Tallahassee Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC)
The City of Tallahassee Public Works Department has relocated their old traffic management center and state-of-the art Tallahassee Advanced Traffic Management System (TATMS) from downtown City Hall to a new Leon County and City of Tallahassee jointly owned Public Safety Complex (PSC). This facility, the award winning Tallahassee Regional Transportation Management Center (RTMC), co-locates TATMS with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) SunGuide® Freeway Management System (FMS).

The RTMC is the centerpiece of the PSC. This 100,000 square foot multi-purpose facility is located on approximately 10-acres in Tallahassee at the intersection of Easterwood Drive and Weems Road. As an emergency services building, the facility is designed to be able to withstand winds from a Category 5 hurricane or an F4 tornado, which means the glass windows are designed to resist a 15-foot, 2x4 at a 100 mph impact. This unique facility co-locates a number of key public safety related agencies and centers including:

- Consolidated Dispatch Agency
- Leon County Emergency Medical Services Administration
- Operations Building for Emergency Medical Services
- City of Tallahassee Fire Department Administration
- Leon County Emergency Operations Center
- City of Tallahassee RTMC
- City of Tallahassee Emergency Management
- Consolidated Data Center

The innovative PSC also touts several environmental and ergonomic features. There are significant energy-conserving improvements in the data center, training rooms, and offices. There are also custom consoles that can be raised or lowered, allowing the emergency dispatch personnel to work from a seated or standing position.

The new RTMC serves as the control center for TATMS, the traffic management system that controls approximately 350 traffic signals in the Tallahassee area with more signals being added every year. The City operates and maintains signals owned by the City of Tallahassee, Leon County, Gadsen County, Florida State University, and the FDOT.

RTMC personnel can monitor over 80% of these traffic signals with over 90 operator controlled closed-circuit television cameras. The signals and cameras communicate with TATMS utilizing over 170 miles of fiber optic cable owned by the City.

The RTMC has set the bar high, already winning two awards. In December 2013, the RTMC was awarded The Big Bend Florida Chapter of Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) 2013 Project of the Year Award. The RTMC was also awarded an Intelligent Transportation System Florida Award presented by over 20 FDOT representatives including the District Three Secretary in March 2014.

"Truly we will be a model for the nation and a background for all of this is the safety of our community."

- Anita Favors Thompson, City Manager
Intelligent Transportation System (ITS) Elements

The RTMC was implemented as part of a City project using FDOT funds provided to the City via a Joint Participation Agreement (JPA) between the City and FDOT. In addition to the RTMC, this project expanded the ITS capabilities in the Tallahassee region by implementing a new FMS along Interstate 10 (I-10).

This FMS is comprised of state-of-the-art ITS technology along a 19-mile segment of I-10 in Leon and Gadsden Counties including:

- 27 traffic monitoring cameras spaced approximately every mile
- 51 traffic incident detection stations spaced approximately every half-mile
- 8 dynamic message signs (DMS) strategically located along the corridor
- A roadway weather information station
- Over 32 miles of fiber optic communications throughout the project area

This FMS is an integrated, interoperable ITS system that will be used to improve interstate operations, provide expeditious incident response, and increase driver safety along the Tallahassee I-10 corridor. FMS operations within the RTMC can be observed from an adjacent conference room via a specially designed glass partition. Real-time traffic conditions are clearly visible via a large, two-level videowall. The videowall allows the operators to monitor the traffic along I-10 and along the many local roadways throughout the region. In addition, the videowall display content configuration can be easily customized by RTMC operators to display video images, TATMS operations, live TV/Cable news feeds, and other pertinent information required during the implementation of incident, event, and active traffic management strategies as well as day-to-day operations.

History

It was recognized early by both the City of Tallahassee Public Works Department and FDOT that co-locating TATMS and SunGuide® FMS within the RTMC would provide mutual benefits to both agencies. Co-location allows efficient, cost-effective, integrated regional management and control of local roadways and the I-10 freeway from the same location and by the same staff. In addition, the project was able to capitalize on the PSC project in a manner that allowed for dramatic traffic management center facility improvements and cost savings. Due to the implementation of this shared facility, taxpayer dollars have been saved in terms of capital costs and will continue to be saved for many years to come with regard to facility operations and maintenance costs.

FDOT Participation/Consultant Participation

The RTMC was made possible through a Joint Participation Agreement (JPA) between the FDOT and the City of Tallahassee. FDOT has generously committed up to $8.0 Million towards the RTMC facility and an additional $8.0 Million towards the FMS deployment along I-10, with funding from the Department’s Ten-Year ITS Cost Feasible Plan. Under this June 2008 JPA, the City of Tallahassee has agreed to administer the design, establishment, operations and maintenance of the FMS and RTMC. This project is a true testament to the partnership between the two agencies and the importance of this facility to the Tallahassee/Leon County region.

Throughout the project, the City of Tallahassee has been supported by a Program Manager, Kimley-Horn. In addition, the FMS and RTMC construction was completed by a Design-Build Firm, World Fiber Technologies. The design of the FMS was provided by Design-Build Firm member, Genesis.

Overall project oversight and guidance has been provided through an ITS Management Team (ITSMT) with representatives from FDOT and the City:

- Gabriel Menendez (City of Tallahassee): Chair
- Lee Smith (FDOT): Vice-Chair
- Cliff Johnson (FDOT)
- Allen Secreast (City of Tallahassee)
- Mike Scheiner (City of Tallahassee)
Why is this Project Unique?

**Unique Co-Location:**
The RTMC is located at the heart of a larger PSC. This co-location led to a dramatic improvement in cost efficiency and schedule efficiency for the RTMC. The cost of a separate stand-alone traffic management facility, typical of many other areas throughout the state, would have far exceeded the costs associated with this joint-facility. In addition, the time to design, permit, and construct a separate facility would have taken significantly longer than capitalizing on the facility construction that was already planned for the PSC.

In addition to the physical collocation of functional space, the collocation and partnership between the City of Tallahassee and FDOT traffic management operations is very unique. City staff plans to operate the FDOT SunGuide® system with City Staff. This will allow the TATMS and SunGuide® operators to be cross-trained and improve the efficiency of the RTMC operations.

**Extended Real-Time Traffic Information:**
The RTMC and FMS projects expand the real-time traffic information available to the City of Tallahassee. This system provides a centralized location at the RTMC to view the integrated network of information from major local roadways and the interstate allowing for a more efficient monitoring of travel conditions and quicker response to incidents. This results in increased safety and operations on area roads for the motorists in the Tallahassee/Leon County region.

**Improved Customer Information:**
Tallahassee has always been at the forefront of disseminating traffic information to their customers as evidenced in their on-line Driver Information System mapping real-time traffic conditions, the @COTTraffic Twitter feeds, and the overall information sharing through technical papers and write-ups found on their website. The new RTMC and supporting ITS technologies will facilitate real-time information that will allow the City to further inform their customers with the goal of improving traffic movement within the Tallahassee/Leon County region.

This highly visible and revolutionary project was completed **on time, under budget, and on scope!**

**Enhanced Emergency Response:**
Housing the dispatch functions for sheriff, police, fire, and emergency medical services in the Public Safety Complex enables the agencies to efficiently share information and expeditiously identify the closest first responder. Co-locating the Consolidated Dispatch Agency and Leon County Emergency Operations Center with the RTMC traffic management functions allows the dispatchers and emergency management to monitor congestion and incidents along the roadway system. This unity of operations dramatically expedites the response time and enhances emergency response in the Tallahassee/Leon County region.

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**Additional Information:**

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District Intelligent Transportation System Engineer  
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Ph: 850.330.1267

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“The complex is more than just a building. It unifies dispatch for all City and County emergency services, improving response times and efficiencies.”

- “Answering the Call: Emergency Hub Unifies Operations – Public Safety Complex is the new home for dispatch, responders”

Article written by TaMaryn Waters, Democrat staff writer.  
July 11, 2013.