitiveness with other states. In order to compete for larger ships coming through the Panama Canal beginning in 2014, or even to re-claim the cargo that is delivered to our state from other ports, we must create a more effective way to invest in infrastructure. Strategic infrastructure projects are more stable and are less volatile than most other investments, and offer clear, tangible benefits to Floridians. As Governor, I will create the Florida Infrastructure Tax Credit to enable Florida's seaports, airports and other major infrastructure projects to compete for new business opportunities, creating more jobs for Floridians. The Tax Credit structured as a 'contingent tax credit' or guaranty will be strategically provided to companies and investors to protect against extraordinary downside risk and specified profitability measures and in any normal circumstance would not be used. These contingent corporate income tax credits will provide investors with enough certainty to move forward with projects they might not have financed otherwise. All of this can be achieved without spending a single taxpayer dollar, and will make Florida more able to attract the much-needed private investment and jobs. Finally, these tax credits will perpetuate greater economic activity. For example, the more tenants a seaport has, the more able they will be to self-finance additional improvement projects. As Governor I will promote this Tax Credit and will seek additional innovative financing methods.

- ***Restart the "Future Corridors" process to ensure coordinated, long-term planning***

Florida's existing roadways are congested, inefficient for commuters and freight, and inadequate to serve the expected growth in population, visitors, economic activity, and geographic distribution. Florida's transportation system will not keep pace without a renewed commitment to investment and innovation in the system. Florida's communities and industries need to be served by an efficient, interconnected transportation. New corridors are essential to Florida's economic future. As Governor, I will be committed to planning these projects strategically so that new roadways and railways are not built in fragmented, haphazard ways. I will restart the "Future Corridors" planning process that Governor Jeb Bush initiated. My vision is to develop a statewide, integrated network of multimodal, multiuse corridors that: address current and future mobility and connectivity needs; are connected to regional and local transportation facilities and services; balance economic and mobility needs with community values and environmental objectives; support our economically distressed or developing areas; support emergency preparedness and response activities; and are financed through public-private partnerships and user fees to the maximum extent possible. I will work in partnership with environmental, economic development, and community advocates to achieve these goals.

- ***Improve Florida's regulatory climate to become more competitive with other states***

Despite an overall low tax burden, Florida's regulatory environment ranks lower than other southeastern states. According to the Forbes "Best States for Business" rankings, Florida lags at #25 while Georgia captures #1, Virginia #2, North Carolina #4, South Carolina #6 and Alabama #19. As Governor I will be committed to reducing unnecessary regulations and cutting red tape. I have developed a plan in partnership with my good friend Steve Forbes that focuses on lowering the cost of doing business in Florida. This includes reducing bureaucracy and conducting thorough reviews of all regulatory functions of the state. We will eliminate regulations that are unnecessary or duplicative and will evaluate where greater efficiencies can be made in the permitting process. These reforms, along with corporate tax cuts, are estimated to create over 500,000 new jobs in Florida over the next 6 years.

- *Correct Florida's "donor state" status to receive a fair share of our tax dollar funding*

Florida's status as a "donor state" means that hundreds of millions of Floridian taxpayer dollars are going to other states' transportation systems and economies. As Governor, I will take every action to improve Florida's return on investment for federal transportation dollars. I will continue to work with our congressional delegation and federal officials to make sure that during the next transportation funding reauthorization bill, Florida receives a greater share back. Further, Florida must prepare multi-modal project investments in order to be considered for new federal funds, especially for the movement of freight. As Governor, I will lead efforts to ensure Florida does its homework, receives its fair share of funds, and does not sink further into "donor state" status. Further, I will work with and provide assistance to Florida's airports and seaports to achieve additional federal funding that they seek.

➤ Seaports

Florida's 14 deepwater seaports are true engines of job creation and revenue generation. Florida's seaports support 550,000 jobs, with an average wage of \$54,400 per year, more than double the average wage for all other non-advanced degree workers and \$15,000 more than the average wage for all occupations. In 2009, the Florida Ports Council reported that maritime cargo activities contributed \$1.7 billion to Florida's tax revenue base and \$66 billion in total economic value. With almost 19 million consumers, Florida is a prime geographic location for international trade. However, these trade opportunities must not be taken for granted. With the expansion of the Panama Canal slated to be completed in 2014, coastal states recognize the significant boom it will bring to trade. States including Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama, and Texas are investing significantly to improve their seaport and transportation infrastructure to capture increased trade. Shipping companies are currently negotiating long-term 40- or 50-year contracts to locate in Savannah, Mobile, and Charleston, with Florida losing these opportunities. The impact goes well beyond a missed opportunity for job creation; it means that many of Florida's current seaport-supported jobs are at risk of being lost to other states. This is unacceptable. As Governor, I will prioritize the strategic funding of Florida's deepwater seaports, leveraging state dollars as well as private and local funds to ensure we are competitive in attracting this critical international trade. I do not believe Florida can wait until January of next year to begin this process. I have already partnered with state legislative leaders and ports directors to begin outlining Florida's plan for seaport improvements and funding. Each Florida seaport has different needs, and opportunities, and in order to maximize state funds, we are working to create a strategic plan. This not only includes direct seaport improvements, but also system-wide infrastructure improvements including access to strategic roads and railways in and out of Florida's seaports.

- *Ensure Florida's direct investment in seaport financing and improvements*

Improvements to Florida's seaports directly impact Florida's economy. One study demonstrated that for every dollar invested in seaports, the state's economy receives \$6.90 in return. Even more compelling are estimates on the impact of a \$50 million seaport investment by the Legislature in 2007. This funding was determined to yield \$25 for every dollar spent. However, the annual funding provided in statute has remained at \$8 million since 1990. The funding is allocated to the Florida Seaport Transportation and Economic Development (FSTED) Council with the mission to finance seaport infrastructure and transportation projects. The Council has been successful in improving infrastructure and job creation. However, to be truly competitive with other states, Florida must invest more, and must invest more creatively. Florida's funding level puts our state at a major disadvantage when it comes to seaport infrastructure. Georgia has invested \$1 billion since 2005 and has captured markets in Florida through improvements to seaports, roads and rails. Alabama has invested over \$500 million in seaport infrastructure improvements and the development of container facilities. Both Alabama and Georgia have issued state general bonds to achieve this, and Alabama has also leveraged funds from its State Pension. Florida can and must provide greater direct investment to finance our seaports and related transportation systems. Even during tight budget years, this funding is necessary to ensure job creation and economic growth in Florida. As Governor, I will be committed this goal. As mentioned above, I propose creating a Florida Infrastructure Tax Credit to achieve aggressive goals at no cost to Florida taxpayers.

- *Increase the flexibility of matching requirements*

Whenever possible, Florida should ensure that private sector investment in infrastructure programs will at least match state input. However, this is not always a realistic formula, especially when others states have far more direct investment to offer. As Governor, I will reevaluate current matching requirements to ensure Florida's seaports have enough flexibility to generate greater private investment.

- ***Offer tax incentives for companies that locate or expand their shipping facilities within Florida***

Florida's seaport competitor states all offer targeted tax credits to companies that locate or expand their shipping facilities, and Florida must do the same. For example, Louisiana provides a 5% annual tax credit for 20 years to companies that invest at least \$5 million in port infrastructure projects. Florida must look at similar methods to encourage investment by the private sector. As Governor, I will advocate providing tax incentives to companies that increase their shipping through Florida, with the goal of attracting more distribution centers and international shippers and rewarding existing companies for expanding their port business within the state. These tax credits will be tied to the creation of jobs and will aid state efforts in attracting trade through our ports.

- ***Remove unnecessary and rigid statutory provisions that impede priority seaport projects***

The current process through which the FSTED Council allocates funds abides by rigid 5-year program funding plans. This process can be far more efficient. As Governor, I will urge the Legislature to revise these rules to ensure the Council can respond to customer and market demands. I understand that international commerce is dynamic in nature and is highly competitive. I support a funding process that will enable faster decision-making for priority projects while also maintaining a statutorily defined, transparent process.

- ***Improve on-dock rail connectivity and develop warehouse and distribution centers at major Florida seaports***

Florida's seaports face tough competition from ports in others states for discretionary cargo and the accompanying economic benefits. A major competitive advantage of ports in places such as Savannah, Charleston, Mobile is that they afford shippers the ability to quickly move their cargo from the port to other modes of transportation, which connect the cargo to markets throughout the southeastern U.S. Improved highway connections to our seaports are needed, as is on-dock rail connectivity. By improving the intermodal connectivity of our ports, Florida's seaports will be able to move products to market more efficiently, which will help ports compete for valuable discretionary cargo. Further, Florida's seaports would benefit from the development of warehouse and distribution centers in close proximity. As I mentioned, I have started to work with seaport directors to identify the unique infrastructure needs in each location and develop a strategic plan to carry out these improvements.

➤ Highways, Roads and Bridges

Florida's highways are nationally acclaimed by those in the trucking industry for the quality of the roads and rest areas. Florida's pavement conditions are in the best state they have been over the last decade and Florida consistently ranks in the top five states with having the least amount of structurally deficient bridges. This was achieved due to Florida's commitment to safety and preservation before any other needs, as well as benefits of our mild climate. However, congestion in Florida's metropolitan and suburban areas is getting consistently worse. Over the past 30 years, Florida has had one of the highest population increases in the country, which has led to considerable strain on roadways. Congestion is one of the biggest threats to Florida's quality of life and economic viability. As Governor, I will commit to reducing drive times for Floridians. This will require strategic planning and financial investment.

- ***Declare a state of Economic Emergency and expedite projects to spark Florida's economy***

Time equals money. After a natural disaster, governments often declare a State of Emergency and temporarily suspend normal project development rules so that bridges and highways can be rebuilt faster. Today Florida is in a State of "Economic Emergency". With double digit unemployment rates for the population at large and even higher unemployment in the transportation and construction industries, time cannot be wasted. Normal transportation projects take anywhere from 18 months to three years to move from concept to the start of construction. This timeline is comprised of many review, revision, coordination and permitting processes by several state and federal agencies. However, in the recent past under emergency conditions, projects were able to move forward in fractions of that time. As Governor, I will suspend some of the review and revision process during this economic crisis in order to get more construction dollars in the hands of engineers and contractors. I will work with Florida's Department of Transportation (FDOT) to identify a group of needed projects that have limited to no permitting requirements, and advance these more quickly through the design, build and other turnkey procurement processes. I believe this will immediately stimulate Florida's economy, help get people back to work, and provide very necessary infrastructure improvements for the state.

- ***Focus on congestion relief***

The annual Urban Mobility report by the Texas Transportation Institute showed that congestion in places such as Miami, Tampa and Orlando has consistently worsened over the past 20 years. Unfortunately, these trends are true across the state. Congestion has become one of the biggest threats to Florida's quality of life and economic viability. As Governor, I will make "congestion relief" a top priority, and will expect projects to be prioritized based upon what they would do to address traffic congestion.

- ***Insist on safety***

Florida's stretch of I-95 was recently ranked by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration as the "most deadly" in the nation for highway fatalities, with I-4 ranked 3rd on the same list. Almost 3,000 people die on Florida's roads each year. These tragic accidents and fatalities are preventable and, as Governor, I will make improved highway safety a top priority. A number of factors have been suggested to contribute to highway deaths: too many lanes on highways, too many cars on the road, and aggressive and more distracted drivers. These are challenging problems to fix, especially as we rebuild Florida's economy. As Governor, I will look for solutions that build safety into new projects, such as creating express lanes in highly congested areas to separate long-haul drivers from short-range commuters, and seek solutions to prevent motorists from crowding onto expressways all at once. I will also seek ways to better educate young drivers in safe driving behavior, and direct more attention to protecting motorcyclists, bicyclists, and pedestrians.

➤ Airports & Aviation Industry

The aviation industry, from manufacturing to maintenance, is a major part of our new Florida economy. Florida's airport system is one of the biggest in the country and consistently ranks among the best. In a recent J.D. Power and Associates survey Orlando ranked #3 for large airports, Tampa #3 for medium sized airports, and Southwest Florida International in Ft. Myers ranked #2 for small sized airports. Miami International is the 4th largest air cargo airport in the nation and 6th in the world. As a state, Florida is second in the nation in general aviation operations. We have clearer flying days for general aviation than any other State in the nation, and approximately 90% of Floridians live within 30 minutes of an airport. While these represent strong assets to our state, we must do more to assure Florida's airways continue to grow and improve. Florida's commercial airports are projected to be at 98% capacity by 2023 if additional investments do not continue to occur.

- ***Recognize the importance of Florida's aviation industry to jobs and tourism***

Over half of Florida tourists, and nearly all international travelers, arrive by air. In 2007 more than 1 million direct and indirect jobs were supported by aviation in Florida, amounting to \$26 billion in annual payroll. That same year, aviation accounted for 8.5% of Florida's Gross State Product, with more than \$96 billion contributed to the state's economy. Florida's aviation industry brings great value to Florida's economy. As Governor I will promote improvements to Florida's regulatory climate, and take every action to increase tourism and trade in the state to support the industry and provide immeasurable benefit to all Floridians.

- ***Restore full use of the Aviation Fuels Tax to the aviation industry***

Florida is ahead of most states when it comes to aviation funding, as one of the few that have a dedicated aviation fund. That funding comes from the aviation fuels sales tax and are supposed to be dedicated strictly to aviation, specifically to improve capacity at Florida's airports. Capacity improvements include everything from runway expansion to terminal improvement. However, in the last decade, some of those dedicated funds have been pushed into the state's general revenue fund and to fund non-aviation projects. As Governor, I will work to restore those funds so that the aviation industry can fully utilize these funds for essential projects.

- ***Utilize my proposed Infrastructure Tax Credit to upgrade and maintain former military bases***

Currently, there are three closed military aviation bases in Florida: Homestead in Miami, Cecil Field in Jacksonville, and the Naval Aviation Depot in Pensacola. All of these facilities are being re-used in and around the aviation world. As a part my proposal to create a Florida Infrastructure Tax Credit, I believe Florida can assist in the process of upgrading these facilities from their military days. In many cases, military codes and standards do not match or meet the local and state civilian codes, so local dollars have been spent bringing these facilities up to code rather than building new facilities that will attract new employers. In order to compete against other southeastern states, Florida must invest in these former military bases and ensure that they successfully transition to productive civilian use.

➤ Freight Railways

Railways have never been more important to Florida's future than they are today. Not only will investments in our rail system mean more jobs for Floridians, but it will also help reduce congestion and improve safety on our roadways. In 2006, nearly 100 million intercity trips were taken on Florida's roadways. Even in this current economy, it is expected to grow to nearly 200 million trips in 2020 and 320 million by 2040. Our current transportation system simply cannot handle that increase without additional investment in the right balance of modes. As Governor, I will work with our railroad partners to make freight rail more economically competitive with trucking. This will allow Florida to be more economically competitive with other states and will save taxpayers money. As Governor, I will work to ensure Florida's regulatory environment and infrastructure is more optimal for promoting freight rail.

- ***Encourage more freight to be carried by rail to reduce highway congestion, improve road conditions, and improve air quality***

One 18-wheeled loaded truck does the equivalent damage on our roadways as 9,600 cars. Further, one freight train can carry the equivalent of 280 trucks. This means that rail can aid in easing congestion, protecting roads, and improving air quality. By putting a portion of truck cargo on rails, Florida can use money that would have been spent on repairing roads and instead spend it on widening roads and improving congestion. Taxpayers will spend less time wasting gas idling in congestion and Florida's highways will need fewer repairs.

- ***Provide corporate tax incentives to encourage private investment in rail infrastructure***

Unlike other modes of transportation, America's freight railroads operate almost exclusively on infrastructure that they privately build and maintain. From 1980 to 2007, America's freight railroads invested approximately \$440 billion for these projects, representing more than 40 cents out of every rail revenue dollar. However, the demand for freight rail transportation is estimated to grow 88% by 2035, and freight railroads will only be able to generate around 65% of the funding to cover these costs. To help bridge this funding gap in Florida, as Governor I will propose a corporate tax incentive for projects that expand rail capacity. This will be available to all businesses that make capacity-enhancing rail investments, not only railroads themselves but also companies that install rail spurs connecting to their facilities. I am confident this proposal will also create jobs for Floridians.

- ***Increase in-state rail manufacturing and business in Florida***

Currently, there is no railroad manufacturing facility in Florida. A few component parts are created here, but the companies that manufacture these items, especially the high-speed rail components are largely European. We need to incentivize those companies to manufacture their products in Florida. In my Jobs and Economic Development plan, I proposed expanding Florida's Manufacturing Machinery and Equipment (MME) exemption. Currently, new and expanding businesses that will increase production by at least 10 percent are eligible for a tax exemption on the purchase of equipment. However, this benefit is not available for the replacement of equipment if that 10 percent threshold is not met. This outdated criterion, of requiring companies to demonstrate increased production to receive the tax exemption, is not imposed in other competitive states. Florida's partial exemption hinders growth and provides a disincentive for investment. As Governor, I will look to remove the 10 percent expansion requirement to increase Florida's competitiveness with other states and attract immediate capital investment. This proposal will lead to additional job creation in the manufacturing sector.

➤ **Bus & Rail Transit**

Improved mobility for all Floridians is paramount to our future. Florida is expected to grow to 25 million people by the year 2030, a 35% increase. As our current and future population ages, we must provide them an opportunity to use a different mode of transportation for their daily activities, other than the automobile. Transit use is continuing to increase a little over 3% statewide per year. Tri-Rail has seen ridership go up 23% from 2007 to 2008. Transportation Disadvantaged Services provided over 50 million trips as well in 2008. There is obviously a growing demand for those who cannot or choose not to drive a car every day. Florida must be a state that makes smart investments in transit operations and improvements so that our residents and visitors have an opportunity to be mobile as much as they desire. With improved mobility though, we must also ensure safety. A recent report has five Florida cities in the top 10 for pedestrian safety issues. This must be corrected. If we want to encourage people to use the bus or train, we have to provide them the infrastructure to get to the bus stop or the train station safely.

- ***Take a leadership role in federal-state projects to ensure affordable, viable results***

The federal government is dedicated to the creation of high speed rail projects. In Florida, projects have been proposed for areas around the state, most notably from Tampa to Orlando and Orlando to Miami. Commuter rail poses a great potential, but at great expense. Much of Florida's population, even in urban areas, is not dense, and this creates logistic challenges. For a modernizing state, public transportation is important. To move forward, federal, state and local governments have to work in unison. As Governor, I will ensure Florida is at the helm of planning and coordinating projects with federal programs, to ensure that the design of these programs are suitable, affordable, and self-sustaining for Florida's unique needs.

- ***Create bus rapid transit in urban areas throughout the state***

Bus rapid transit is a relatively new idea to America, but has been utilized in high-density areas of the world. The idea is that dedicated lanes can be created along existing surface roads within urban and suburban areas. These dedicated lanes are more cost effective than the creation of new urban commuter rail lines, and also help alleviate congestion for traditional commuters. Cities across Florida, including Miami, Tampa, Orlando, Sarasota, Bradenton, Jacksonville, and Gainesville are all currently planning these types of systems. We must turn these concepts into real projects to recapture more federal transit tax dollars going to other states. As Governor, I will work with communities to help align projects across county and city lines, to ensure more interconnected options for passengers, and will work with the private sector to develop funding possibilities for these systems.