

## **ARRA Experience:**

# Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization

Miami, Florida • [www.miamidade.gov/MPO/](http://www.miamidade.gov/MPO/)  
305.375.4507 (t) • 305.375.4950 (f)

*The Miami-Dade Metropolitan Planning Organization (Miami-Dade MPO) serves the Miami Urbanized Area, and has a continuing, cooperative and comprehensive transportation planning process that results in plans and programs that consider all transportation modes and support metropolitan community development and social goals.*

*Did your state include you in ARRA discussions? Were you briefed, given up-to-date information and kept aware of the opportunities for your organization(s) and members (i.e. local governments)? Please describe your overall experience on ARRA coordination with your state.*

The Florida State Department of Transportation (FDOT) included the Miami-Dade MPO in a number of discussions regarding ARRA. We had numerous phone calls, two meetings, and attended a video conference at FDOT District VI with FDOT Central Office on the subject. Along with District VI we held a joint briefing for municipal and county transportation agencies to better prepare them to submit qualified projects for ARRA funding. An official from FDOT Central Office attended one of the MPO Governing Board Meetings to brief Board Members on the ARRA and the latest information, funding figures and proportions expected for the state, the MPO and local governments. The MPO assisted FDOT District VI with qualifying Surface Transportation Program projects. The MPO had contacted municipalities and requested project lists, prior to the coordination with the state, in anticipation of stimulus funding availability and in coordination with our County Executive Office and the County's Office of Intergovernmental Affairs.



There was almost no information available on funding municipal transit projects and Miami-Dade Transit (MDT) had to call FHWA directly to receive assistance. It is possible that there were not many MPOs which voted to provide 20 percent of the area's transit ARRA funding to local governments. We participated in a workshop held by MDT for municipalities on ARRA requirements.

*What types of outreach/educational tools did your organization use or is using for ARRA? Please describe any website, public outreach, surveys, email blasts, newsletters, social networking tools, etc. that you may have used and if it was effective.*

Miami-Dade MPO sent multiple letters and e-mails to all 34 municipalities in the county and all county transportation agencies. We also have an ARRA feature on our website with current information, including links as well as expected local funding distributions and projects, for municipalities and agencies. Four of the MPO Governing Board meetings had ARRA items on their agenda and the agendas have very wide surface and e-mail distributions. The meetings are webcast and broadcast on local cable access stations. We also invited all municipalities and transportation agencies to a joint workshop held by the MPO and FDOT District VI (see answer to question 2 above). All meetings were very well attended and all other outreach methods were effective.

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*Please describe the ARRA funding or tax initiatives your organization or member local governments are directly receiving or involved with.*

Though the Miami-Dade MPO solicited projects for stimulus funding, the funding for the Surface Transportation Program (STP) and the Transportation Enhancements Program (TEP) will be administered in our area by our district office of FDOT. The municipal and county transit projects are being applied for and will be administered by the MDT, the local recipient of 5307 and 5309 FTA funds. Again, the MPO solicited the projects and provided them to MDT.

*How is your organization or member local governments tracking all of the ARRA opportunities? How will you meet the reporting requirements of ARRA if you receive funding?*

The MPO has been tracking all the county and municipal the projects approved by the MPO Governing Board and submitted by staff to FDOT, and comparing that list with the FDOT's lists submitted to FHWA and FTA. We expect that the individual agencies and municipalities will keep their own records for surface transportation projects and submit them to FDOT District VI which will report to FHWA. In the case of transit projects, the same will be done with MDT which will report to FTA.

*Are you or have you been in contact with your Congressional delegation? If so, please describe the context of this correspondence, which offices you reached out to and what staff you contacted.*

Yes. Our Office of Intergovernmental Affairs (OIA) has been in contact with our Congressional delegation. The OIA has a presence both locally and in Washington.

***Please share any relevant details of your ARRA experience. Your story is important in measuring progress and overall success!***

The MPO found that managing multiple communications and multiple solicitations and the responses from 34 municipalities and other transportation agencies with at first hundreds of projects, was very time consuming. Most of the questions required individual responses and attention to individual projects. The fact that project requirements were issued at different times, and that information on municipal transit projects was received later, added to the work and time involved.