

2012-2015 FPTA Strategic Plan



Florida Public Transportation Association

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About FPTA

The Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA) is a nonprofit association whose members include major public transit agencies in Florida, as well as interested citizens and businesses. FPTA's membership is composed of numerous fixed route and Paratransit systems, a commuter railroad, a heavy-rail commuter system, and two people mover systems. FPTA was incorporated in 1974 and the previous mission of FPTA is to fulfill the following objectives:

- To provide a forum for public transit service providers and affiliated organizations to exchange experiences, studies and to engage in meaningful discussion of mutual problems, concerns and issues.
- To foster the improvement of public transportation in the state by promoting the beneficial use of research and factual study.
- To act as a collective voice in promoting the recognition, use, expansion and enhancement of public transportation in the state.
- To elicit cooperation efforts among member agencies, their employees, agents and customers, along with the general public to pursue and achieve common interests.
- To represent the interests of member agencies, individually or collectively, in forums appropriate for the prosecution, enforcement or defense of issues of interest to those members.
- To receive and apply funds for the achievement and furtherance of organizational purposes and objectives, including levying, assessing, charging and collecting dues from the membership of the Association.
- To acquire, hold and own land, facilities, equipment and furnishings and do all things necessary and incident to carrying out the organizational purposes and objectives.

The Executive Committee was tasked with creating new Mission and Vision Statements. A special meeting was held on October 22, 2012 to discuss and create new Mission and Vision Statements. They are:

MISSION STATEMENT – To continuously support improved public transportation in Florida through advocacy, innovation, education, and partnerships.

VISION STATEMENT – Through the support of innovative public transportation and transit-supported land use, improve the quality of life in Florida.



About the Plan

Introduction

The Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA) represents collective member interests for improving mobility throughout the State of Florida. FPTA efforts have included legislative coordination, public education, and raising awareness of various issues and opportunities to improve our quality of life and economic development. These efforts can have a pronounced impact on local concerns and future benefits to all transportation agencies. In order to determine the future direction of the FPTA, FPTA solicited local agency representation and involvement during our Strategic Planning Session, which was held on May 10-11, 2012 in Vero Beach, Florida.

The timing of this Strategic Plan is critical, as numerous major changes have occurred both at the administrative level of FPTA, as well as on the ground with many transportation agencies here in Florida. After 31 years of dedicated service, the Executive Director of FPTA retired and his replacement began her tenure in February 2012. Further, with the continued economic crisis, the changing thought process of the younger generation, and the focus on energy independence and environmental awareness, ridership has soared across the State. The demand and importance of transit services at the local level is unprecedented and this allows FPTA the opportunity to further innovate and expand on the services that are provided to members.

Strategic Planning Process

Several methods of obtaining input were conducted to ensure a broad spectrum of the FPTA membership base had an opportunity to provide feedback. The process involved the following:

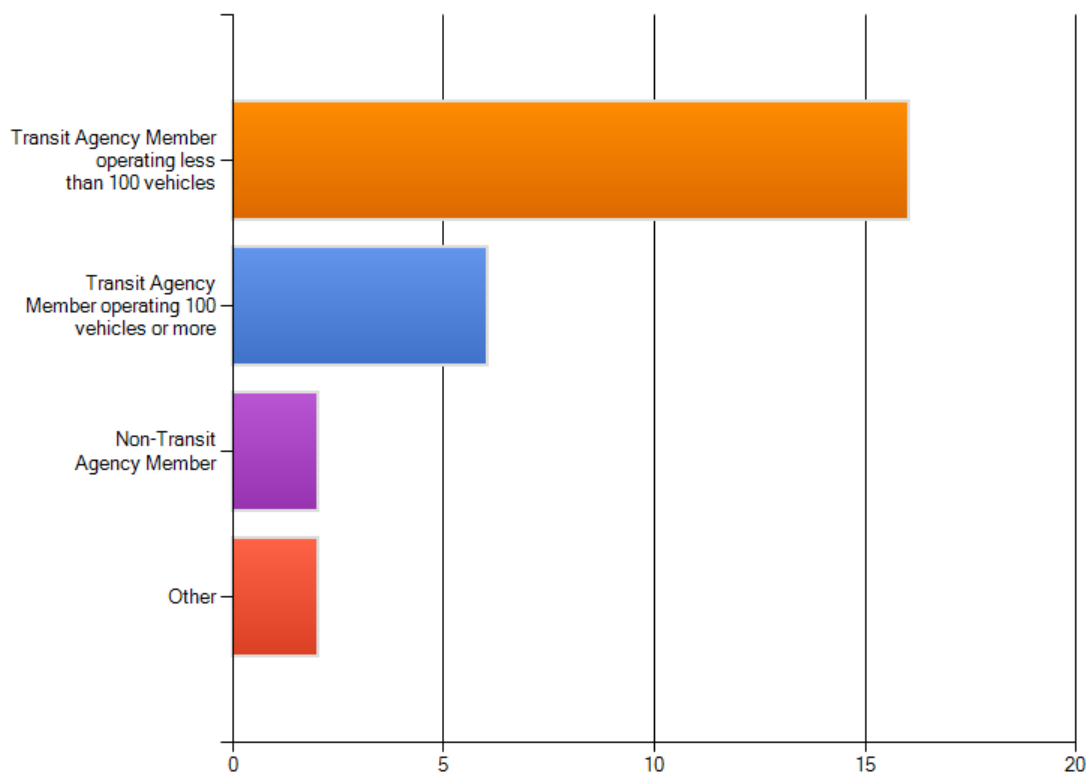
- **A web-based Membership Survey to collect information on the Needs and Mission of FPTA. All FPTA Board Members were sent this survey instrument for completion.**
- **One-on-one interviews with current FPTA Leadership, Past Chairpersons, and Ex-Officio Members.**
- **Attendance at a two-day meeting held in Vero Beach, Florida.**
- **Development of a 2012-2015 FPTA Strategic Plan**

The outcome of the Strategic Planning process was to develop overall strategic goals and priorities for FPTA, as well as the creation of a detailed plan to achieve them.

Membership Survey

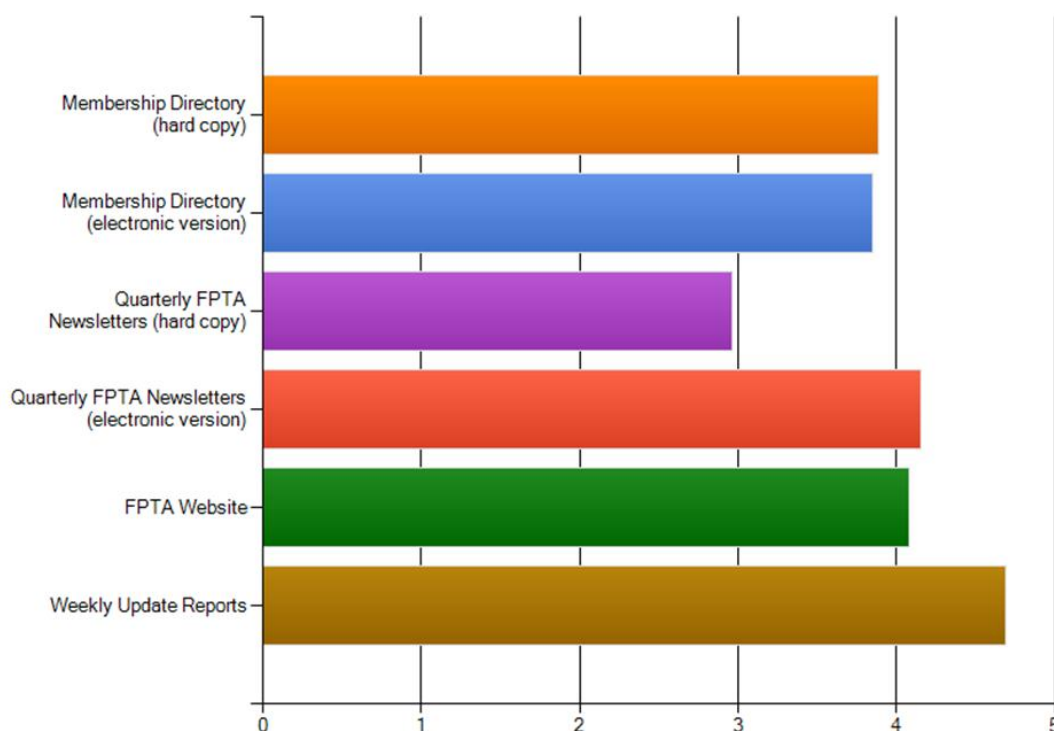
All FPTA board members were sent a web-based Membership Survey in preparation of the Strategic Planning Session. This survey was designed to gather some base information on the existing FPTA member's thoughts, perceptions and views on the organization. Twenty-seven (27) members (or 75%) completed at least a portion of the survey. Of the members who responded, the majority were from transit agencies operating less than 100 vehicles (61.5%), with 23.1% operating 100 vehicles or more. In addition, several non-transit agency members/other completed the survey; this would include either the two voting Business Class Members or the Ex-Officio Members of FPTA.

Type of FPTA Board Member who Completed the Web-Based Survey



FPTA currently utilizes several approaches to communicate with its members and others. Each FPTA Board Member was asked to score each of the main communication methods of FPTA on a scale from 1 to 5, with 1 being not as effective and 5 being very effective. The methods of communication that scored the highest were the FPTA Weekly Update Reports (73.1% ranked these as “very effective”) provided by the Executive Director and the electronic version of the Quarterly Newsletter (50.0% ranked these as “very effective”). Other methods of communication, such as the hard copy version of Membership Directory also ranked fairly highly (44.4% ranked this as “very effective”).

Scoring of FPTA’s Current Communication Methods

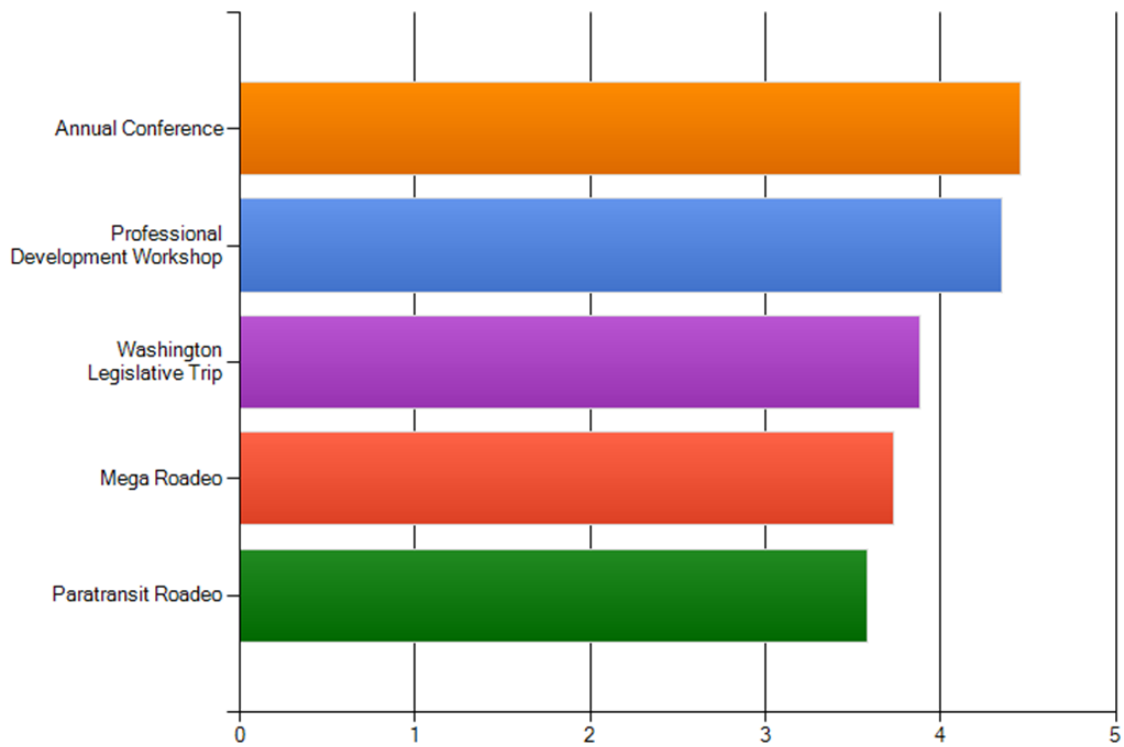


Some additional suggestions were made regarding if other means of communication should be utilized by FPTA, they were as follows:

- Improve the communication with the private sector on the role of FPTA.
- Hold occasional teleconferences.
- Create web alerts for last minute incidents, events, or legislative activities that require immediate attention.
- Create an FPTA “app” for smart phones or other hand-held devices.
- Utilize Twitter, Facebook and other social media.
- Create instant messaging alerts.
- Conduct email blasts on critical issues.
- When Members ask for information, share that information on the FPTA website.
- Create Listservs among transit managers at various levels to allow continuous, day-to-day opportunities for communication and information sharing.

FPTA currently conducts or helps coordinate several activities/events for the Florida public transit community. The FPTA Members were asked to score each activity/event as to whether the event is beneficial, with a score of 5 being very beneficial and 1 being the least beneficial. The events that scored the highest were the Annual Conference (61.5% rated this event as “very beneficial”) and the Professional Development Workshop (61.5% also rated this event as “very beneficial”). Other activities/events that FPTA plans or coordinates were ranked fairly highly.

The Benefits of FPTA Activities/Events

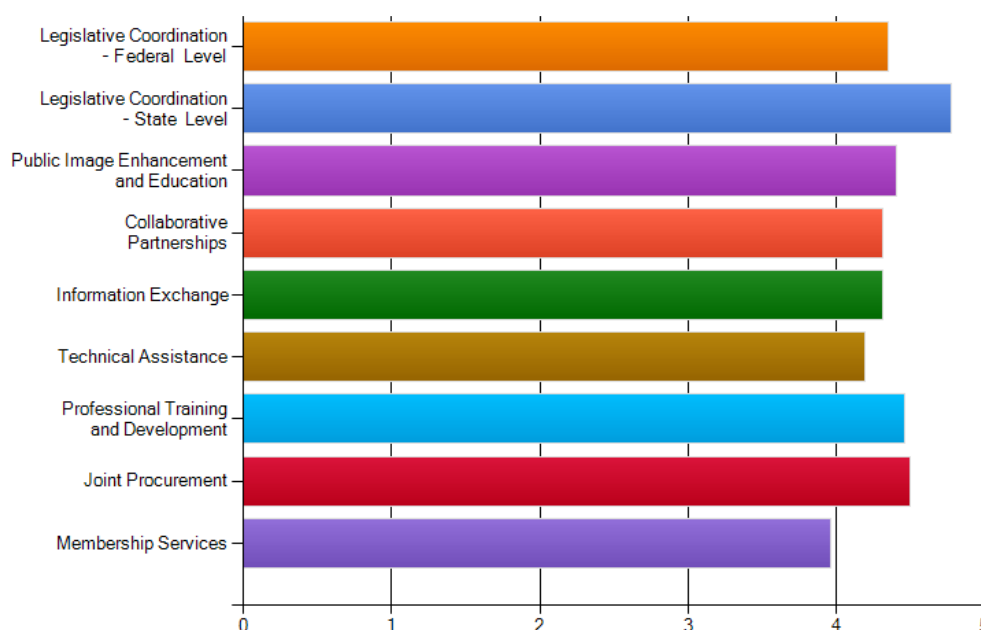


FPTA Members were asked to provide any other activities or events that FPTA should host or be involved with. Several recommendations were made:

- Visit the various counties to hear the concerns of the users of the systems.
- Visit the transit agencies Executive Board meeting to introduce the new Executive Director and to help the board understand the benefits of FPTA.
- Network with Georgia, North Carolina or other southeastern states to share ideas and training opportunities.
- Provide internships and training opportunities.
- Participate in the Florida Commuter Choices Summit/CTD Annual Meeting.
- Hold an Annual Legislative Day in Tallahassee.
- Invite Union leadership representing drivers and mechanics to events.
- More involvement with FTA and FDOT.
- Have FPTA be a guest speaker at local transit events and attend meetings with state and federal officials around the state.
- Statewide procurement of materials and supplies.
- Assist any group who would like to establish a transit-supportive coalition in their community.

As an organization, FPTA has been involved in a number of activities and functions. The FPTA Members were asked to rank each activity as being very important to not important. Three activities rose to the top of the list: Legislative Coordination at the State Level (76.9% ranked as the “very important”), Joint Procurement (65.4% ranked this as “very important”) and Professional Training and Development (53.8% rated this as “very important”).

Scoring Results of FPTA Activities and Functions



Several other open-ended questions were asked of the FPTA Members regarding any other suggestions or advice to improve the focus or effectiveness of FPTA. The suggestions were as follows:

- Increase the educational opportunities for this in the legislature to participate in visiting the counties they serve and possibly attend LCB meetings.
- FPTA should expand its reach to include middle managers and others seeking to build their resumes, learn new skills, and become more valuable to their organizations for job advancement.
- Continue to support agencies at the local level.
- Show more “mojo” in Tallahassee.
- Accomplish one statewide initiative each year as an industry.
- Improve relationship with FDOT and FTA.
- Hold the quarterly meetings at Transit Authorities around the state with the host agency sharing its accomplishments and its challenges.
- Keep a library on the FPTA web site for information or presentations.
- Aggressive communication.
- More roundtable discussions of what is going on in each member’s community in terms of transit developments at Board meetings and at conferences.
- Consider inviting more representatives of organized labor to its conferences, and perhaps a roundtable discussion of issues.
- Create a Legislator of the Year Award and try to get more legislators to attend the FPTA annual meeting.

One-on-One Interviews

Ten (10) interviews were conducted of current FPTA Leadership, past Chair Persons, and Ex-Officio Members. These individuals were asked a series of questions in order to:

- Understand Stakeholder’s Vision and Values regarding Public Transportation
- Obtain Opinions and Perceptions on FPTA Priorities, Issues, and Opportunities
- Discover stakeholder needs and expectations of FPTA.

This one-on-one survey consisted of fourteen (14) questions related to General Issues & Perceptions, the Value & Image of FPTA, and the Development of FPTA. The questions were summarized into common issues and key words to determine if a theme was present. The paragraphs below will highlight the topic area, the question asked, and the Common Themes and Key Words for each question of the survey.

General Issues & Perceptions: Please provide your assessment of Public Transportation in Florida, what is its status, what is its role, its challenges?

Common Themes:

Importance and Role has come a long way in Florida; urban/urbanizing/rural challenges; Underfunded, Underserved; Service design issues (existing services mostly designed for captive riders); limited markets served; land-use design issues; need to expand service types; Public Transit role as an important component of the Transportation system is still in transition; Still remains auto centric perspective; Service is utilized more than most people realize; Land Use development and Transportation Policy not connected.

Key Words:

- Important
- Under-served
- Unfunded
- Limited
- Transition
- Auto-centric
- Not Connected (with Land Use Policy)

General Issues & Perceptions: What are the perceptions about Public Transportation in your area? Are there different perceptions by different groups?

Common Themes:

General view of transit just for dependent market; perceptions improving especially among younger generations; Migration from other areas where transit existed is a positive force for Public Transit development in Florida; Perception is exceptional in this location as system has blossomed; urbanized areas more aware on need for Public Transit; Definitely different perceptions by market, level of service and community environment; strong support from the disabled market; need service vs. no new taxes; economic benefits realized.

Key Words

- Low, Medium, Low-end of High
- Innovative
- Effective
- Strong Positive (disabled market)
- Dependent Market
- Need
- Exceptional
- Improving

General Issues & Perceptions: In order to be successful, what type of support does your organization need?

Common Themes:

Business support; Regionalism/Organization; Money; Land-use coordination; need to prove good stewardship of public funds; need to be efficient and responsible; Citizen and Political support is essential; Legislative support, training, supply and equipment availability; Partnerships Chamber; local government; MPO's; FDOT.

Key Words

- Regionalism
- Coordination
- Efficient
- Responsible
- More \$\$\$

FPTA Value and Image: What do you think is the value of the Florida Public Transportation Association?

Common Themes:

Partnerships; bringing common individuals together; big picture; networking; important forum for providing and sharing issues and ideas; Key Forum for Public Transit Directors/Leadership; has been less valuable in Lobbying - needs to improve this; Beneficial to staff learning / training; camaraderie; FPTA can be very powerful tool, was more important in past; mutual assistance; need to voice transit role as Partner for sustainability; reduced burden of buying equipment; value of training; FDOT partnership and communications.

Key Words

- Important
- Leadership
- Beneficial
- Powerful
- Big Picture
- Training
- Camaraderie

FPTA Value and Image: What has your experience been with FPTA?

Common Themes:

Outstanding; Positive experience; Sharing of issues and ideas; Not lived up to potential; can move forward and increase value; extremely satisfied; valuable relationships; phenomenal; positive mentoring,

Key Words

- Outstanding
- Positive
- Live up
- Increase Potential
- Extremely Satisfied
- Phenomenal

- Mentoring

FPTA Value and Image: What's good about FPTA? What would you list as the greatest strengths of FPTA?

Common Themes:

Networking! Networking! Individual Commitments and positive Group dynamics; ability to speak with one voice; fostering of relationships among members; sharing ideas; camaraderie; member participation; FPTA coordination for earmarks; provide awareness of FTA/FDOT issues; lobbying; sharing resources; training; collective strength; need to tell the story in more venues,

Key Words

- Networking
- Commitments
- Positive Dynamics
- Sharing
- Coordination
- Training
- Collective Strength

FPTA Value and Image: Does FPTA need to do more? Less? Just keep on doing what it does?

Common Themes:

Build more partnerships; support Public Transit image and role of addressing community livability and sustainability goals; greater involvement with National level and APTA; greater focus on communicating and awareness of issues to legislators; support coordination among urban, urbanizing, rural; Nurture more local groups for support; Need better organization and content of Board meetings.

Key Words

- More Partnerships

- Better Political Relations
- Livability
- Sustainability
- Coordination
- Urban / Rural / Urbanizing
- Not Less

FPTA Value and Image: What type of image does FPTA have among members? Among others (e.g. Legislators, Officials, Other Associations)?

Common Themes:

No Image - Need to work on this; Wes was image, recent marketing has changed; APTA has respect for FPTA; Need to grow FTA Relationship; FACTS appreciates FPTA; Some Legislators know FPTA; don't think we have an image of "us"; other organizations don't view us, but other States recognize us thanks to relationship with FDOT; members have positive image of FPTA due to training and educational activities and awards; Could do better with other Associations.

Key Words

- No Image
- Need Work
- Positive Among Members
- Relationship with FDOT
- APTA Respect

FPTA Development: How do you "sell" or promote transit in your area? What is your message?

Common Themes:

Consistent; reliable service, efficient and effective; responsive; Sell as important component of Transportation System; Getting story out to press; social networks; community involvement; message of access to work,

school, sell to schools, business leaders, citizen group, churches, retirement centers, etc.; transit is Green; environmental benefits; meet with passengers; e-mails; FPTA presence at the local level needed; advocate through local press and media outlets; sell as increasingly important component of entire transportation system.

Key Words

- Reliable
- Efficient
- Transit Story
- Community
- Groups
- Green
- Environment
- Important

FPTA Development: What do you consider to be common among transit agencies in Florida? Different?

Common Themes:

More Commonality than difference; need more funding; have plans for funds; great passionate managers; professional talent in Florida; common interest in regionalism but organizational structure determines focus; all need personnel, drivers, mechanics; common paratransit issues; need technology; union issues; training issues; all moving people; difference in politics, business, perceptions; difference relates to scale and greater need in more urbanized areas; different modal mix.

Key Words

- More Common
- Need Funding
- Agency Size / Structure
- Paratransit

- Personnel Needs
- Union
- Urbanized / Rural

FPTA Development: What should be the purpose and role of the FPTA?

Common Themes:

Advocacy; serve as united Spokesperson; role for education awareness; internal role for networking and professional development; Provide insight to members of the big picture looking outward to customers and partners as well as looking inward for skills, tools, defining needs and strategies; Help exchange information; Get Money for Transit; coordinate between agencies for improvements; Facilitate National/Federal level; address how we all together can meet needs; Lobby.

Key Words

- Advocacy
- Education / Awareness
- Big Picture
- Exchange
- Coordinate
- Communicate
- Facilitate
- Lobby

FPTA Development: Are there strategic alliances with other associations or interest groups that FPTA should develop?

Common Themes:

Universities; Urban Land Institute (ULI); CUTR; Senior Advocates; Healthcare Industry; Education Systems / Institutions; County/City associations; league of women voters; MPO's; RPC's; Chambers of Commerce; Trade

organizations; need to address relationships with paratransit systems as they are not part of FPTA; invite political participation with events.

Key Words

- ULI
- Partnerships
- Business
- Political Participation

Strategic Goals

The FPTA Members who were present at the Strategic Planning Session were presented the findings from the Web-Based Membership Survey and the One-on-One Interviews and discussed the highlights that were evident. This plan includes goals, objectives and strategies to assist with further innovating and expanding on the services that are provided by FPTA to its members.

The following five-year Strategic Goals were identified by FPTA Members in order to support our Mission of continuously supporting improved public transportation in Florida through advocacy, innovation, education, and partnerships:

- **Strategic Goal #1:** Improve the Image/Brand/Awareness of FPTA (Advocacy, Innovation, Education, and Partnerships)
- **Strategic Goal #2:** Improve the Advocacy Efforts and Grassroots Support of FPTA (Advocacy and Partnerships)
- **Strategic Goal #3:** Improve Transit System Participation at FPTA Events (Innovation and Education)
- **Strategic Goal #4:** Define Potential Partners and Involve/Add other Groups to Improve our Relationships (Advocacy and Partnerships)

Strategic Goal #1:

1.0 Improve the Image/Brand/Awareness of FPTA

Objective 1.1: Develop/Update a Communication Plan to improve the image/brand of FPTA.

Strategy 1.1.1: Review and update the FPTA Communication and Education Plan developed by Clear Light Communications, dated January 12, 2010.

Strategy 1.1.2: Implement the FPTA Communication and Education Plan.

Objective 1.2: Improve the relationship with FTA and FDOT to improve the image of FPTA.

Strategy 1.2.1: Chairman and Executive Director should meet with the DOT Secretary annually.

Strategy 1.2.2: Executive Director should meet with FDOT staff on a more frequent basis.

Strategy 1.2.3: Invite the FTA Region IV Administrator and their staff to FPTA events.

Strategy 1.2.4: Coordinate activities or training sessions with FTA and FDOT, as appropriate.

Objective 1.3: Increase the Awareness of FPTA

Strategy 1.3.1: Utilize social media to increase the awareness of FPTA, including updating the IM4 Transit Facebook and Twitter Pages weekly.

Strategy 1.3.2.: Increase participation in state and federal conferences.

Strategy 1.3.3: Hold a Public Transit Legislative Day/Board Meeting in Tallahassee and increase educational opportunities for Legislators to be exposed to FPTA.

Strategy 1.3.4: Rotate the quarterly meetings to different Transit Agencies.

Strategy 1.3.5: Increase communication and participation internally to FPTA Members and also externally to gain more awareness and support of FPTA.

Strategy 1.3.6: Create a statewide event that all systems participate in to increase awareness of FPTA and transit in Florida.

Strategic Goal #2:

2.0 Improve the Advocacy and Grassroots Efforts of FPTA

Objective 2.1: Increase presence at the Capital.

Strategy 2.1.1: The Executive Director should meet with Legislators, Legislative Staff, and Stakeholder Associations on a regular basis.

Strategy 2.1.2: Form a coalition that consists of organizations and companies that support transit.

Strategy 2.1.3: Hold a Public Transit Legislative Day in Tallahassee.

Objective 2.2: Utilize social media to improve the communication efforts and assist with legislative initiatives and grassroots support.

Strategy: 2.2.1: Increase postings on both IM4 Transit's Facebook and Twitter pages.

Strategy: 2.2.2: Utilize social media to send legislative alerts.

Strategic Goal #3:

3.0 Improve Transit System Participation at FPTA Events

Objective 3.1: Increase communication to FPTA Members to ensure knowledge and awareness of FPTA Meetings/Events.

Strategy 3.1.1: Develop a weekly communication method, with a "Save the Date" section.

Strategy 3.1.2: Develop a New Member Orientation to gain involvement and knowledge of FPTA from new General Managers.

Strategy 3.1.3.: Ensure website is kept up-to-date with upcoming Meetings and Events.

Strategy 3.1.4: In order to keep participation high, encourage a guest speaker at each board meeting that would interest everyone.

Strategy 3.1.5: Ensure the board meetings are more accessible via technology (webinars, video conferencing, etc.).

Strategic Goal #4:

4.0 Define Potential Partners and Involve/Add other Groups to Improve our Relationships

Objective 4.1: Add additional FPTA Ex-Officio Members to increase improve our relationships.

Strategy 4.1.1: The Executive Committee will review recommended Ex-Officio Members, including, but not limited to, the Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council and Floridian's for Better Transportation.

Objective 4.2: Increase the Membership to FPTA

Strategy 4.2.1: Approach all Community Transportation Coordinators who are not receiving 5307 dollars to consider joining FPTA.

Strategy 4.2.2: Fill the three (3) voting Tier IV Members on the FPTA Board of Directors.

Strategy 4.2.3: Increase the Business Class Membership to FPTA.

Strategy 4.2.4: Create an "Associate" member of FPTA (such as MPO's, local governments, Chambers of Commerce, etc.) and begin recruitment.