



Transportation Initiative Report Executive Summary

April 11, 2022

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Executive Summary

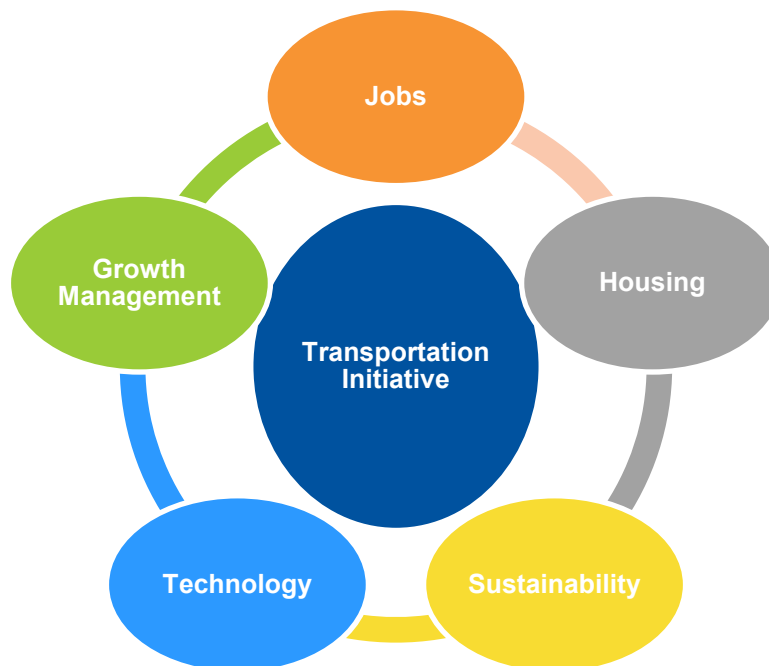
“It will be an economic driver that will create jobs, opportunities, and connectivity. It will be an evolutionary process that will be something going forward for decades. Our residents are frustrated by the current situation in Orange County. It is important they see themselves benefitting from this.”

– Orange County Mayor Jerry L. Demings at the January 25, 2022, Board of County Commissioners’ Transportation Initiative Work Session

Transportation Initiative Purpose

Transportation is at the core of quality-of-life issues because it connects us to so many different segments of our lives—housing and jobs, people and amenities, and sustainability (Figure ES-1). The transportation needs within Orange County are wide-ranging and represent a variety of services and infrastructure, such as trains and buses, highways and local streets, pedestrian and bicycle facilities, and lighting and technology. In conjunction with other County initiatives, such as Vision 2050 and Orange Code, Orange County’s Transportation Initiative aims to strengthen the connections within the public realm to improve its roadways, sidewalks, bike lanes, and the character of the community. The benefits of a strong transportation system affect each resident and must be distributed equitably.

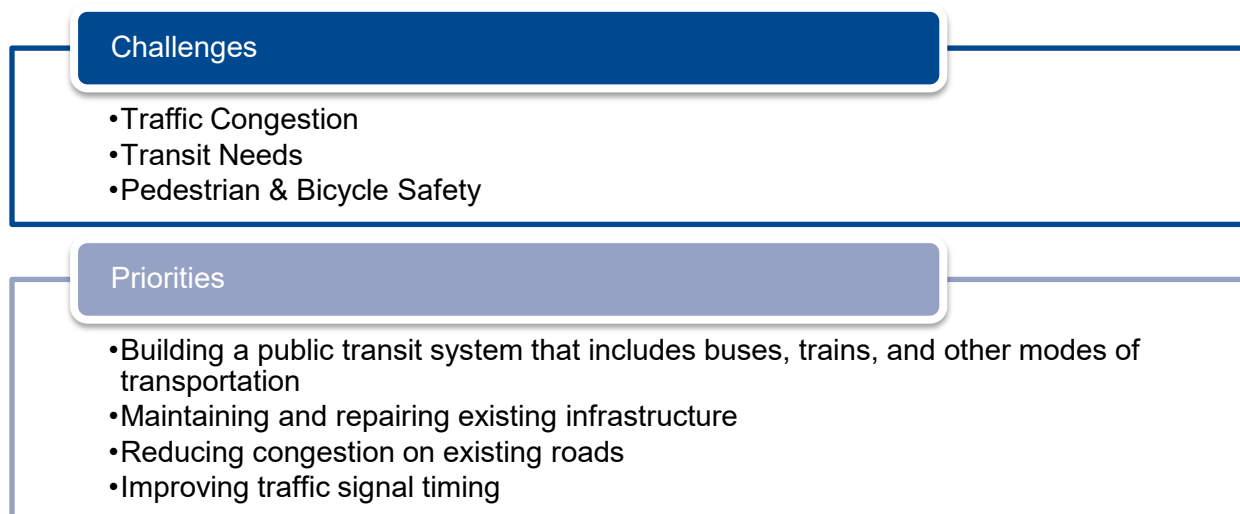
FIGURE ES-1. TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVE BENEFITS TO ORANGE COUNTY COMMUNITIES





Community engagement has been the foundation of the Transportation Initiative from its inception through April 2022—both to identify the communities’ transportation needs and to demonstrate how every individual can see the benefits of the transportation improvements. Feedback from the community engagement identified the top transportation challenges and priorities for improving transportation in Orange County shown in Figure ES-2.

FIGURE ES-2. TOP CHALLENGES AND PRIORITIES IDENTIFIED BY THE COMMUNITY



Addressing the Funding Gap

The County’s identified transportation needs are far greater than the current funding can address. As the County’s list of unfunded projects continues to grow, residents, visitors, and business owners will bear the cost of an inefficient, inequitable, and auto-centric transportation system if a new funding source is not applied.

To close the gap between identified needs and available funding, Orange County is proposing a one-cent sales tax that would be dedicated to transportation projects, infrastructure, technology, transit, and safety. The proposed surtax is projected to generate \$600 million annually¹ in County revenues, representing \$11.9 billion over 20 years.

This new revenue source could be applied to *both* Capital projects and Operations and Maintenance (O&M) expenditures, unlike existing funding sources that traditionally only fund capital improvements or specific types of improvements. Additionally, the surtax would provide the County with funds that could be used as matching funds to compete for federal grants, such as the ones made available in the Investment and Infrastructure Jobs Act (IIJA) increasing Orange County’s competitive advantage against other regions and counties.

¹ Based on Florida Department of Revenue- September 27, 2019



Transportation Needs

The Needs Assessment conducted for the Transportation Initiative identified transportation needs related to:

- Orange County Transportation Improvements
- Transit
- Municipalities

Orange County Transportation Improvements

Orange County's Transportation Improvements support a comprehensive approach to addressing deficiencies of the transportation system, which includes:

- Providing safe transportation for people of all abilities, at all times of the day, especially for vulnerable users and neighborhoods, and where there has been a history of crashes.
- Supporting communities, and the environment in each corridor.
- Enhancing connectivity to neighborhoods, communities, and regional places.
- Prioritizing underserved neighborhoods.
- Advancing the Comprehensive and Sustainability Plan.

The needs related to Orange County Transportation Improvements were categorized as Safety Improvements, Major Roadway Improvements, and Operations and Maintenance. Figure ES-3 illustrates what is included in each of the sub-categories and associated programs.

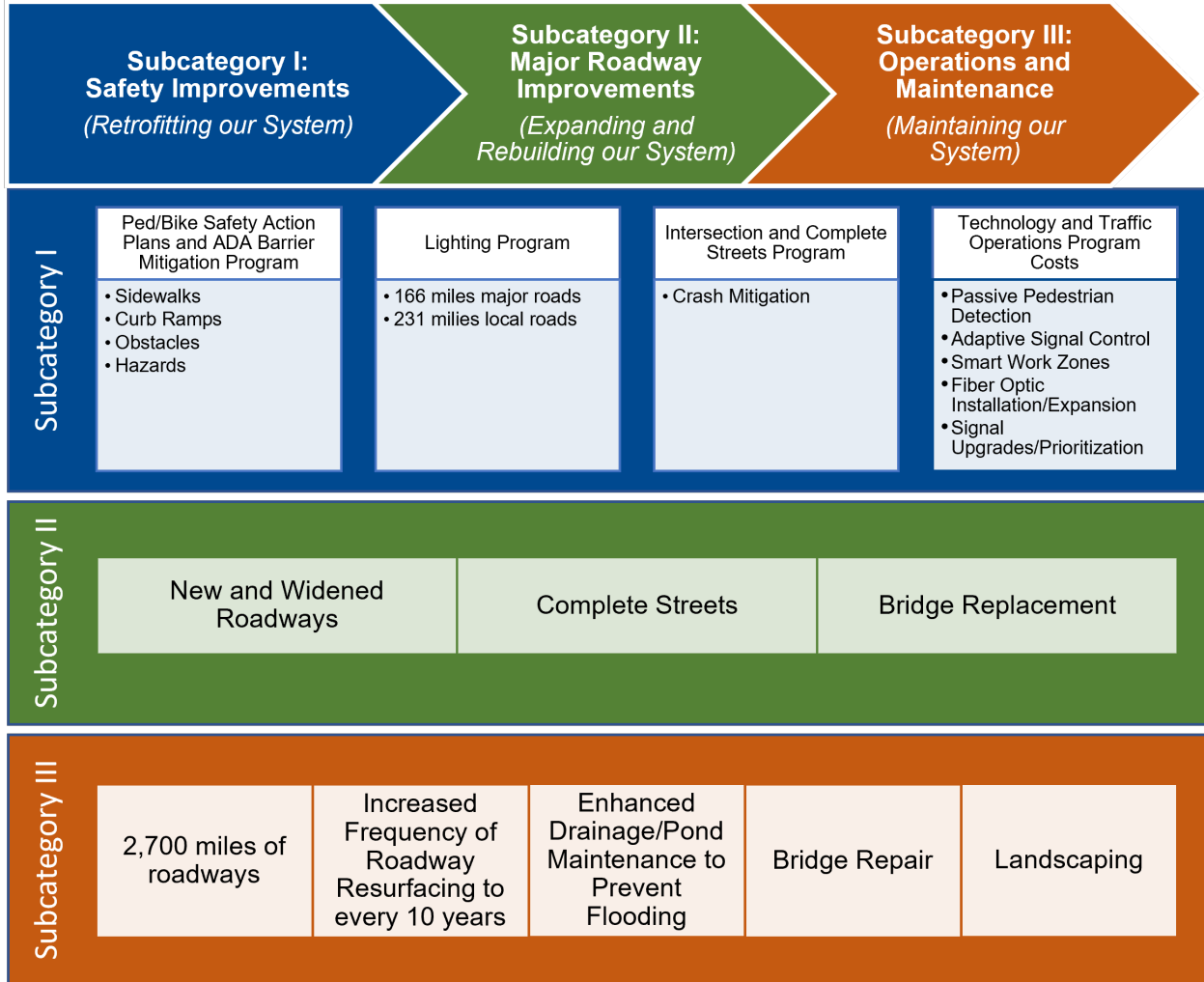
Safety Improvements. The identified safety projects are at specific intersections and included in corridor improvement projects guided by the County's Pedestrian Bike Safety Program which also includes four pedestrian bridges. Also, safety improvements included are part of the County's Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Transition Plan for the Public Rights-of-Way, lighting program, and technology and traffic operations program.

Major Roadway Improvements. Major Roadway Improvements were identified based on a review of projected travel demand for the entire roadway network on existing facilities and corridors that are planned for but not yet constructed. The improvements represent 154 miles of new and reconstructed roadways and 45 bridges that will need to be replaced over the next 20 years because they have reached their 50-year lifespan.

Operations and Maintenance. Operations and Maintenance needs are related to maintaining the County's roads and bridges, landscaping, and an additional 79 miles per year to account for roadway miles that may be added to the system within the 20-year period.



FIGURE ES-3. COUNTY TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENTS BY SUBCATEGORY



Transit

Currently, Central Florida has two mass transit service providers. The Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority, known as LYNX, operates the bus and paratransit systems. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) operates SunRail, the region’s commuter rail system.

Building upon the regional and county transit plans from 2018 and 2019, the 2022 Orange County Transit Plan is a needs-based plan with a focus on forecasted demand throughout the region over the next 20 to 30 years. The demographic and socioeconomic characteristics of Orange County residents, such as age, auto availability, income, and disability are used to identify areas in need of high levels of transit access. Travel patterns across all modes of travel compared against existing transit travel patterns highlights gaps in transit service relative to where residents and visitors are traveling. Long term plans also considered roadways, land use and future land development pattens that can inform where transit routes are necessary. This plan would not be complete without the input from our community through regular customer surveys and outreach activities.



The updated Transit Network includes a new route/service structure and nomenclature. The new route/service structure will consist of a layering of service types that will provide mobility options for a variety of trip lengths and purposes. These service types will address regional travel (longer trip length) while still providing first- and last-mile connections (short trip length) to neighborhoods, employment concentrations, and activity centers. The range of transit services provides access to less populated areas while still providing faster, higher frequency and direct connections between activity centers and areas with higher population and employment densities. Transfers between the transit service types and SunRail provide opportunities to traverse the system in a fast and efficient manner.

Eight service types define the future LYNX Orange County transit network:

- SunRail/commuter rail service,
- high frequency bus service,
- regional and commuter express bus service,
- local bus service,
- community / circulator bus,
- on-demand/flexible bus service,
- high-capacity corridor bus service, and
- complementary paratransit service.

The objective of this transit plan and network is to meet the needs of Orange County residents and visitors as well as provide an economic engine for years to come. Existing transit passengers will see their service options run more frequently, later in the evenings, and on the weekends. Meanwhile, opportunities will emerge for new riders to use transit for their mobility needs through an expansion of flexible, on-demand services and express routes connecting the region's major activity and employment centers. This plan lays the foundation for a multi-modal system that can move and grow with its residents. As the mobility needs of Orange County continue to evolve so will the transit network.

Municipalities

Orange County shares transportation and transit services with the many municipalities that reside within it. Collectively, the Cities and Towns within Orange County would be appropriated 10 percent of the Transportation Initiative surtax revenues, proportioned based on its population to address their local transportation needs.

Total Projected Costs of Transportation Needs

Table ES-1 summarizes the funded and unfunded transportation needs for Orange County, Transit (LYNX and SunRail), and Municipalities within Orange County. It also identifies the funds needed for program management and contingency reserves and the potential state and federal financial support through matching grants and agreements.



The total cost in today’s dollars for Orange County’s transportation-related needs over 20 years is approximately \$21.4 billion. The current Orange County 5-year Capital Improvement Program (CIP) would fund a projected \$1.3 billion over that timeframe, resulting in \$20.1 billion in unfunded needs.

Table ES-1. Summary of Projected Orange County Transportation Needs (20-year Horizon)

NEEDS TYPE	FUNDED	UNFUNDED	TOTAL PROJECTED
County Transportation Improvements	\$1,340,800,000	\$5,828,200,000	\$7,169,000,000
<i>Safety</i>	\$99,500,000	\$1,674,800,000	\$1,774,300,000
<i>Roadways</i>	\$701,300,000	\$3,100,500,000	\$3,801,800,000
<i>O&M</i>	\$540,000,000	\$1,052,900,000	\$1,592,900,000
Transit*	\$0	\$11,363,000,000	\$11,363,000,000
Municipal Partnerships Plans and Projects	\$0	\$1,799,700,000	\$1,799,700,000
Management & Contingency Reserves	\$0	\$863,700,000	\$863,700,000
State**	\$0	\$202,100,000	\$202,100,000
Total Projected Funding Needs	\$1,340,800,000	\$20,056,700,000	\$21,397,500,000

*State and federal funding sources are expected to cover \$5,964,000,000.

**Potential future payback for projects on the State Highway System within Orange County.

Implementation Plan

The Transportation Initiative implementation plan is a framework by which the County can address the needs identified in the Transportation Initiative Report in a responsible and efficient manner. The implementation plan outlines a transparent process for the public that is accountable for the expenditures of the surtax. The implementation plan includes the oversight structure, allocation of funding and spending, prioritization of needs, and program management.

Oversight Structure

The amount of additional revenue that will be generated from the Transportation Initiative warrants an elevated level of oversight to guide the implementation process and provide transparency. The components of the oversight structure are expected to include a Technical Committee, a Citizens Oversight Board, and the Orange County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) as the implementing agency. These responsibilities are outlined in Figure ES-4. The County and its partners must be committed to dedicating resources to creating and delivering this program with transparency and accountability.



FIGURE ES-4. OVERSIGHT STRUCTURE



Funding Allocation and Spending

A funding allocation plan will allow the County to maximize the value of the surtax revenue to the agencies and partners responsible for implementing the projects. It will take into consideration the amount of anticipated revenue, the projected needs, and how the funds are distributed.

As of January 2022, the plan is being developed around a ‘Three Bucket Scenario’ shown in Table ES-2.

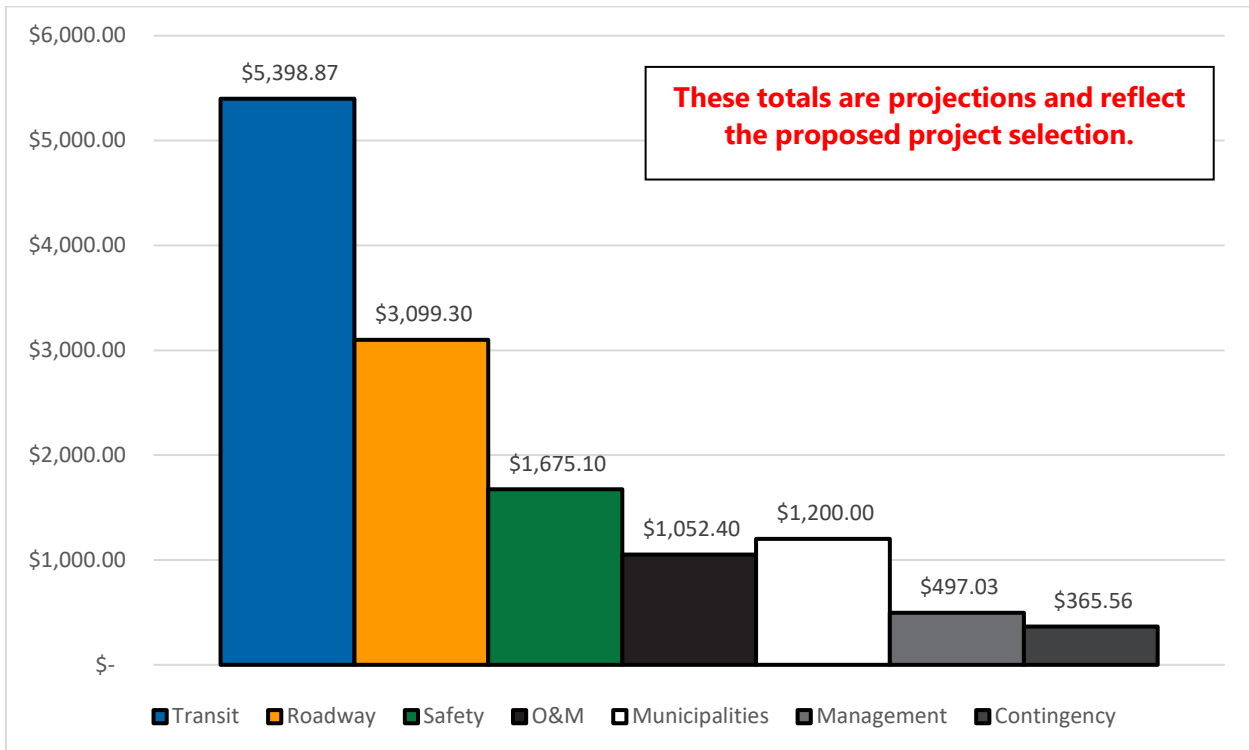


Table ES-2. Three Bucket Funding Allocation by Administrating Agency

ADMINISTRATING AGENCY	SUBCATEGORY	PERCENT OF PROJECTED FUNDING NEEDS
Transit	Total Transit	45%
County	Total County Safety Roadways O&M	45%
Municipal		10%

Figure ES-5 shows the projected totals of spending for those same categories over the next 20 years.

FIGURE ES-5. TRANSPORTATION INITIATIVE SPENDING TOTALS (2023 – 2042) (MILLIONS USD)



Prioritizing the Needs

The County is considering different approaches to review projects for technical merit in order to prioritize them, particularly to roadway and safety projects that will provide the most benefit for the community.

The prioritization for Orange County transportation improvements is expected to be needs-based and consistent with Title VI and in coordination with partners, including MetroPlan Orlando and



FDOT. The three different components of the County Transportation Improvements were weighed within the context of the overall needs of Orange County:

- Safety Improvements were recommended to be funded within the first five years of the adoption of the surtax to meet the County's goals for improving safety.
- Major Roadway Improvements were prioritized based on the roadway capacity and where traffic exceeded the adopted Level of Service (LOS) threshold. Roadways already identified as overcapacity were selected to begin first. Bridge reconstruction should be funded based on their projected lifetimes.
- Operation and Maintenance unfunded needs should be fully funded annually and would be funded continuously.

Program Management

Implementing such a robust transportation program will require balancing many components. Key factors include:²

- Selecting the project delivery method that will produce the best outcomes.
- Creating an effective and efficient process for leveraging existing County resources.
- Delivering projects in the most effective and efficient manner possible—on-time, on-budget, and meeting the needs identified.
- Meeting expectations of community stakeholders.

The adoption of the transportation surtax removes funding as an obstacle for project delivery delays. It will force the County and other regional transportation partners to evaluate and adjust the way in which they advance the various projects during the next 20 years. Program management will be instrumental in providing continuous coordination across projects and stakeholders.

Conclusion

The gap between the County's identified transportation needs and the amount of funding available to address the needs is substantial. The Transportation Initiative Report identifies the gap and offers methods for prioritization and implementation of transportation projects that will maintain a continued exceptional quality of life in Orange County. The County, along with its regional partners, is committed to working with communities to solve their specific transportation problems. Developing and maintaining the region's transportation system will require coordination and cooperation with many different supporters.

² National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine 2017. Strategic Program Delivery Methods. <https://doi.org/10.17226/24719>