

TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

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TRANSPORTATION ELEMENT

I. TRANSPORTATION

A. CHANGES IN TRANSPORTATION AND RECENT REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVES

1. Gulf of Mexico Drive (GMD)/State Road (SR) 789 (GMD (SR 789)) Functional Classification Change

Federal law and guidelines require that the Federal Functional Classification of Roadways be updated after the U.S. Census, every ten years. The purpose of the update is to recognize the context change of the urban boundaries for transportation planning. The Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) District One initiated a study that analyzed the existing Functional Classification for each state roadway within the district. In April 2004, the Sarasota-Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) approved the re-designation of GMD (SR 789) from Minor Arterial to Urban Collector.

2. Senate Bill (SB) 360

Approved by the Florida Legislature in 2005, SB 360 made significant changes to transportation, including the introduction of the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS). The SIS was developed, in part, to respond to transportation weaknesses to the state's strategic resources, including roadways that access airport and port facilities. The resulting impact to the local state road system is that projects that have been on the MPO's Five Year Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP), such as the widening of US 301 from downtown Sarasota to University Parkway were removed. The SIS also brings a new funding formula. Roads that are part of the SIS system garner 75% of funding through the MPO. All of the remaining roads must split the remaining 25%. The only SIS/Emerging SIS roadways in Manatee and Sarasota counties are University Parkway (connects Sarasota/Bradenton International Airport to I-75), US 41 (from I-275 to Port Manatee), and I-75. GMD (SR 789) is not a SIS designated facility.

3. Regional Initiatives

The implementation of local government comprehensive plans regarding transportation—including road corridor designations, project priorities, right-of-way acquisition, and construction has become, over the last decade, more difficult to achieve, due to reduced federal and state funding and increased right-of-way and construction costs. These funding reductions have been exacerbated by the national and state recession beginning in 2006 and continuing with increasing negative effects to federal, state and local revenues. Two regional organizations formed recently to encourage greater transportation funding will continue to be monitored by the Town for their impacts to the Town.

a. South Tampa Bay Area Transportation Partnerships (STARTUPS)

The South Tampa Bay Area Transportation Partnerships is a privately funded regional coalition established in 2004 by the Manatee and Sarasota Chambers of Commerce to ensure that the region receives additional transportation revenues in order to maintain a

strong economy and exceptional quality of life. The organization has enlisted the support of a team of transportation experts and initiated a comprehensive, long-term effort to ensure that the region has a strong and unified voice on transportation issues at the local, state, and federal level. Membership includes a broad base of business and community leaders working together for a common goal.

b. Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA)

The Tampa Bay Area Regional Transportation Authority (TBARTA), approved by the Florida Legislature during the 2007 session (SB 506), is authorized to finance, plan, construct, operate, and maintain certain transit facilities and multimodal transportation systems and facilities. The authority may issue revenue bonds to finance authority projects. TBARTA became effective July 1, 2007, and includes the following counties: Sarasota, Manatee, Hillsborough, Pinellas, Pasco, Citrus, and Hernando. A portion of the bill creating the authority also authorized \$1 million in start-up funds, which were vetoed by the Governor Crist before the legislation became effective.

4. 2011 Florida Community Planning Act.

The 2011 state legislative amendments to Florida's Growth Management Act significantly changed the comprehensive planning law. The Community Planning Act ("Act"), among other things, reduced the state role in local transportation planning by focusing state FDOT plan review and comment on the adverse impacts on "transportation resources and facilities of state importance." Those resources and facilities are not further defined by the Act. Likewise, Regional Planning Councils are limited in review and comment to the adverse effects on regional resources or facilities in the Strategic Regional Policy Plan, and extra-jurisdictional impacts inconsistent with the comprehensive plan of any affected local government in the region. Local governments also are no longer required to adopt FDOT level of service standards for state roads. Notably, local governments no longer are required to have transportation concurrency systems, and rescission of an existing transportation concurrency system is not subject to state review. Further, there is no longer a requirement that local governments adopt mobility strategies or a mobility plan to support and fund mobility.

B. GULF OF MEXICO DRIVE (SR 789) CONGESTION MANAGEMENT, INCLUDING ON AND OFF ISLAND

The Town's 2005 Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) identified congestion management on GMD, on and off island, as a major issue. The Town sought cooperation with the Cities of Sarasota and Bradenton Beach, as well as Manatee and Sarasota Counties to fund a study that identified off-island congestion points and recommended remedies. In June 2007, the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) completed the study entitled *Development of Effective Strategies to Alleviate Traffic Congestion for the Barrier Islands*, and presented its findings and recommendations to the Town Commission. The Town Commission directed the Town Manager and the Mayor to meet with the affected local governments to discuss the study results and to identify future improvements that are mutually agreeable.

CUTR based their findings and recommendations on information collected for the congested areas of Gulf Drive between Bridge Street and SR 684 (north of the Town limits) and St. Armands Circle (south of the Town limits). The data was collected during the peak hour (3:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m.) peak season (March 9, 2007) and consisted of turning movement counts, roadway geometry, signal timing, drawbridge operations, pedestrian activity, parking maneuvers, queuing data, and travel time. The data collection and analysis is found within the study. A summary of the findings and recommendations is below.

1. St. Armands Circle Congestion

Major causes of congestion in St. Armands Circle are: heavy traffic volume during peak hours and tourist season; heavy pedestrian and parking activities; motorists who are unfamiliar with traffic circles/roundabouts; and, lack of clear striping and signage at various locations.

The recommended strategies include: installation of a signal at the intersection at John Ringling Boulevard and Adams Drive; a bypass that would route traffic one block northbound on Adams Drive and one block westbound on Madison Drive, rejoining John Ringling Parkway. (When warranted, signalize the intersection at Madison and John Ringling Parkway.) According to the analyses, this by-pass could result in a reduction of northbound and eastbound traffic entering/exiting St. Armands Circle by 30-40% with an overall reduction in travel time by 17%. Commercial vehicles and trucks would continue to use the Circle. Although this is a significant reduction and a benefit for pass-through traffic, any changes to the existing configuration or routing will need the cooperation of the City of Sarasota, the St. Armands merchants, and the residential neighbors. A second recommendation is to add pavement markings or repaint faded pavement markings, particularly on the north leg. The City of Sarasota implemented a plan for the beautification of the Circle. The project will include lane channelization on the north side. CUTR recommended that pavement markings also be added to guide motorists.

2. Gulf Drive, SR 684 (Cortez Road)/Bridge Street Congestion

For the Gulf Drive, SR 684 (Cortez Road)/Bridge Street area, CUTR collected data for turning movement, bridge operations, road geometrics, signage, and pedestrian activity during the peak hour, peak season. A summary of the findings and recommendations is below.

Major causes of congestion near the area of Gulf Drive and Cortez Road/Bridge Street are: heavy traffic volume during peak hours and tourist season; SR 684 (Cortez Road) drawbridge operational impacts; and inadequate capacity at the Gulf Drive/Bridge Street mini-roundabout. The issue of the drawbridge opening frequency was resolved in February 2007, when the US Coast Guard reduced the bridge openings during the season, which helped to alleviate back-ups.

The recommended strategy is to add an additional northbound lane on Gulf Drive, starting at Bridge Street and extending through the mini-roundabout, ending with an exclusive eastbound turn onto SR 684. Implementing this recommendation would require minor geometric, signage, and striping modifications to the mini-roundabout. The CUTR study indicated that additional right-of-way would be needed. According to the analyses, the overall travel time would be reduced by 26% and the vehicle delay

would be reduced by 60%. As shown, substantial improvements can be realized through these projects, however, their implementation and success would require intergovernmental cooperation and coordination. The Town has continued to work with adjacent jurisdictions to try to alleviate the congestion problems created by the off-island bottlenecks, but little progress had been made in achieving a consensus on a fundable solution.

At the same time, little funding has been available and few realistic alternatives for the widening of Gulf of Mexico Drive are available to relieve the congestion that accumulates on the Drive. However, traffic congestion has been reduced due to an extended national and local economic downturn and a reduction in the seasonal peak functional population. Thus, the Town anticipates that minimal additional congestion on Gulf of Mexico Drive, other than at the bridges, will continue into the near future.

C. EXISTING TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM

The Town has an existing permanent resident population of approximately 7,633 and a peak seasonal population of 9,456 for a functional population of approximately 17,089. The Town is situated in both Manatee and Sarasota Counties and is located on a barrier island, which is bordered by Sarasota Bay on the east and the Gulf of Mexico on the west.

The only major transportation route through the Town is GMD (SR 789), whose functional classification is an Urban Collector. The typical cross section of GMD, which runs north to south through the island, is a two-lane rural road, with a bicycle lane in each direction. Left-turn lanes and right-turn deceleration and acceleration lanes are provided at some locations. There are two signalized intersections on GMD: at the intersection of Longboat Club Road; at the southern end of the Town; and, at the intersection of Bay Isles Parkway, approximately three miles north. Since these intersections are located over three miles apart, the roadway typically operates as an uninterrupted flow facility. GMD is part of the state highway system and is expected to remain under state jurisdiction. Figure 1, Existing Transportation System, illustrates the existing classification, laneage, and general Level of Service (LOS) for GMD through the Town. All other roadways within the Town are classified as urban local streets. Traffic on these streets is limited to low-volume residential use. There is an eight-foot wide multi-use pathway that run on the east side of GMD, from the New Pass Bridge north to Broadway, to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle traffic. There is also a sidewalk that has been constructed intermittently along the west side of GMD.

The Town is accessed from the south by New Pass Bridge, a bascule bridge connecting the Town to Lido Key/St. Armands Circle. New Pass Bridge has one travel lane in each direction, a center refuge lane, and one 10-foot shoulder outside of each travel lane. The bridge is designed to accommodate four travel lanes, two in each direction, if needed. Longboat Pass Bridge, a two-lane bascule bridge, connects the Town with the City of Bradenton Beach on Anna Maria Island to the north. Both bridges connect to secondary roads to the mainland. These routes eventually lead to major regional facilities, including I-75, US 41, and US 301. The major facilities provide regional access to the Cities of Bradenton and Tampa to the north, and the Cities of Sarasota, Fort Myers, and Naples to the south. Presently, no limited access facilities, ports, airports, rail lines, and related facilities exist or are planned in the Town.

D. TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM CONDITIONS

The only GMD capacity-related improvements made to GMD since 1995 are the lengthening of deceleration lanes at Harbourside Drive (northbound) and an eastbound turn lane at Buttonwood Drive (southbound). The Town received MPO approval for various GMD intersection improvements in the Country Club Shores area. However, significant stormwater costs arose during the initial design phase and the Town Commission determined that the costs outweighed the projected benefits. FDOT has indicated that no additional capacity-related improvements are scheduled for GMD in the next five years. FDOT resurfaced GMD (SR 789) in 2009 and 2010.

Table 1 provides a comparison between 1995 and 2006 Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes from FDOT count stations. The count stations are located at the south end, the county line (approximately mid-key) and the north end of the key. These volumes were obtained from the FDOT. As the table indicates, traffic volume along GMD has decreased. The cumulative change at the south end of the Town, near Longboat Club Road, is an approximate 24% reduction. The mid-section change at the county line, is an approximate 32% reduction, and at the north end, near Binnacle Point Drive, is an approximate 34% reduction. Although the data indicates an overall decline, peak season traffic on- and off-island continues to create congestion at both access bridges.

1. Level of Service (LOS)

In April 2004, the Sarasota-Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization approved the re-designation of GMD (SR 789) from Minor Arterial to Urban Collector. According to John Czerepak, FDOT's Growth Management Coordinator at that time, the Town will not be penalized for funding by the redesignation. Czerepak indicated that FDOT methodology for calculating level of service for the section of GMD (SR 789) is the Urban Arterial methodology.

As shown in Tables 2 and 3, the LOS of a roadway can be categorized into six classifications. Each LOS classification is given a letter designation, from A to F, with LOS A representing the best operating condition and LOS F the worst. Table 4 provides a general definition of LOS and a description of each LOS classification. For GMD (SR 789), the minimum acceptable LOS standard during peak-season, peak-hour conditions is LOS E. This standard was based on FDOT's updated operating level of service standards for the state highway system as indicated in the FDOT LOS Manual. It is not used as a standard for the Town transportation concurrency system.

Based on the LOS criteria in Tables 2 and 3, the 2006 traffic conditions for GMD were analyzed. This analysis was conducted in several steps. First, the 2006 AADT volumes, as shown in Table 1, were converted to peak-hour volumes by the Sarasota-Manatee MPO staff using the FDOT planning methodology for peak season, peak hour volumes. The peak-season, peak-hour traffic volumes were both compared to the LOS criteria found in Tables 2 and 3. Table 5 identifies the results of this analysis for 2006 traffic conditions. As indicated in Table 5, all sections of GMD operate at LOS C or better during the peak hour of the peak travel season.

**TABLE 1
COMPARISON OF 1995 AND 2006 AADT TRAFFIC VOLUMES
GULF OF MEXICO DRIVE (SR 789) – TOWN OF LONGBOAT KEY**

GMD Location	AADT 1995	AADT 2000	AADT 2006	Total Percent Change 1995-2006	Average Annual Percent Change
Longboat Club Road	18,500	17,000 *	14,100	-23.7%	-1.98%
Manatee-Sarasota County Line	14,000	12,200	9,500	-32.1%	-2.68%
Binnacle Point Drive	13,000	n/a	8,500	-34.6%	-2.88%

* Count station formerly located at GMD/Putting Green Lane

Source: 1996 Adopted Comprehensive Plan Data & Analysis; FDOT, 2004; FDOT Website, July 10, 2007

**TABLE 2
LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) CRITERIA FOR PEAK-HOUR
TWO-WAY ON ROADWAY**

Letter	Traffic Volume Vehicles Per Hour Two Way
A	0 - 810
B	811 - 1,270
C	1,271 - 1,720
D	1,721 - 2,260
E	2,261 - 3,010
F	>3,010

Source: FDOT LOS Manual, 2002.

**TABLE 3
LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) CRITERIA FOR PEAK-HOUR
PEAK DIRECTION ON ROADWAY**

Letter	Traffic Volume Vehicles Per Hour One Direction
A	0 - 460
B	461 - 720
C	721 - 980
D	981 - 1,280
E	1,281 - 1,710
F	>1,710

Source: FDOT LOS Manual, 2002.

**TABLE 4
LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS) DESCRIPTIONS**

General Definition of LOS: The ability of a maximum number of vehicles to pass over a given section of roadway or through an intersection during a specified time period, while maintaining a given operating condition.

Letter	Description of LOS Classifications
A	Describes primarily free-flow operations at average travel speeds, usually about 90 percent of the free-flow speed for the arterial classification. Vehicles are completely unimpeded in their ability to maneuver within the traffic stream. Stopped delay at signalized intersections is minimal.
B	Represents reasonable unimpeded operations at average travel speeds, usually about 70 percent of the free-flow speed for the arterial classification. The ability to maneuver within the traffic stream is only slightly restricted and stopped delays are not bothersome. Drivers are not generally subjected to appreciable tension.
C	Represents stable operations; however, ability to maneuver within the traffic stream and change lanes in midblock locations may be more restricted than at LOS B, and longer queues, adverse signal coordination, or both may contribute to lower average travel speeds of about 50 percent of the average free-flow speed for the arterial classification. Motorists will experience appreciable tension while driving.
D	Borders on a range in which small increases in flow may cause substantial increases in delay and hence decreases in arterial speed. LOS D may be due to adverse signal progression, inappropriate signal timing, high volumes, or some combination of these factors. Average travel speeds are about 40 percent of free-flow speed.
E	Characterized by significant delays and average travel speeds of one-third the free-flow speed or less. Such operations are caused by some combination of adverse progression, high signal density, high volumes, extensive delays at critical intersections, and inappropriate signal timing.
F	Characterizes arterial flow at extremely low speeds below one-third to one-fourth of the free-flow speed. Intersection congestion is likely at critical signalized locations, with high delays and extensive queuing. Adverse progression is frequently a contributor to this condition.

Source: Highway Capacity Manual, 1994.

TABLE 5
2006 TRAFFIC VOLUMES
GULF OF MEXICO DRIVE (SR 789), TOWN OF LONGBOAT KEY

GMD Location	2006 Traffic Volumes, AADT	2006 Peak-Season, Peak-Hour, Two-Way Traffic Volume LOS		2006 Peak-Season, Peak-Hour, Peak Direction Traffic Volume LOS	
Longboat Club Road	14,100	1488	C	818	C
Manatee-Sarasota County Line	9,500	1,003	B	551	B
Binnacle Point Drive	8,500	887	B	488	B

Sources: FDOT, 1996.

2. Accident Data

In addition to traffic volumes, accident data was obtained and analyzed for the most recent five-year period (2002 through 2006) for GMD from south of New Pass Bridge to north of Longboat Pass Bridge. The results of this analysis are summarized in Table 6. As indicated in Table 6, rear-end accidents were the most prevalent type of collision, with an average of five per year for this 10.5-mile-long segment of GMD. The annual average rear-end collisions for the prior reporting period - 1993 through 1995, was considerably higher at 13 rear-end average annual collisions. Following rear-end collisions, the bicycle and other classifications each had four annual average accidents. The “other” category included the following accident types:

MV sideswiped another MV,

MV collided with another MV on other roadway,

MV collided with moveable object on road,

MV ran into ditch/culvert, and

MV backed into another MV.

Collisions that averaged two per year include: right - or left-turns and collisions with fixed objects. The low accident rate for GMD can be attributed to adequate left- and right-turn storage lanes at major intersections and driveways, with the presence of the multi-purpose path completed along the east side of GMD and an nearly complete sidewalk system along the west side, as well as the addition of striped and marked bicycle lanes.

**TABLE 6
ACCIDENT DATA FOR GULF OF MEXICO DRIVE (SR 789), FROM SOUTH OF NEW PASS BRIDGE TO NORTH OF
LONGBOAT PASS BRIDGE, TOWN OF LONGBOAT KEY**

GMD Location	Year	Collision Type								Total Collisions	Total Traffic Fatalities	Total Injuries
		Head On	Rear End	Bicycle	Angle	Fixed Object	Right/Left Turn	Pedestrian	Other			
Longboat Pass Bridge To Gulf Bay Road (2.75 miles)	2002	0	1	2	3	3	1	0	3	13	0	9
	2003	0	3	1	0	1	0	0	2	7	0	5
	2004	0	2	2	0	0	4	0	1	9	1	8
	2005	1	0	2	2	2	0	0	0	7	0	5
	2006	0	1	2	0	1	2	0	0	6	0	7
	Total	1	7	9	5	7	7	0	6	42	1	34
Gulf Bay to Manatee/Sarasota County Line (1.99 miles)	2002	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2003	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2004	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2005	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2006	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
	Total	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Manatee/Sarasota County Line to Harbourside Dr. (3.05 miles)	2002	0	3	2	0	0	0	0	2	7	0	3
	2003	0	2	4	0	2	0	0	1	9	0	9
	2004	0	2	4	0	1	0	0	2	9	0	9
	2005	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	1	3
	2006	1	1	0	2	0	1	2	3	10	0	9
	Total	1	9	11	2	3	1	2	8	37	1	33
Harbourside Dr. to New Pass Bridge (2.54 miles)	2002	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	2	0	1
	2003	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	2
	2004	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	9
	2005	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	2
	2006	0	4	0	0	1	1	0	2	8	0	6
	Total	1	7	1	0	1	1	0	5	16	0	20
Total Accident Types by Year	2002	0	5	4	3	3	1	0	6	22	0	13
	2003	0	5	5	0	3	0	0	5	18	0	16
	2004	0	4	7	0	1	4	0	3	19	1	26
	2005	2	3	3	2	2	0	0	0	12	1	10
	2006	2	6	3	2	2	4	0	5	26	0	24
	Total	4	23	22	7	11	9	2	19	97	2	89
	Yearly Average	1	5	4	1	2	2	0	4	19	0	18

Source: Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), July 2007

E. FUTURE TRAFFIC PROJECTIONS

The analysis of future traffic conditions was based on a relationship between projected trends provided by FDOT at its count stations and projected volumes on GMD from the Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) long-range transportation model for the Year 2035. The projections are divided into short- (2006-2010) and long- (2010-2035) range.

1. Short Range (2006-2010) Traffic Volume Projections

FDOT has developed the *FDOT Trend Macro* spreadsheet model to assist in modeling traffic trends. The model uses historical AADT information only to project future volumes and is fairly reliable for short-term projections. Utilizing FDOT's model for the 2006 to 2010 projections, a rate of change for each count station in terms of vehicles per year was determined by comparing the 1992 through 2006 actual volumes as collected at the count stations (Table 7). This methodology indicates that volumes will continue a general decline during the seven-year planning horizon, which is justified since the Town has undergone considerable conversion of higher density tourism properties redeveloped into lower density residential. Results of the traffic projection methodology, including the annual change in number of vehicles and projected percent change between 2006-2013, are identified in Table 8.

2. Long Range (2020-2035) Traffic Volume Projections

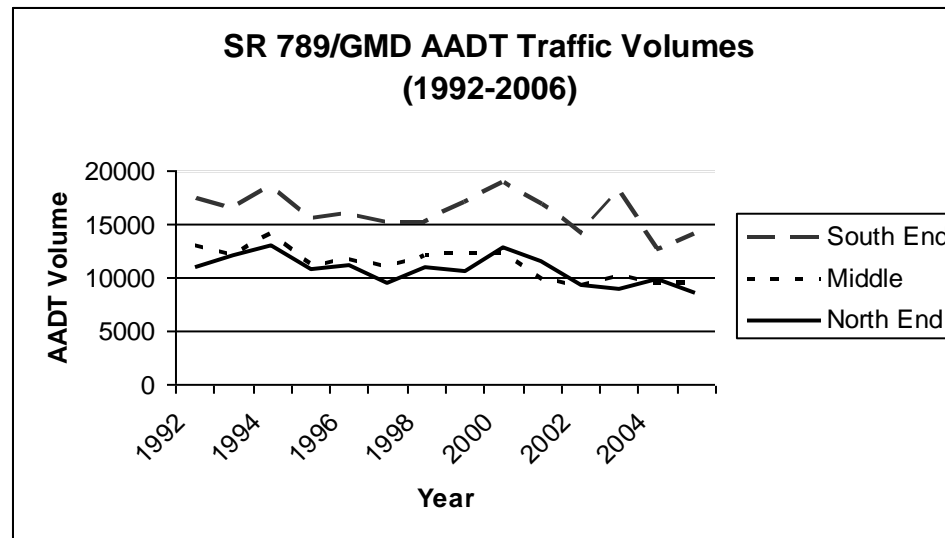
The MPO long-range model relies on socio-economic inputs and is generally the best source for projecting generalized long-term trends. The MPO model was developed for a large, two county region, and is "gravity-based", meaning that it distributes traffic across screen lines until the traffic is balanced. The MPO model is very useful for long-range planning, but is limited in its applicability to small areas, such as the Town, which is located at the "edge" of the model. The FDOT and MPO models are both constrained when it comes to projecting future traffic volumes on GMD (SR 789). Table 9 presents the peak season, peak hour, two-way, and peak season, peak hour directional LOS for 2010 and 2020. Based on the MPO model which is the current best available data, GMD is projected to operate well above the adopted LOS and will continue to do so through 2020. Table 10 presents the MPO AADT projections from the most recently adopted long-range plan through 2035.

As discussed above, using the MPO's long-range model to project volume for GMD (SR 789) is difficult due to the model limitations. Recent redevelopment trends have been to convert tourism units to residential units, resulting in the loss of 250 tourism units. As a consequence, and a consequence of demographic changes toward smaller unit occupancies, traffic volumes are lower. As shown on Table 10, the MPO long-range model for 2035 indicates that as a trend, AADT volumes will continue to decrease.

**TABLE 7
HISTORICAL AADT TRAFFIC COUNTS (1992-2006) GULF OF MEXICO DRIVE (SR 789)
TOWN OF LONGBOAT KEY**

GMD Location	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Longboat Club Road	15000	17400	16400	18500	15500	15900	15200	15200	17000	29900	16900	14000	18100	12600	14100
Sarasota/Manatee County Line	12000	12900	12100	14000	11200	11700	11100	12100	12200	12200	9900	9300	10200	9500	9500
Binnacle Point Drive	--	11000	12000	13000	10800	11200	9400	10900	10600	12700	11500	9200	8800	9800	8500

Source: FDOT Traffic Count Stations, MPO, July 2007.



**TABLE 8
2006 TRAFFIC VOLUMES, SHORT RANGE (2006-2013) AADT PROJECTIONS
UTILIZING FDOT MODEL, GULF OF MEXICO DRIVE (SR 789)
TOWN OF LONGBOAT KEY**

GMD Location	2006 AADT (Existing)	2013 AADT (Projected)	Projected Annual Change Vehicles	Projected Percent Change 2006-2013
South End	14,100	14,500	+57	+2%
Sarasota/Manatee County Line	9,500	8,050	-207	-15%
North End	8,500	8,000	-71	-6%

Source: FDOT District One, 2007.
Sarasota/Manatee MPO, 2007.

**TABLE 9
2010 AND 2020 AADT/PEAK SEASON VOLUMES AND PEAK HOUR
PEAK SEASON LEVEL OF SERVICE (LOS), GULF OF MEXICO DRIVE (SR 789)
TOWN OF LONGBOAT KEY**

GMD Location	2010 Traffic Volumes AADT	2010 Peak Season Volume	2010 Peak-Season, Peak-Hour, Two- Way Traffic LOS		2020 Traffic Volumes AADT	2020 Peak Season Volume	2020 Peak-Season, Peak-Hour, Peak Direction Traffic Volume LOS	
South End	14,800	16,444	1,562	D	13,600	15,111	1,436	C
Manatee- Sarasota County Line	8,700	9,666	918	B	6,200	6,888	654	B
North End	8,500	9,444	897	B	6,400	7,111	676	B

Source: FDOT and Sarasota/Manatee MPO, 2007

**TABLE 10
2030 AADT VOLUMES, GULF OF MEXICO DRIVE (SR 789)
TOWN OF LONGBOAT KEY**

GMD Location	2030 Traffic Volumes, AADT
South End	8,628
Manatee-Sarasota County Line	6,026
North End	7,198

Source: FDOT and Sarasota/Manatee MPO, 2007

F. PUBLIC TRANSIT

The Town is served by two public transit providers: Manatee County Area Transit (MCAT) and Sarasota County Area Transit (SCAT). In 1999, MCAT discontinued service to the Town. SCAT continued to provide service to the Holiday Inn (prior to its closing), where it turned around to reverse the route. In April 2002, a consulting firm retained by the Sarasota-Manatee MPO recommended connecting MCAT and SCAT into a seamless transit system to benefit the transit systems and riders. The seamless service was initiated in September 2006. An approved interlocal agreement between Sarasota and Manatee Counties addressed operational costs. The Town has no public transit terminals, public transit rights-of-way, exclusive public transit corridors, or significant parking facilities serving public transit.

1. Manatee County Area Transit (MCAT) Service

MCAT provides trolley service on Anna Maria Island from the City Pier, at the north end, to Coquina Beach, at the south end. Currently, the trolley runs on 20-minute headways throughout the day. After 9:00 p.m., the schedule changes to thirty-minute headways. The trolley is free and is popular with tourists. The trolley connects to mainland routes from MCAT's transfer station, located at Manatee County's public beach at the western terminus of SR 64 (Manatee Avenue). From the transfer station, riders may connect to Route 3 and Route 6, which connect to the main transfer station in downtown Bradenton. Route 3 travels SR 64 (Manatee Avenue) with hourly headways on weekdays and 90-minute headways on Sundays and holidays. Route 6 travels from Coquina Beach along SR 684 (Cortez Road), Monday through Saturday, on 60-minute headways. Both routes a highly urbanized area that offers a variety of shopping and medical services. Additionally, numerous residential neighborhoods are a short walk from these arterial roadways. The current fee structure is \$1.25 per person. The cost for seniors, persons with disabilities and children under the age of six is 75 cents. MCAT provides door-to-door paratransit (Handy Bus) service by appointment only for those people who qualify due to age, disability or other reasons.

2. Sarasota County Area Transit (SCAT) Service

Through the referenced interlocal agreement, SCAT's Route 18 provides service from the main transfer station in Downtown Sarasota, through St. Armands Circle and Longboat Key, ending at Manatee County's Coquina Beach. Numerous bus stops on Longboat Key are located along Gulf Of Mexico Drive. Headways from the downtown Sarasota transfer station are 60 minutes.

The SCAT downtown transfer station provides connections to all SCAT routes, including the Sarasota-Bradenton International Airport with seamless connections to MCAT, and the cities of Venice and North Port. The main station also provides connections to the Greyhound station. The current SCAT fee structure is \$1.25 cents for all riders except children. SCAT Plus is a paratransit service specifically for persons with disabilities. All eligible riders must be certified through SCAT. The current cost for SCAT Plus is \$2.50.

3. Planned Transit Improvements Relating to Longboat Key

The integration of seamless service between MCAT and SCAT represents a major service improvement. At this time, five-year transit development plans indicate no specific improvements planned for the Town. SCAT has completed the reconstruction of its main downtown Sarasota transit facility.

Both systems have a shelter program underway, although no specific shelters are scheduled for Town locations. SCAT's program uses advertising to pay the capital and maintenance costs for shelters with a general demand standard of ten boardings per day.

The 2002 MPO study referenced above recommended a water taxi system that would connect the Town with downtown Sarasota and downtown Bradenton. However, at this time, there are no capital plans that would implement the study recommendations.

4. Major Trip Generators and Attractors

The Sarasota County Comprehensive Plan's Transportation chapter identifies two major attractors on Longboat Key: Town Hall and the adjacent shopping area. SCAT Route 18, which serves the Town, stops at the shopping center. Manatee County's Comprehensive Plan does not indicate any major attractors in the Town.

5. Relationship of Public Transit Services to Land Use

The Key is spatially well served by public transit due to the linear form of the island, resulting in the development of most of the commercial, tourism, and higher density residential along GMD. In fact, there are very few areas of the Town that are not within quarter mile of transit service, and almost none beyond half mile. MCAT uses a quarter mile standard and SCAT a half mile standard for analysis purposes.

6. Ridership

With the recent seamless service connection between SCAT and MCAT, ridership on Route 18 has increased. SCAT indicates that average daily ridership has steadily grown from a September 2006 daily average of 190 passengers to a January 2007 average daily of 344 passengers, a 45% increase.

7. Transportation Demand Management Services Available

The Sarasota/Manatee Metropolitan Planning Organization promotes alternative transportation modes to avoid single occupancy vehicle use. The MPO provides a commuter assistance program to businesses and residents in Manatee, Sarasota, DeSoto, and Charlotte Counties.

The commuter assistance program has emphasized contracts with larger employers by offering alternative transportation advice and ridesharing coordination services. Contacts have been made with Longboat firms; however, due to the Town's relatively small employment base, and large retirement and seasonal population, efforts to promote ridesharing have been limited.

8. Effects of 2007 Florida Legislature Property Tax Reductions

The 2007 legislative session produced two significant requirements for local governments. In an effort to address the current inequities of the state tax structure, the first action requiring local governments to roll back their spending is already in force. The legislature also required all local governments to cap their budgets to last year's millage rates plus additional cuts - Manatee County is required to cut nine percent and Sarasota County is required to cut seven percent from their 2007-08 budgets. Transit fees are likely to be increased by both Manatee and Sarasota Counties.

The second action is a proposed "Super Exemption" for homeowners, which was approved by the voters in January 2008. The exemption further reduces property taxes, with adverse impacts to existing and planned transit services.

G. PORTS, AVIATION AND RAIL

There are no seaports, aviation, or rail facilities in the Town. The only seaport in the two county region is Port Manatee, located on Tampa Bay in the northern portion of Manatee County.

A main line of the CSX Railroad and U.S. 41 are both a few hundred feet from Port Manatee. The Port operates its own railroad that connects to the CSX line, and is expanding its intermodal terminal due to rail and highway facilities. Passenger rail service is not available in either Sarasota or Manatee Counties; however, Amtrak service is available in Tampa. Thruway bus service to the Tampa rail station is available between Sarasota and Bradenton. CSX transportation uses the existing Seaboard Coastline (SCL) railroad lines to provide freight service.

Sarasota/Bradenton International Airport is located on the mainland across the Bay from the Town. Public transit via SCAT is available to and from the airport to the Town, as identified in the Public Transit section. The airport is a major intermodal facility, and as noted in the Intergovernmental Coordination chapter of this Plan, the Town maintains continuous contact to ensure land use compatibility and mitigation of impacts to the Town.

H. MOBILITY PLANNING

The lack of suitable alternatives to the widening of Gulf of Mexico Drive to alleviate traffic congestion, and the unique linear configuration of the island point to the need and opportunity for a more comprehensive, multi-modal transportation system for the Town. The Town has chosen to pursue a mobility plan to help meet its future transportation needs, instead of relying upon a transportation concurrency system. The mobility plan will consider all available modes of transportation, including public transit, shuttle and circulator service, improved pedestrian and bicycle access, as well as traditional vehicle-based transportation and transportation improvements. At the same time, the Town will continue to require traffic impact analyses for development proposals, according to type of development, in order to manage the extent of development impacts on congestion, operations safety, efficient traffic flow and access to development sites and Gulf of Mexico Drive.

APPENDIX: FIGURE 1 – FUTURE TRANSPORTATION

