

MINUTES OF THE JOINT COLLIER & LEE COUNTY MPO TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Held on March 7, 2013

The following members were present for the joint meeting of the Collier & Lee County MPO Technical Advisory Committee on March 7, 2013 at the Estero Community Park & Recreation Center, 9200 Corkscrew Palms Boulevard, 103A, Estero, Florida 33928.

Collier TAC

Kerry Keith	City of Naples Port Authority
George Archibald	City of Naples
Reed Jarvi	Collier County Transportation Planning
Dale Bathon	Collier County Traffic Operations
Michelle Arnold	Collier County ATM
Joe Irvin	City of Marco Island

Lee TAC

Matt Noble	Lee Department of Community Development
Andy Getch	Lee Department of Transportation
Josh Philpott	Lee County Port Authority
Wayne Gaither	LeeTran
Dawn Huff	Lee County School Board
Persides Zambrano	City of Cape Coral Public Works
Ben Bullert	City of Fort Myers Engineering
Josh Overmyer	Town of Fort Myers Beach
John Gucciardo	City of Bonita Springs Public Works
Margaret Wuerstle	Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council
Bon Herrington	Charlotte County Punta Gorda MPO

Those also in attendance included: Russ Muller and Lawrence Massey with FDOT; Trinity Scott with Collier County ATM; Gary Harrell with Charlotte County Punta Gorda MPO; Darla Letourneau with BikeWalkLee; Tammy Vrana with Vrana Consulting (FDOT); Lauren Brooks with URS Corporation (FDOT); Maureen Bonness with the River of Grass Greenway; Lucie Ayer and Lorraine Lantz with Collier County MPO; Don Scott, Ron Gogoi, Meghan Marion and Anna Bielawska with Lee County MPO.

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 9:34 a.m. by Ms. Arnold.

Ms. Marion called the roll for Lee County TAC and announced that a quorum was present.

Ms. Lantz called the roll for the Collier County TAC and announced that a quorum was present.

Agenda Item #2 – Election of a Chairperson

Ms. Arnold was elected as chairperson of the March 7, 2013 Joint Lee and Collier Technical Advisory Committee Meeting.

Agenda Item #3 – Public Comments

None.

Agenda Item #4 – Approval of Agenda

MOTION BY MR. PHILPOTT TO APPROVE THE MARCH 7, 2013 JOINT COLLIER/TAC TAC AGENDA. SECONDED BY MS. ZAMBRANO. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

ACTION ITEMS

Agenda Item #5A – Prioritization and Approval of the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Regional Pathways Priorities

Mr. Scott presented this item. He stated that the list is similar to last year's list. There was no money received last year for regional enhancement projects. FDOT has now indicated that it will consider programming these projects in the future using the State Portion of Transportation Alternative Program (TAP) funds allocated for District 1. Mr. Scott said that the list is being re-submitted again minus SR 78 in Lee County. Mr. Scott also specified that in Lee County these projects will also be put on other project lists just in case the regional transportation alternatives funding does not come through.

Ms. Zambrano asked what type of funding can be received for SR 78 sidewalks. Mr. Scott answered that the segment east of I-75 was put down as a regional project, but there are issues with the right of way and drainage. Mr. Scott said he is looking to put it on the regular state and federal funded priority list.

Mr. Bullert said the City of Fort Myers would like Priority #3, the Winkler Canal Feasibility Study, pushed up. This access point would connect major pathways and sidewalks and is very important to the city's citizens. Mr. Gogoi mentioned that, in this case, they cannot go straight to the PD&E phase because of a Right-of-Way issue. This is why a feasibility study needs to be completed. In addition, the project can also get

placed on a local priorities list, so it will eventually get funded. Mr. Scott also clarified that the top priority on the list is usually alternated between Lee and Collier counties.

Ms. Lantz said that Collier is fully supportive of the US 41 River of Grass Greenway Project (Priority #1). She mentioned that Ms. Maureen Bonness is here today to do a presentation on this project.

Ms. Bonness gave a PowerPoint presentation on the US 41 River of Grass Greenway project. This project was envisioned as a multiuse pathway along the Everglades between Naples and Miami. This pathway will be roughly parallel to US 41. The public involvement MindMixer website for this project is at www.riverofgrassgreenway.org.

Mr. Muller asked whether the side of the 12' pathway for the US 41 River of Grass Greenway has been determined yet. It is listed as being on the north side of US 41 on the priority list. Ms. Bonness responded that most likely it will be on the south side according to the PD&E as well as the feasibility study. Engineers involved in the PD&E study mentioned that it would be a fatal flaw if the pathway is placed on the north side.

Ms. Zambrano asked why the master plan was not done before the PD&E for the River of Grass Greenway project. Ms. Bonness replied that the funding for the master plan and PD&E came from two separate sources. She also said that the master plan & PD&E study were well coordinated during the public workshop sessions in Naples.

Ms. Bonness said that **April 7th** has been now declared **National Everglades Day**.

Mr. Massey of FDOT clarified that one segment has to be funded through construction according to the current design regulations, or all of the design has to be programmed for the full length of the PD&E. It is important to get the design for a segment for the River of Grass Greenway, but it will not completely meet Federal Highway (FHWA) approval. Mr. Scott asked what the timeline is for programming through construction. Mr. Massey said that according to his understanding the timeline should be within the 5 year Work Program. Mr. Scott responded that this is not physically possible for most projects. Mr. Massey replied that FDOT is in the process of developing a memorandum with FHWA, but this is the latest he has heard concerning the design regulations.

Mr. Noble made a statement concerning the Abel Canal PD&E study (Priority #2). He said that he cannot support moving the Winkler Canal Feasibility Study ahead of Abel Canal, as previously suggested by the City of Fort Myers, for these reasons: Lee County has gone ahead with the trail heads at either end of this trail corridor; the Harnes Marsh trail has already been constructed, and it is already open; the other end of the corridor at the Admiral Lehigh Neighborhood Center is under construction now; and the right of way is underway with the East County Water Control District.

MOTION BY MR. NOBLE TO APPROVE THE TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP) REGIONAL PATHWAYS PRIORITIES LIST AS AMENDED, EXCLUDING THE LISTED SIDE OF

**THE US 41 RIVER OF GRASS GREENWAY PROJECT. SECONDED BY
MR. IRVIN. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.**

REPORTS AND PRESENTATIONS

Agenda Item #6A – Discussion on the Future Funding Opportunities for the Lee Collier (LinC) Transit Connection

Mr. Scott presented this item. LeeTran has asked to bring this item forth for discussion in identifying the future funding opportunities for the Lee Collier transit connection, also known as LinC.

Mr. Shine of FDOT said that the Service Development Grant that helps fund the LinC connection has a three year time frame. Mr. Scott replied that the actual agreement mentions two years. Ms. Arnold said there is funding for two years, but the third year will be funded by Collier money. Mr. Shine clarified that the Service Development Grant dates are October 2011 – October 2014 (these are the actual bus service dates). The expiration date of the grant is December 31st to give the parties involved an extra quarter to produce a final invoice. Mr. Scott asked if LeeTran has enough money to keep them running through the three year period. Mr. Gaither answered yes. The funding will go through September 30th, 2014.

Mr. Scott asked LeeTran what this service route costs them per year. Mr. Gaither answered that it costs around \$515,000 annually (Monday – Sunday) with the current ridership. There are 9,000/month consistent riders. If you combine LinC with route 150, which complements it, the ridership is at 11,000 riders/month. LinC is a route that is well received by citizens both in Lee and Collier county.

Mr. Scott asked Mr. Shine if he had any other suggestions. Mr. Shine said that this is a competitive grants application, and he is hopeful that the project will continue to operate in the future.

Mr. Gogoi asked whether the corridor has to be designated in order for a project to be eligible for a Transit Corridor Grant. Mr. Shine stated that it is always a challenge to distribute these funds. Each district gets an allocation of Transit Corridor funding.

Mr. Scott asked if LeeTran and CAT would like to discuss these funding issues in front of the MPO Board. Ms. Trinity Scott said that both CAT and LeeTran will have a meeting tomorrow, March 8th, to speak about the LinC route.

Agenda Item #6B – Discussion of the Lee and Collier Reapportionment Letters and any Changes to Future Regional Activities

Mr. Scott presented this item. The current recommendation from the Lee MPO Board is for Collier and Lee to stay as separate MPOs but to move forward with any changes to regional coordination.

Ms. Lantz said that direction from the Collier MPO Board was also to stay separate as well. Collier is looking for a joint recommendation letter from both boards explaining the complexities and differences of the two MPOs.

Mr. Scott mentioned that the joint recommendation is consistent with the **Interlocal Agreement for Joint Regional Transportation Planning and Coordination Between the Collier and Lee County MPOs** (Attachment 3 of Agenda Item 6B).

Ms. Arnold asked if an endorsement is needed from the committees as well and not just the MPO Boards. Mr. Scott said that it would be appreciated.

MOTION BY MS. ZAMBRANO TO ENDORSE SEPARATE COLLIER AND LEE MPOS AND UPDATING THE INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT FOR JOINT REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AND COORDINATION BETWEEN THE COLLIER AND LEE COUNTY MPOS AS NEEDED. SECONDED BY MR. ARCHIBALD. MOTION CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY.

Agenda Item #6C – Update on the Long Range Transportation Plans for Old US 41 from US 41 in Collier County to Bonita Beach Road in Lee County

Ms. Lantz presented this item. The Collier MPO has been working on a Minor Update to the 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan and is expected to adopt it on March 8th before the Collier MPO Board. Collier has added the Old US 41 project (from Collier County to Bonita Beach Rd in Lee County) into the cost feasible plan. She said that the future implications of this action need to be discussed.

Mr. Scott added that there are some State/other arterial funds available in Lee County to fund this project in similar time frames to Collier County.

Ms. Zambrano asked if the purpose of this project is 6 laning. Mr. Scott answered it is 4 laning.

Agenda Item #6D – Presentation on the US 41/Bonita Beach Road Interchange ETDM Project

Ms. Lauren Brooks from the URS Corporation provide a PowerPoint on this project. They are assisting FDOT with the Efficient Transportation Decision Making Process (ETDM) for this project, a precursor to the PD&E phase.

Ms. Zambrano asked how the ETDM would fall into the decision for the Lee County MPO not to fund any overpasses in Lee County. Mr. Scott answered the decision only concerned Colonial Blvd between the Caloosahatchee River and I-75 for a 15 year period and that the Board had moved up this priority at a Board meeting.

Ms. Brooks said that comment cards are being passed around, and she asked for suggestions concerning this project.

Mr. Scott asked Ms. Brooks what needs to be programmed after a PD&E to get a PD&E approved.

Agenda Item #6E – Update of Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Projects and Plans

Mr. Massey presented this item.

Mr. Scott said that SR 82 is a high priority for both counties.

Mr. Massey said that there has been a need to do a PD&E on SR 29 from I-75 to Oil Well Rd.

Mr. Scott indicated that there has been discussion in the past for the need of creating an SIS Priorities sub-committee.

Ms. Ayer brought attention to SR 82. The recommendation from Collier is to move the Right of Way phase into the first 10 years.

Mr. Scott said the sub-committee can make comments on drafts of documents in a timely manner. He also asked if the TAC wants to have specific members on the sub-committee.

Mr. Massey mentioned that not every MPO prioritizes the SIS, and this list is a good thing.

Ms. Ayer suggested nominating a few dedicated members for the sub-committee.

Ms. Arnold asked if there are any volunteers for the sub-committee.

Ms. Trinity Scott suggested having a member from the two transit agencies and also an odd fifth member from the Regional Planning Council.

The **Sub-Committee** members from the TAC are:

Lee County TAC: Andy Getch and Wayne Gaither

Collier County TAC: Reed Jarvi and Michelle Arnold

Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council: Margaret Wuerstle

Ms. Ayer asked if they should send comments to FDOT this year concerning the SIS priorities. Mr. Massey said he would wait until after the draft document is available. Mr. Scott said he would send some questions to FDOT for clarification on some of these issues.

Agenda Item #6F – Discussion on the Development of Transportation Regional Incentive (TRIP) Priorities

Mr. Scott presented this item. The entire list of joint TRIP priorities is attached in the agenda packet. None of TRIP projects in the District were funded due to a lack of available TRIP funds. Mr. Scott said the list will be re-submitted. He asked the jurisdictions for project applications by mid-April. The Collier and Lee MPO Boards will prioritize them in June.

Ms. Zambrano asked if this is for Fiscal Year 2018/2019. Mr. Scott answered yes.

Other Business

Agenda Item #7 – Florida Department of Transportation Report

None.

Agenda Item #8 – Transit Update

Ms. Trinity Scott of CAT provided a PowerPoint presentation giving an overview of the Collier County Transit System. She said that there has been a continuous increase in ridership over the last three years on Collier's fixed route. There were over 1.2 million riders last year. Mr. Scott asked about the Transportation Disadvantaged ridership. Ms. Trinity Scott answered that it is slightly decreasing.

Mr. Gaither of LeeTran provided the report for Lee County Transit. He said that LeeTran also has increased ridership. The October-December quarter had over 1 million riders, a milestone for LeeTran. The groundbreaking for the LeeTran facility is on March 25th. Mr. Scott asked if there is anything new concerning the Florida Gulf Coast University route. Mr. Gaither explained that FGCU has decided to pull money for Route 60 that provides access to campus. There have been meetings between faculty and students who want to continue working with LeeTran. This will be discussed in front of the Board of County Commissioners at an upcoming meeting. Mr. Philpott asked what the ridership for Route 60 is. Mr. Gaither said it is rather low. LeeTran has the only service out there, and ADA service will be affected.

Ms. Letourneau commented that FGCU is a public institution and the MPO Board needs to communicate with them regarding Route 60. Mr. Gaither said that there are alternative ways of funding that can be introduced, such as having a transportation fee added to the registration fee.

Agenda Item #9 – Members' Comments

None.

Agenda Item #10 – Information Items

Mr. Scott said that there is a Summary of the FDOT 2013 Legislative Package in the agenda packet. The noise mitigation component along limited access roadways was highlighted to the local jurisdictions.

ADJOURNMENT

Meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.