

**JOINT LEE/COLLIER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION (MPO)
BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN COORDINATING COMMITTEE (BPCC) AND
PATHWAYS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (PAC) MEETING**

Lee Health Healthy Life Center at Coconut Point
23190 Fashion Drive, Estero, Florida 33928
10:30 a.m.

August 22, 2017 Meeting Minutes

1. Call to Order and Roll Call

The meeting was called to order at 10:30 by Mr. Bonness. Mr. Ortman called the roll for the Collier PAC and announced that a quorum was not present. Mr. Gogoi called the rolled for the Lee County BPCC and announced that a quorum was present.

Collier County MPO PAC Members Present:

Joe Bonness, At-Large
Jane Cheffy, At-Large
Andrea Halman, At-Large

Lee County MPO BPCC Members Present:

Carl Karakos, City of Fort Myers
Saul Gibbons, City of Bonita Springs
Doug Saxton, Village of Estero
Dan Moser, Injury Prevention Council
David Wagley, Lee County Community Development
Andy Getch, Lee County Community Development
Lee Waller, Lee County Parks & Recreation
Simone Behr, Lee County Visitor Convention Bureau
Mark Tesoro, Lee Memorial Trauma Services
Syndi Bultman, Lee Memorial Trauma Services
David Wheaton, At-Large
Salli Kirkland, City of Sanibel

Collier MPO Staff Present:

Anne McLaughlin, Executive Director
Eric Ortman, Senior Planner
Gabrielle Gonzalez, Administrative Secretary

Lee County MPO Staff Present:

Don Scott, Executive Director
Ron Gogoi, Transportation Planning Administrator

Others Present:

Dayna Fendrick, Naples, Florida
Patti Huff, Everglades City
Jodi Walborn, Safe Routes to School

Jessica Crane, Blue Zones
Lorraine Lantz, Collier County Transportation Planning
Victoria Peters, District Liaison, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)
David Agacinski, FDOT
David Murphy, Lee County DOT
Nicole Monahan, City of Fort Myers

2. Election of a Chairperson

Mr. Moser: **I motion to nominate Mr. Bonness as Chair.**

Mr. Gibbons: **I second the motion.**

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

3. Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda

None.

4. Approval of the Agenda

Mr. Bonness stated that there were two changes to the agenda. Item 6A – Presentation on FDOT Complete Streets Handbook – was being deleted; and a presentation by Lee Health on Motorcycle Crash Data was being added as Item 6E.

Mr. Karakos: **I motion to approve the agenda as amended.**

Mr. Moser: **I second the motion.**

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

5. Action Items

a. Approval of Proposed Changes to the Joint Regional Pathways Map

Mr. Gogoi stated that at the June meeting [meeting was in May], the Collier MPO Board adopted a Revised Regional Non-Motorized Transportation Network Map with the following changes. The River of Grass Greenway was deleted. SR 29 from the northern end of New Market Road to Everglades City was not added, as recommended by the PAC, until further study was done. An inset showing the Gordon River Greenway was added.

Mr. Gogoi stated that the Lee County MPO Board has not yet voted on this map and that Lee MPO staff suggest the following additional changes. Adjust the Gordon River Greenway inset to remove “neighborhood” pathways surrounding the airport and leave only the Gordon River Greenway

which is a regional pathway. Add SR 29 from SR 82 to the Hendry County Line. [This section was included in the Collier MPO executive summary but excluded from the map.] Add a section on Oil Well Road from Camp Keasis Road to SR 29. [This section was not called out in the Collier MPO executive summary as it was already included in the map.]

Mr. Ortman stated that the Collier MPO Board also made a minor change to the Gulf Coast Connector Trail shifting a small section on the FPL corridor north of Radio Road to Livingston Road.

Mr. Moser: **I motion to approve the Joint Regional Pathways Map as changed.**

Mr. Saxton: **I second the motion.**

THE MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY

The motion and vote were official for the Lee County MPO but not for the Collier MPO as they were lacking a quorum,

6. Reports and Presentations

a. Presentation of FDOT Complete Streets Handbook

Removed from Agenda

b. Lessons Learned from Planning Trail Projects

Ms. McLaughlin stated that both the Lee and Collier MPO staff had unforeseen issues in their regional planning activities. In Collier County the MPO Board abandoned the River of Grass Greenway due to opposition from the Miccosukee Tribal Council, hunters and environmentalists.

Ms. McLaughlin stated that there had been years of demonstrated MPO support for the River of Grass Greenway which occurred under former executive director's leadership; including funding for the western most portion of the greenway as well as transit funding secured by the original supporters of the Greenway.

Ms. McLaughlin stated that she had been unaware of the substantive tribal opposition to the greenway that had existed for years until a joint MPO Board meeting in 2016; and was also unaware that an earlier letter of opposition from the Miccosukee had not been included in the final report. Ms. McLaughlin stated that the MPO process had not adequately followed during the development of the plan; and that a better outcome could have resulted in the MPO process had been more rigorously followed. Ms. McLaughlin stated that the Collier MPO Board has since adopted a Government to Government Communication Policy to facilitate better tribal relations.

Mr. Gogoi stated that, in 2011, the MPO had done a feasibility study for a Winkler Canal shared use path in Fort Myers. The area around Winkler Avenue was relatively built; some of the right-

of-way along the canal was owned by the state, some Fort Myers, and the ownership of some of the right-of-way was unknown.

Mr. Karakos stated that the City of Fort Myers and the surrounding community had not expected the amount of resistance to the path by the residents of McGregor Preserve. On February 21, 2017, there was public meeting with more than 100 residents who were not opposed to a shared use path but were opposed to the exact location of the path along the canal. Security and privacy

Mr. Karakos stated the even though the canal was a logical location for the path and the city had right-of-way along the canal the City should have done a better job at communicating with the public that this was only a feasibility study. Mr. Karakos stated that he thought the McGregor Reserve community was under the impression that the path along the canal was the location for the path and not just an option. Mr. Karakos stated that more public information on what a feasible study is would have been more helpful. Mr. Karakos stated that the feasibility study would continue with the canal being only one option for the path.

A lengthy discussion on the feasibility study followed. Mr. Moser stated that many of the home owners along the canal were unaware that there was an existing right-of-way easement. Mr. Moser stated that the City started thinking about this project in 2009 when there were few homes built along the canal and that faster movement on potential projects might eliminate some of these issues. Mr. Wheaton stated it was his belief that if Council members had been better informed there may have been few problems.

Mr. Gogoi stated that residents in the Whiskey Creek neighborhood were opposed to a Safe Routes to School project near Tanglewood Elementary. Their opposition was based on losing a portion of their yards even though the yards were infringing on the public right of way.

Mr. Murphy, Lee County DOT, stated that the public is often not aware of a Safe Routes to School project until the project is ready to begin and that informing the public about SRTS projects earlier in the process could eliminate problems. Mr. Gogoi stated that future Lee County SRTS projects that school will post signs on the streets where the project will occur. Discussion continued

Ms. Fendrick stated the River of Grass project took eight years to complete and that changes in political leadership was one of the causes of the project being cancelled. Ms. Fendrick stated that the PD&E Study began to address many of the project's issues and that they could have been worked out. Misunderstanding of what a feasibility study is and questions being asked that could not be answered by a feasibility study.

Ms. Huff, Everglades City resident, stated that she was happy with the Collier MPO's Government to Government Policy and wished it had been in place at the start of the project. Ms. Huff stated that she had been told that tribal communications would take place during the PD&E process. Ms. Huff stated that a no-build has not been done because the ROGG report was only a feasibility study. Ms. Huff stated that there were numerous administrative changes during the course of the plan, and asked how these normal staff changes should affect long-term plans and studies.

Ms. McLaughlin stated that the MPO's Government to Government Policy recognizes that federally recognized tribes are sovereign nations and that communications with the tribes needs to occur on a peer to peer level where the level of officials from each government were equal. For the MPO this would mean that the MPO Chair or Vice Chair would speak with the Tribal Chair or Vice-Chair with the intention of mutual understanding and avoidance of conflict. The policy also states that each government retains all of its own remedies if consensus cannot be reached.

c. Able Canal Pathway PD&E Study

Mr. Gogoi stated that the PD&E study was kicked off by FDOT with a public meeting in December 2016. Mr. Gogoi stated that there was some opposition at the public meeting.

Mr. Scott stated that Lee County Parks & Recreation and MPO staff met with approximately 70 residents of the Town Lakes neighborhood in January of this year. Some of the residents were in favor of the project for economic development reasons but most were against the project for safety and privacy reasons. Mr. Scott stated that the opportunity to construct pathways will become more limited as development continues to occur; and that this project will not just connect Lehigh Acres but has regional implications with other areas such as LaBelle. Mr. Scott stated that political terms and the long-term nature of transportation projects were often not compatible with each other.

Mr. Moser stated that a group of residents teamed up with BikeWalkLee to muster support for the project from the larger community; and that construction of the pathway would increase property values. Discussion followed on how project proponents and opponents could collaboratively work together in a better manner.

d. Discussion on Land Trail Opportunity and Priority Trails Map Update

Mr. Scott stated that the Office of Greenways & Trails (OGT) had scheduled 14 public meetings at different locations and that the two MPOs would coordinate their efforts to support opportunities in Lee and Collier Counties.

Mr. Scott stated that Lee County was trying to have two priority trails and that he did not know if OGT would allow having two priority trials in the County. Mr. Scott stated that the MPO was comfortable with how the opportunity trails were currently being represented. Mr. Scott stated that the final proposed map would be available by September 1st and that the MPO would share the map and any concerns that the MPO had. Mr. Scott stated that it would be helpful if anyone wanted to attend one or more of the meetings and voice their opinion.

e. Presentation on Motorcycle Crash Data

Ms. Bultman, Lee Health Trauma Center, gave a well rounded presentation on motorcycle crashes. The presentation covered who was involved in crashes, the types and causes of crashes, how many crashes resulted in serious injuries and fatalities and the various costs that resulted from a motorcycle crash. Ms. Bultman offered to send the power point and data to anyone who was interested in looking at the issue in greater depth.

7. Florida Department of Transportation

Mr. Agacinski stated that the Office of Greenways and Trails was hosting a number of open house workshops for the Florida Greenways & Trails System 5-Year Plan Update. A list of the meetings was handed out.

Mr. Agacinski stated that the Complete Streets Handbook was being further revised by Headquarters and that presentations on the Handbook were being delayed until these revisions were completed. The District 1 September 19 Complete Streets Workshop was still scheduled to occur.

Mr. Agacinski stated that the public comment period for the revised Florida Design Manual closed on July 31st; the intended implementation date is January 2018. FDOT will hold three open houses for the Cleveland Avenue pedestrian safety study between Winkler and SR 82 which may include a road diet, installation of medians, and mid-block crossings with HAWK signals.

Mr. Agacinski stated that Central Office was preparing for a potential a call for Sun Trail projects in October.

There was a brief discussion about the location of recently installed street lights on US 41 in Estero where the poles are taking a portion of the six foot sidewalk effectively reducing the sidewalk to a four-foot sidewalk.

8. Lee Tran and CAT Updates

Lee Tran – No updates.

CAT – Mr. Ortman stated that CAT was revising the beach route based on public input, and modifying the routes to Immokalee. The modified Immokalee routes may be viewed on colliertransit.com.

9. Members' Comments

None.

10. Information Items

September 30 is the Second National Bike and Park Day to promote cycling in parks. The event is being sponsored by Adventure Cycling.

Mr. Karakos stated that the City of Fort Myers is creating an interactive map that will show all of the bike racks in the City.

11. Adjournment of Meeting

Having no further business, the Joint BPCC/PAC meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:40 p.m.