

Project Brief || CENTRAL BROWARD TRANSIT

resulting from the Alternatives Analysis described above.

Broward County MPO 2025 LRTP - The Broward County MPO first defined a county-wide network of premium transit, and express and local bus services in its 2025 LRTP Transit Element. This Element recommends transit improvements within the Central Broward study area which effectively defines the Proposed Action including “High Performance Transit” (HPT) service on I-595 from 136th Street to US 1, a central circulator loop from the Tri-Rail station at Broward Boulevard through downtown Fort Lauderdale to the beaches, and HPT services between the airport and the CBD.

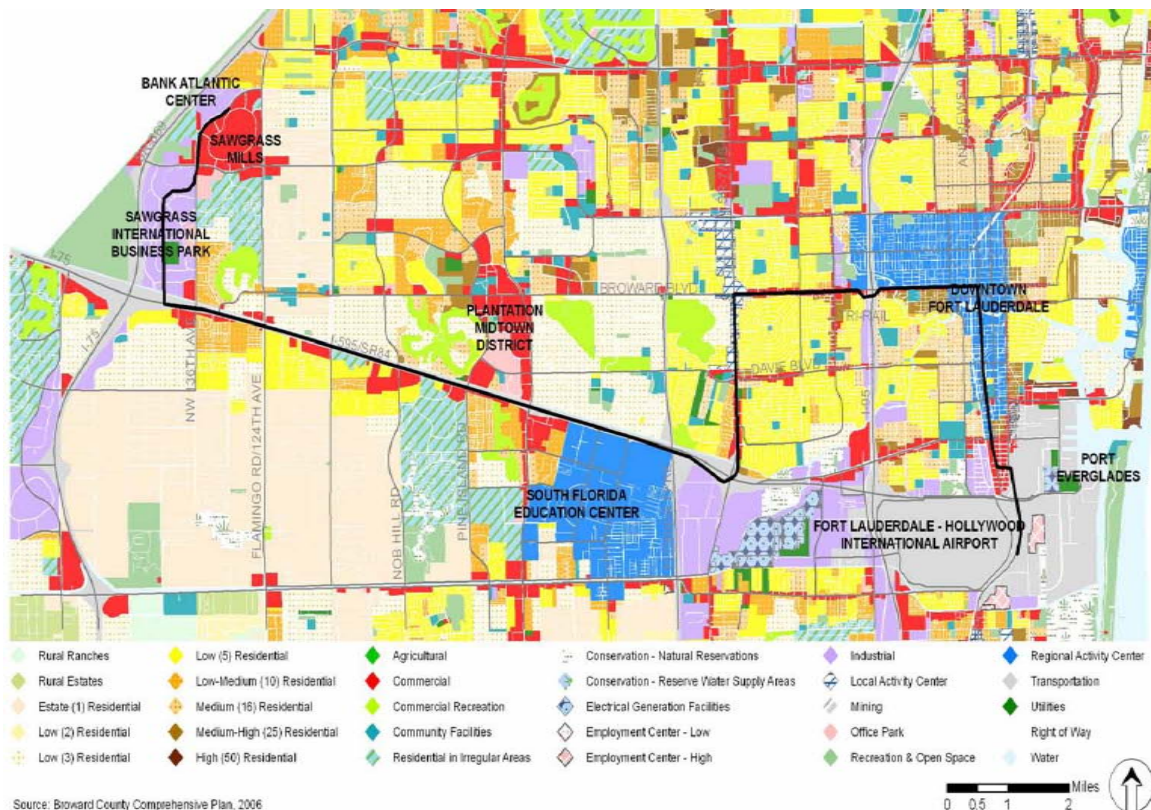
Broward County MPO LRTP Year 2030 Update - Identifies the Proposed Action in its Transit Element. It builds upon the previous plan by emphasizing non-automobile modes of transportation. Through this Plan, the MPO recognizes that it is impossible to keep expanding roads to meet the future travel demand

and that a wider range of mobility options are needed.

Broward Boulevard Studies – Numerous studies of Broward Boulevard between I-95 and the Ft. Lauderdale CBD have been conducted beginning in the early 1980’s. This corridor is a segment of the Proposed Action. These studies include the *Fort Lauderdale People Mover Feasibility Study*, *Broward Boulevard Multimodal Corridor Study*, and *Downtown Fort Lauderdale Connection Study*.

Study Area

The Central Broward East-West Corridor is located in the central portion of Broward County and extends approximately 21 miles from Sawgrass Mills / Bank Atlantic Center east to the Fort Lauderdale - Hollywood International Airport. The study area boundaries include Oakland Park Boulevard, the Weston-Sawgrass area, Griffin Road, and the Intracoastal Waterway.



Interstate 595 (I-595) currently serves the majority of the east-west travel demand in the corridor, carrying more than 185,000 vehicles daily. I-595 opened to traffic in 1989 as the only limited access east-west freeway in Broward County, connecting the rapidly

developing residential suburbs in the western portion of the county with the downtown/port/airport area and I-95 which acts as the transportation spine for southeast Florida. The result is a heavily congested corridor suffering from deteriorating reliability and safety.

Problems and Needs that Motivate Major Transit Consideration

Growth in Broward County and the region is anticipated to continue unabated for the next 25 years, with a 50 percent increase projected. The western suburbs continue to be desirable to families looking for larger homes and good schools, while the employment heart remains in the eastern portion, linked to downtown Fort Lauderdale, the airport and seaport. Travel demand on I-595 is expected to exceed 300,000 vehicles per day by 2030. The master plan for the corridor includes the addition of tolled reversible express lanes which will consume the remaining right-of-way, yet will still not meet the anticipated traffic demand. Also, the existing transportation system in the Fort Lauderdale area cannot accommodate continued growth in vehicular demand without extensive condemnations.

A consistent understanding has developed among stakeholders over the past decade or so that the only way to accommodate travel demand associated with continued growth in Central Broward County and its economy is by providing high-speed, high-capacity, reliable transit service. Given the nature of this corridor, it is essential that such a service be supported by a comprehensive program of park-and-

ride facilities, feeder buses and pedestrian connections.

The project need reflects the following conditions:

- **Rapid population and employment growth** - Broward County has experienced rapid population growth, with an average rate of 7.5 percent annually from 1920 to 2000 and now ranks 15th in the nation's most populous counties. This growth is anticipated to continue through 2030, although at a lower rate, with the addition of a half million new people. Employment is also expected to increase by 45 percent in this timeframe.
- **County's largest activity Centers** – Broward County's largest trip generators are located in the project study area. These include Downtown Ft. Lauderdale, the South Florida Education Center (SFEC) with 45,000 students daily, Sawgrass Mills - the world's largest outlet mall, two corporate parks, and the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport (FLL). These travel markets attract a significant

portion of all travel to and within the study area, yet are largely dependent on automobile travel for access.

- **Increased development densities and change in development patterns** – Due to increasing land values, eastern Broward County is redeveloping to higher densities. As this occurs, the Central Broward corridor will grow in population density 25 percent more than the county average. In addition, growth of primarily high-density residential and commercial developments in the western edge of Broward County, including redevelopment and in-fill developments within the study area is occurring. This on-going process has led to a growing need to accommodate east-west travel and provide more east-west mobility options.
- **Increased travel demand and congestion** – Roadways in the study corridor are at capacity and the three factors listed above will result in continuing deterioration in roadway level of service in central Broward County, underlining the need for premium transit service as an alternative means of travel in this corridor. Peak hour average travel speeds to the major travel markets in the study area are anticipated to deteriorate by as much as 75% by 2030. County-wide, vehicle hours delay is expected to increase by a

factor of eight¹. For example, I-595 has already surpassed its design capacity faster than originally projected. Average annual daily traffic (AADT) on I-595 is close to 200,000 today, and projected to exceed 300,000 in 2030. This illustrates the need to accommodate east-west travel demand and the need for alternatives to single occupant vehicle travel.

- **Limited capacity on existing east-west roadways** - I-595 is the only east-west limited access highway in Central Broward County. The other east-west roadways in the corridor are arterial streets with a maximum of six lanes, with opportunities to add capacity limited due to the built-out nature of abutting residential and commercial development. Adding lanes would result in extensive community disruption and high project costs. The limited capacity on east-west facilities emphasizes the need for new transit facilities and services as an alternative for single occupant vehicle travel.
- **Limited transit service options** – Right-of-way constraints in the corridor restrict current transit services to buses operating in mixed traffic, and therefore subject to the congestion delays experienced by automobile

¹ Broward MPO, 2030 Long Range Transportation Plan Update- SAFETEA-LU Compliance, July 2007

traffic. In order to sustain economic growth in the county, which supports downtown Fort Lauderdale, the airport and the seaport will require investment in premium transit services with significant capacity and high reliable speeds that compete favorably with automobile travel.

- **Air quality** - Increasing population and employment in Broward County is expected to increase Vehicles Miles Traveled (VMT) which would in turn increase vehicle emissions. The implementation of a premium transit system as described in the 2030 LRTP would contribute to the reduction in VMT and vehicle emissions, consistent with the Motor Vehicle Emissions Budgets (MVEB).

Goals

The Central Broward East-West Transit system would improve east-west mobility in Broward County in a way that is feasible in terms of engineering and public acceptance, that minimizes environmental impact, and that is cost effective and ultimately eligible for federal funding.

The goals and objectives of the project are based on the goals and objectives of the Broward MPO's 2030 Long-Range Transportation Plan and reflect the FTA's "New Starts" evaluation criteria. The study's goals are:

- **Travel and Mobility Goal:** Provide a "premium transit"

improvement that enhances east-west mobility in central Broward County.

- **Financial Goal:** Provide a "premium transit" improvement that most efficiently uses available financial resources.
- **Economic Goal:** Provide a "premium transit" improvement that supports economic growth and development.
- **Community Goal:** Provide a "premium transit" improvement that is consistent with the needs and desires of the residents of Broward County, in order to maximize community acceptance and support.
- **Land Use Goal:** Provide a "premium transit" improvement that ensures compatibility between land use policies and transit service so that the need for trip-making and the amount of travel is reduced and the opportunities for transit-oriented development are maximized.
- **Environmental Goal:** Provide a "premium transit" improvement that enhances and preserves the social and physical environment, and that keeps potential impacts to sensitive resources to a

Evaluation Measures

The Alternatives Analysis evaluated the four alternatives that were evaluated during a Tier 1 evaluation

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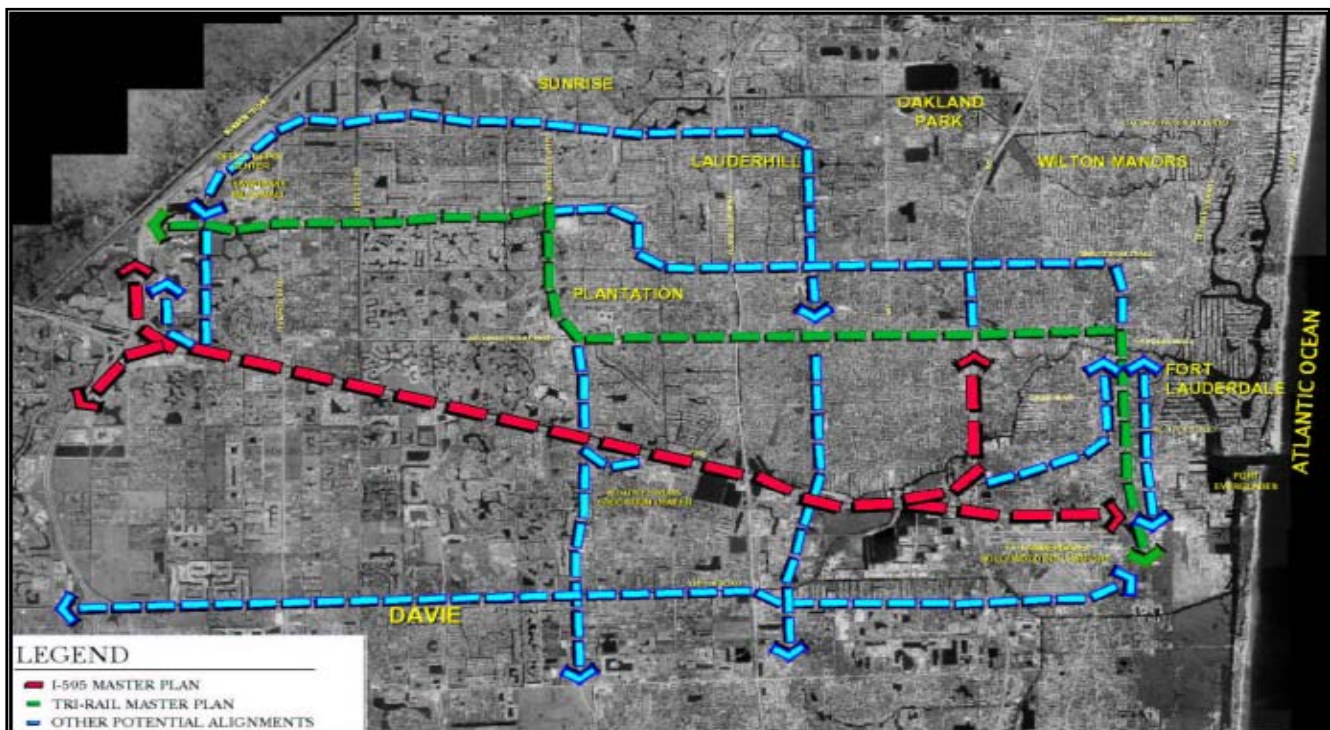
in greater detail. Seventeen (17) criteria were used to evaluate the Tier 2 build alternatives. These criteria were designed to respond to the seven stated goals: maximize potential ridership, minimize costs, potential eligibility for “New Starts” approval, system connectivity, maximize service to minority and transit dependent populations, promote economic development, and minimize the potential for environmental impact.

Alternatives Considered

The Initial Alternative Analysis phase identified a large number of alignment alternatives and technologies that were identified by

evaluation criteria that reflect issues raised during the project’s Initial Alternative Analysis Scoping process and also reflect, to some degree, evaluation criteria used by the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). The initial set of alignments that were ranked most highly focused on two “sub-corridors” - Sunrise/Broward and the I-595 right-of-way, and appeared to achieve different goals - urban design/transit oriented development versus congestion relief, respectively.

Results of the initial screening process recommended the use of bus rapid transit (BRT) or Light Rail Transit (LRT) technologies and identified a number of alignment



Initial Alternative Analysis Options

previous studies and through rigorous agency and public meetings.

These alternatives were evaluated and screened using wide-ranging

alternatives to be carried forward.

The Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) is the construction of a light rail line that provides service from the Sunrise/Sawgrass area to

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Adopted Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA)

Downtown Fort Lauderdale and the Fort Lauderdale/Hollywood International Airport Intermodal Center.

The alignment begins at the Sawgrass Mills/Bank Atlantic Center and travels south to I-595 through the Sawgrass Business Park. The alignment runs east on I-595, providing service to the South Florida Education Center, and then turns north on SR 7. At Broward Boulevard, the alignment turns east to Downtown Fort Lauderdale. In

Downtown, the alignment heads south on Andrews Avenue to 30th Avenue, where it turns east to US-1. The alignment follows US-1 south to the proposed Fort Lauderdale/Hollywood International Airport Intermodal Center.

Trains would operate at six minute headways in the morning and afternoon peak periods; 15 minute headways in the off-peak periods. Hours of operation would be similar to existing BCT operations; generally from 5:30 a.m. to 11:00 p.m.