

BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN COORDINATING COMMITTEE

10:00 a.m., Tuesday, October 25, 2016
Fort Myers Regional Library, Room A
1651 Lee Street, Fort Myers, FL 33901
239-244-2220



Meeting Minutes

The meeting of the Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinating Committee was held on Tuesday, October 25, 2016, beginning at 10:10 a.m. in Room A of the Fort Myers Regional Library, 1651 Lee Street, Fort Myers, FL.

Those in attendance included:

From the BPCC

Andy Getch	Lee County Department of Community Development
Carl Karakos	City of Fort Myers
Dan Moser	Injury Prevention Coalition
Dave Wheaton	Member-At-Large
David Wagley	Lee County Department of Community Development
Doug Saxton	Village of Estero
Isobel Hitchcock	Member-At-Large
John Karcher	CAC Member
Lee Waller	Lee County Parks and Recreation
Lt. Petracca	Lee County Sheriff's Office
Megan Will	Town of Fort Myers Beach
Persides Zambrano	City of Cape Coral
Sean Gibbons	City of Bonita Springs
Sgt. Donakowski	Cape Coral Police
Simone Behr	Lee County Visitor and Convention Bureau
Tina Sujana	Member-At-Large

Others in attendance included Ron Gogoi and Don Scott with the Lee County MPO; David Munday; D'Juan Harris with FDOT; David Jones with FDOT; Gary Nadeau with Kimley-Horn; Kris Cella with Cella, Molnar Associates; Brad Davis with Alta Planning; Ned Baier with Jacobs Engineering

Call to Order and Roll Call of BPCC Meeting

Mr. Moser, BPCC Chair, called the meeting to order at 10:10 a.m. Quorum was met. The members introduced themselves.

There were no public comments.

Agenda Item #1 - *Approval of the September 27, 2016 BPCC Meeting Minutes

Mr. David Wagley, Lee County Department of Community Development, suggested the minutes be changed to reflect that the potential hazardous walking conditions discussed in Agenda Item #3 were the opinion of the presenter, Ms. Dawn Huff, Lee County Schools.

The motion to approve the minutes was made by David Wagley and seconded by Doug Saxton. It was approved unanimously.

New Business

Agenda Item #2 - Review and Discussion on FDOT's Draft Tentative Work Program for FY 2018 through FY 2022

D’Juan Harris, FDOT, discussed, the Draft Tentative Work Program for FY 2018 through FY 2022. FDOT is decentralized into eight districts. D’Juan Harris is a representative of District 1 based out of the Southwest Area Office in Fort Myers. District 1 is headquartered in Bartow, Florida. The District 1 Secretary for the next month is Billy Hattaway. The document discussed is for District 1, Lee County. FDOT has just published this draft tentative Work Program, that was attached to the agenda packets, covering fiscal years 2018 through 2022. The document is currently going through an ePublic Hearing which ended on October 24th (also attached was the additions, re-schedulings and deletions table or **Add/Defer/Delete**). Comments on the document will be accepted by FDOT through Monday, October 31st.

The FDOT Work Program process begins while FDOT is still working through the adopted Work Program for the current FY of 2017 and all the way out through 2021. Currently, FDOT is in the middle of Work Program development, also referred to as “gaming,” and that moves out from the current year adding projects to the new fifth year, FY 2022. The five year work program development focuses on maintaining the existing Work Program and adding capacity improvements. The improvements to the draft work program are developed in coordination with the Lee County MPO and based on established MPO priorities, transit priorities, Strategic Intermodal Systems (SIS) priorities, preservation of the State highway system, safety enhancements, and shared use paths/trails. As funds are available, these projects are added to the work program.

Mr. Harris discussed the phases the projects go through that include planning, project development and environmental study (PD&E), preliminary engineering design (PE), right-of-way (ROW), and construction (CST). Each phase can take from 2-3 years and the entire process can take up to 15 years.

Mr. Harris then referred to the **Add/Defer/Delete** table that was included in the agenda packet. Mr. Gogoi passed out additional tables as necessary. FDOT is still working on some additional bike ped projects and project phases for inclusion in the work program, with the primary focus on new bicycle pedestrian projects and project phases in the work program which have been added based on SRTS priorities adopted by the Lee County MPO Board at its March 18th meeting, Sun Trail priorities adopted at its April 22nd meeting, and TA and SU funded bicycle pedestrian priorities adopted at its August 19th meeting. Mr. Harris then opened the floor for comments and questions regarding the **Add/Defer/Delete** table.

A question was asked about the Village of Estero Bike Ped Master Plan that was set for 2018/2019 and if the Village would be reimbursed by FDOT in those years if the Village paid for the study now. The earliest those funds would be available would be July 1, 2018. The Work Program must be adopted and the decision to adopt those projects and correlating funds could only be made at that time. It might be adopted in a certain year but it still must be included in the Work Program. Funding may not occur until after that. The City of Sanibel and the Village of Estero are not LAP certified so those projects will be funneled through the MPO for funding.

A comment was made about how long it takes a transportation project to be built and the Burnt Store project was begun in 2000. The last segment, Van Buren Parkway to Charlotte County Line, will be funded in 2020. The project has been in progress for 20 years but it does happen and time does fly.

Another comment was made about the seven mile trail on Kismet in North Cape. It will put the Cape on the map for trails and funding is set for this year, 2017. It doesn't show up in tentative but it is in adopted now.

A comment was made to recognize the City of Cape Coral and the Lee County MPO for working so well together on that and making it happen. Providence Nagy, FDOT, was instrumental in gaining the funding for the trail.

Mr. Ron Gogoi pointed out that Tanglewood Elementary is not in Work Program but will be added later. It is in **Add/Defer/Delete** table and is funded through Safe Routes To School (SRTS). Tanglewood and Mariner were begun with David Jones when he was SRTS coordinator and will finally be added to the Work Program. VanBuren and Kismet projects were already mentioned. There was another capacity project mentioned that includes a shared use path. It is a County project funded with Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) dollars. Two other projects, Summerlin Road shared use path and Andalusia sidewalks, phases are not in Tentative Work Program but will be added later. Mr. Gogoi also looked at what was in this tentative Work Program and compared it with the same one from FY 2017- FY 2021 and nothing has changed much. Bike/Ped percentage with regard to funding has pretty much remained the same. Transit and aviation dropped. MPO priorities that were adopted last year, only two were funded. Generally, over \$700,000 is received each year. Mr. Gogoi also discussed other projects that didn't get funded. SRTS submitted three projects and one received funding. It was not in Work Program or **Add/Defer/Delete** table and D'Juan Harris was asked to look into that. Mr. Gogoi asked for a few projects design and construction, Bell Boulevard and Marsh Avenue sidewalks, to be funded from Transportation Alternative (TA) and Multi-modal Enhancement (SU) funds. He asked that some of that money be saved for contingency but it would be possible to fund some of the smaller projects like Bell and Marsh.

Mr. Harris explained that the reason the outer years, 2019-2021, have more funds is because allocations came in later. A cycle will be developed to advance more projects and move further down the priority list.

A comment was made about breaking the Leonard Boulevard project up in to phases to make it more cost affordable. Mr. Gogoi stated there wouldn't be enough time.

The TA and SU dollars have been combined. There is still money in the fund and even one project could be chosen and funded.

A comment was made about Shoemaker/Colonial intersection and how it was to include the extension of the sidewalk on the north side of Colonial because the TIGER project ended there. Now it is possible the price tripled and a question was asked about where that project was in all this. Mr. Gogoi stated that was a City project and he would allow Mr. Carl Karakos with the City of Fort Myers to address that. Mr. Karakos will get back with a comment on that at a later time. Mr. Don Scott stated that there is construction in that area now and there will be connections at the intersection. It will be further discussed at the LAP meeting and go back out to bid.

Mr. Gogoi then asked if the committee was okay with the suggestions that staff had made about using the TA and SU funds for the previously suggested projects. The committee did not vote on this but the general consensus seemed agreeable to funding a few projects although there were differing opinions on which projects to choose. D’Juan Harris was concerned that the projects be carefully vetted and accurate long range estimates are formulated. Mr. Gogoi expressed concern that he didn’t want the money to sit there and projects get delayed because they didn’t get funded. Another concern was expressed that someone else would take the money.

This was an information only item. No action was required.

Agenda Item #3 - Presentation of the Cape Coral Bike Ped Master Plan

Persides Zambrano with the City of Cape Coral explained that the City is wrapping up their Master Plan that was a grant from FDOT. She has been managing the project with Mr. Ron Gogoi of the Lee County MPO. She introduced Brad Davis, Alta Planning, and Ned Baier, Jacobs Engineering, and they provided a presentation on the Cape Coral Bike Ped Master Plan.

Guided by a Project Advisory Committee, the MPO’s consultant Alta Planning + Design Inc., and Jacobs have been working on a bicycle pedestrian master plan for the City of Cape Coral since the spring of the year. The consultant has developed a draft final report which is currently being finalized. The finalized report will be presented to the Cape City Council for acceptance at its November 2nd meeting. The document is not yet ready for review by the BPCC, but the final accepted report will be distributed to the committee after Council acceptance. In simple terms, it is about trying to create a network in Cape Coral that is family friendly and accessible for all ages and abilities. They addressed traffic stress and safety as a focus. The goals they looked at were 20 years out. They would like to achieve Bicycle Riding Silver since Cape is currently Bronze. They also had a goal to create a walkable community. They would like to double the number of cyclists and decrease the number of related accidents. They also put a time frame on build out. In order to formulate this plan they studied demographics and conducted public surveys. They also did traffic crash analysis related to road type. They found that although major roads only comprise about 14% of the roadway network, over half of crashes occur on them. A big concern was how to address safety issues on those roads. They further examined the four major corridors of Del Prado, Cape Coral Parkway, Pine Island, and Santa Barbara, representing only 3% of the roadway network, but over half of the crashes occur on these roads. Recently, City Council even tried to reduce the speed on the roads in Cape Coral to help reduce the number of accidents. The consultants looked at a few other related areas. Demand for walking areas was examined and the demand was clustered around the major roadway areas. The sidewalk/bicycle path network was documented and sidewalk areas were reasonable but the bicycle network was found to be lacking. The level of traffic stress was also looked at with relation to speeds and comfort of walkers/cyclists.

A representative of Jacobs Engineering, Ned Baier, explained that there were three ways stakeholders and the public were heard during the course of the study. There was a project advisory committee that met several times, two public workshops, and an online tool. The recommendations were developed from stakeholder/public input and focused or based on context with relation to speeds and traffic volume. The implementation strategies are to either repurpose existing right of way or expand the roadway. Expanding the roadway can be more costly and sometimes cannot be done due to existing infrastructure and lack of space to expand. Several options were considered including road diets. The final recommendations

were to close the gaps in the bicycle pedestrian network and some further study may be required. Enhancing the routes with landscaping and signs was another recommendation.

The final aspect of the study was funding. The total plan cost was estimated at \$63 million and did not include design. Grants could be used but generally they only amount to \$2 million per year. The total City of Cape Coral budget for transportation is only \$6 million per year. Two different implementation schedules were presented, 10 year and 20 year. The 10-year called for about \$6 million per year and the 20-year called for about \$3 million per year. Usually these plans are funded through a dedicated funding source like a sales tax.

They will proceed with a presentation to City Council on November 2. At some point Council will be asked to adopt the plan and establish maintenance and funding policies. Design modifications are possible.

A question was posed about the sales tax and if a municipality could implement its own sales tax. It is not possible and must be countywide. We are currently following what is happening in other communities.

Agenda Item #4 - Presentation on the US 41 Corridor Improvements in Fort Myers

David Jones, project manager with FDOT, provided a presentation on the FDOT corridor improvement project that is located along Cleveland Ave, US 41, from Winkler Avenue to just south of SR 82. The Master Plan done in 2005/2006 produced an outcome of adding medians along US 41. A road safety audit was done with one of the benefits being the median for pedestrian safety. This project incorporates safety and restoration enhancements intended to extend the life of the roadway and drainage systems while improving pedestrian and vehicular safety. Safety improvements include construction of a raised median, six mid-block pedestrian crossings with overhead mounted pedestrian traffic control devices that are High-Intensity Activated crossWalk beacons or HAWKs, new and upgraded signals at select intersections including Linhart/Stella, LED lighting upgrades, and new signing and pavement markings. They will keep the three, ten foot lanes in each direction and add a one foot traffic separator where the turn lanes are. In addition, the extension of the dual box culvert at Canal Street will provide extra room for pedestrian connectivity and increased safety for road users. Driveways and curb ramps will be replaced where practical to bring the corridor in compliance with current ADA standards. The City of Fort Myers is also designing the replacement of utility systems along the corridor which will be constructed with the roadway improvements. The FDOT portion is budgeted at \$12 million. Construction should begin sometime in the fall of next year, 2017. The construction time is estimated at between two and two and a half years.

At the request of the City of Fort Myers, when construction is complete a "road diet" test will be conducted by FDOT for approximately two months in the peak season. The test will consist of a temporary lane closure of the inside travel lanes for both northbound and southbound directions from Canal St. to Victoria Ave. This will help to assess the feasibility of a future road diet design option and evaluate the impact of a reduction in travel lanes to the roadway's level of service and the associated impact of traffic diverted to the City's network of parallel reliever roadways. There will also be intensive public involvement at this phase. The public involvement includes but is not limited to presenting at committee meetings, hosting neighborhood meetings, and communication with local business owners. Mr. Jones then opened the floor for questions and comments.

A question was asked about the project fly through slide and for an explanation of it. It is basically a rendering of what the project will look like along the section from Grace to Canal.

Another question was asked about the traffic count along the stretch. It is from 41,000 to 55,000.

The work being done on McGregor is behind schedule and a question was asked about whether the US 41 project will overlap with it resulting in two major traffic routes being basically closed. The US 41 project could implement mandatory start dates for construction but the project may not be delayed too long because of severe drainage issues.

The presentation moved along to the fly through movie slide showing the rendering of the completed project segment from Grace to Canal.

The public hearing is scheduled for January or February. One of the most important things is educating the public. The public needs to be informed as to what a road diet is and what complete streets are. The education being done now is mainly on the median additions.

A comment was made about what the extra space would be used for if the road diet test is successful since there are different groups speculating whether it will be for transit or cycling or both. There may not be enough room for one or the other since the lanes are already narrow.

A question was directed to Kris Cella, with the public relations firm of Cella, Molnar, and Associates, regarding the reason the McGregor project has not started yet and why the City and FDOT are not coordinating on their projects to alleviate traffic stress to the City. She responded that she did not know but it is supposed to be starting relatively soon. Another response was made by Carl Karakos with the City of Fort Myers, that the delay was due in part to two project managers leaving the City of Fort Myers and there is a transition phase going on now. The McGregor project is scheduled for completion in two years.

A question was made about the theory behind the medians. The medians are due to the development the Council wants along the corridor, to eliminate left hand crashes, and to address the safety of pedestrians from and around the high school.

Another question was asked about whether resurfacing funds were used exclusively for the project. Half of the funds are resurfacing and half are safety dollars. The original resurfacing was delayed because of the City requesting the medians. That request changed the scope of the project.

A question was asked as to the exact purpose of the road diet test if nothing is going to be changed. It is being done to examine the corridor. Nothing will be done in this project but that doesn't mean something won't be programmed or prioritized in future years if the road diet test looks like it will work. Future projects could include bicycle lanes or transit lanes in this corridor.

Another question was asked about the reason the road diet isn't being conducted along the entire corridor. The section that was chosen is a lower traffic section. This is a transition area into downtown.

A comment was made about the fact that this is not modeling. This road diet test is actually trying it and learning from it and seeing what is the next step.

Another comment was made about having an Origin and Destination study possibly using cell phone data to figure out which routes are being used from Cape Coral to get to the Interstate. There already has been an O & D study done on this corridor for the original lane diet request.

A suggestion was made to delay the McGregor project until the US41 project is done. They will take the concerns back to FDOT and look at the projects to see how much overlap there will be.

A concern was raised about not doing the road diet any further south and then not connecting with the existing bicycle corridor that would get the cyclists to Colonial but nothing to get them further north. The comment was to do the study to connect to something that is existing or in the works. The lane closure diet is just a test and will be empty during the test. The bottom line is the test is to see what vehicles are doing. This is not a solution it is just the start of the transition to complete streets.

A comment was made about the lack of support the general public will have for this due to the traffic it will cause.

Agenda Item #5 - Discussion on the Lee County update to FGT's Priority Trail Network

Ron Gogoi, Lee County MPO, discussed staff proposal for adding trail corridors/individual trails to the FGT Priority Trail Map. This is the route that must be taken to get funding for trails.

The Office of Greenways and Trails (OGT) is updating the Florida Greenways and Trails System (FGTS) Plan, and the Opportunity and Priority Maps. There was an attached email with this information. Priority trails automatically make their way to the Florida Sun Trail network so the update is critical to Lee County to ensure that our high priority trail corridors from the 2040 Bike Ped Element are added to the Land Trails Priority Map, and we make a strong play for more SUN Trail funds to the area. The new individual trails that will benefit by addition to the Land Trails Priority Map will be the Pine Island Trail which has an expensive PD&E Study scheduled for 2020, and the Colonial Waterway Able Canal Multi Use Trail which has a PD&E Study currently under way.

Fortunately for us, we are a little ahead in this exercise as compared to other Florida counties because if you recall we started this exercise over a year ago, and we had several discussions at BPCC meetings, which all culminated with staff making a request to FGT to add our additional identified corridors to the priority map. We were told by FGT then to wait until they start the process to update the Priority Trail Map. It should be approved by 2018. We must vet this again through the BPCC to ensure we have consensus before staff resubmits the request.

The committee did not vote on this but did not object to this proposal.

A question was asked about the US 41 corridor through Bonita and the rail corridor there. It was taken off and won't be part of the priority trails.

A question was asked about a trail from 31 going out 78 east toward Hendry along North River Road. It is in the Master Plan for a pathway request but not in this trail network. Also, Babcock Ranch is asking the trail to be extended to their trails proposed in Babcock Ranch. There may be support from FGT for that project.

A question was asked about the Pine Island project and whether it will just be a bike lane. It is proposed as a path not a bike lane.

Old Business

Agenda Item #6 - TIGER and Other MPO Project Updates/Developments

There was no presentation on TIGER and no other MPO project updates/developments.

Agenda Item #7 - Local Government Reports on Bicycle Pedestrian Related Projects

There were no local government reports.

Agenda Item #8 - LeeTran Report

There was not a report from LeeTran.

Agenda Item #9 - FDOT Report

There was not a report from FDOT.

Agenda Item #10 - Public and Member Comments on Items not on the Agenda

There were no other public or member comments on items not on the agenda.

Agenda Item #11 - Discussion of a Joint Meeting Date with the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee

There was no discussion on a joint meeting date with Charlotte County.

Agenda Item #12 - Announcements

There were no announcements.

Agenda Item #13 - Information and Distribution Items

The information and distribution items were included in the agenda packet.

Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 12:00 p.m.

Next Joint BPCC & Charlotte County MPO BPAC MeetingNovember 22, 2016

* Action Items + May Require Action

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status. Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact Mr. Johnny Limbaugh at the Lee MPO at 239-330-2242 or by email at jlimbaugh@leempo.com at least seven (7) days prior to the meeting. If you are hearing or speech impaired call (800) 955-8770 Voice / (800) 955-8771 TDD. The MPO's planning process is conducted in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and related statutes. Any person or beneficiary who believes he has been discriminated against because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, or familial status may file a complaint with the Lee County MPO Title VI Coordinator Johnny Limbaugh at (239) 330-2242 or by writing him at P.O. Box 150045, Cape Coral, Florida 33915-0045.