

**JOINT COLLIER AND LEE CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING**

Florida Department of Transportation Southwest Area Office/SWIFT SunGuide Center

10041 Daniels Parkway

Fort Myers, FL  33913

#### October 6, 2016

**MEETING MINUTES**

**Agenda Item #1 – Call to Order/Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order by Don Scott, Lee County MPO, at 3:00 p.m. Calandra Barraco with Lee County MPO called roll for the Lee County CAC. A quorum was not met. Eric Ortman with the Collier County MPO called roll for the Collier County CAC. They did not have quorum either. The meeting was started as committee of whole. At Agenda Item #6B, the Lee County MPO had enough members, that arrived late, for a quorum.

**Agenda Item #2 – Pledge of Allegiance**

Don Scott led the Pledge of Allegiance for the meeting.

**Agenda Item #3 – Election of a Chairperson**

Gary Shirk with Collier County was elected to Chair the meeting.

**Agenda Item #4 – Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**Agenda Item #5 – Approval of Agenda**

The agenda was approved unanimously with a motion by Rick Anglickis and a second by Bev Larson.

**Agenda Item #6 – Action Items**

**A. Review and Approval of the Revised Regional Roadway Network and Review of the Proposed Joint Resolutions for Board Action**

Don Scott recommended that the MPO amend the Lee Collier Regional Roadway network, given as handout/attached to agenda, and review the proposed Joint Resolutions for Board action. Lee County had received TRIP funding for Burnt Store Road, and resolutions showing the regional network are now required to be included with the agreement. The regional roadway network is being revised to reflect projects that have now been completed (like the Metro Fowler connection) and to adopt a joint resolution designating the network, handout and attached to agenda. The county will do a specific resolution for Burnt Store but the MPO needs to also have a resolution covering the regional map. In addition, as part of this process the Joint MPO Board will be asked to approve the attached resolution for the previously adopted TRIP priorities. These resolutions are being done to allow the local agencies to enter into the new FDOT TRIP funding agreements that now require a joint resolution designating the facility as a regional facility (and including a resolution that covers the TRIP priorities will also help cover the possible future project agreements). Mr. Scott also pointed out that Collier wanted to call out the Everglades at I75 to include wording indicating that it would be in the vicinity of this location. Mr. Scott opened the item up for comments.

Mr. Scott bought up the changes proposed and approved in the Joint TAC meeting. They are changing the “in the vicinity of” Everglades Boulevard designation and the completion of the CAT terminal.

In addition, he touched on the TRIP priorities and they have not changed. This is just a paperwork cleanup exercise.

A question was raised about the studies that have been completed to date regarding the Everglades and panther habitat and if an EIS would be required. There is nothing immediately planned for the area but studies would be required. The map is simply to start the process.

Mr. Rick Anglickis with Lee County made the motion to approve the map/resolution and Karen Homiak with Collier County seconded the motion. The motion was approved with one member opposed.

**B. Review and Approval of the Revised Regional Non-Motorized Transportation Network**

Don Scott recommended that the MPO amend the Lee Collier Bi-County Regional Non-Motorized Map as shown in Attachment A. At the Joint Lee and Collier Bicycle Pedestrian meeting in the spring, the Lee Collier Regional Pathway map was revised based on adding and removing segments, revising the status of segments and updating the Southwest Coastal Regional Trail alignments that were recently added to the State maps. Following those changes, the changes were not adopted by the Collier MPO as there were numerous questions raised by staff and the Collier PAC regarding the status of individual projects, the definition of pathways on some of the road segments as some segments will remain as sidewalks, and the interpretation of the map by the public and users of the map.

On July 22nd, staff from the Lee and Collier MPO’s met to resolve the issues, and it was proposed that (1) we show the network in a single color (2) change the title from Pathway to “Non-Motorized” Network as right of way constraints in certain urban areas within the network will not allow the accommodation of new shared use paths and those segments will have to remain as existing sidewalks, and (3) maintain separate maps as part of the respective Bicycle Pedestrian Plans for staff and committees’ use that illustrate the status/cross-sections of individual segments on the network and that local MPO or jurisdiction Bike Ped plans will determine what gets built along the corridors. At the October 6th meeting, the Joint Committee’s will be asked to recommend MPO approval of the revised map, attached to agenda packet.

In addition, due to recent changes in FDOT agreements that include the need for resolutions for the processing of funding agreements for projects, the staff is proposing to include a resolution approving the Joint Regional Map. A draft of the resolution was attached to the agenda packet for Joint Committee review, input, and MPO Board action.

Mr. Scott also mentioned that he had been contacted about the River of Grass Greenway and the environmental sensitive aspects of the project how this would affect that project or if it meant the resolution was in support of the project. There were three letters regarding the River of Grass Greenway that he brought and handed out. He explained that the map is simply to provide opportunities for regional funding in the future and it doesn’t indicate endorsement of any project.

Patty Whitehead of the Lee County CAC brought up social justice, cultural, and environment issues regarding the project and the impact to the tribes in the area and how the asphalt path would negatively affect them. She commented that the improvements should be made locally and not in the middle of the Everglades. An alternate path for the River of Grass Greenway would be to turn at SR 29 and terminate in Everglades City was proposed.

Al O’Donnell raised design issues that could be addressed when the projects are proposed.

Patty Huff of the Collier County CAC and Friends of the River of Grass Greenway, stated that she had been in contact with the tribes and they are informed, involved, and part of process. This is a long-range project and studies still need to be conducted to link the east coast to the west coast.

There was a motion to approve the map and the resolution from Karen Homiak and a second from Randy Krise. There was one member that opposed the motion.

**Agenda Item #7 – Reports and Presentations**

**A. Review of the Regional Components of the National Highway System and Functional Classification Updates**

Ron Gogoi with the Lee County MPO recommended that the Lee and Collier County MPO Boards adopt a resolution at the October 21st meeting requesting FHWA to designate SR 82 as a National Highway System facility. He provided an overview of the plan to submit a request to FHWA for adding SR 82 to the National Highway System (NHS) that will allow projects on this roadway to be eligible for National Highway Performance Program (NHPP) funds and FAST lane freight grants. The SR 82 segment is from Fowler Avenue in Lee County to SR 29 in Collier County and the proposal request is to classify it a principle arterial. A study was conducted that even with the programmed improvements, sections of SR82 improvements will not carry into 2035. The additional funding programs open opportunities to program the capacity improvements on SR 82 in Collier County, and the ultimate 6-lane configuration on those segments which are programmed for 4-lane widening, or construction is underway. The request to add SR 82 to the NHS will require joint collaboration and coordination among the adjoining counties and the MPOs through which the roadway runs. Resolutions have to be adopted by the Lee County and Collier County MPOs and the Hendry County BOCC. A Statement of Justification was included in the agenda. TheDraftJustification Document was handed out today for review. The complete list of Lee MPO roadways and roadway segments for NHS designation changes were included inthe agenda.

A question was asked about a shortage of funds and there is currently a shortage of funds for this area. Certain sections of SR 82 are not in the current work program and are not currently funded. The Lee County MPO started the process for the NHS designation changes to achieve more funding. The restrictions are not any different than those already on US 41.

There does not appear to be a downside of this designation. It will not take local funds away from other projects. A comment was made that it will help Lee and Collier Counties by providing an additional reasonable pathway to the more populated areas.

The motion was moved for approval by Al O’Donnell and seconded by Ty Symroski. It was approved unanimously.

**B. Regional Transit Discussion**

Omar DeLeon with Collier Area Transit (CAT) stated there will be a reevaluation of the two Immokalee Circulator routes (Routes 22 and 23) over the next few months. One public meeting to solicit input from the community in an effort to identify origins and destinations that are not currently being served by the system has already been conducted. They received a great response.

As part of the process, regional opportunities for connection into Lee and Hendry counties will be evaluated. SR 82 is one of those routes that will be looked in to. Another example, is service to iTech that has been identified as a destination that both residents of the Immokalee community and adjacent counties are interested in accessing with transit.

Additionally, Collier County and Hendry County are partnering with Good Wheels to provide a rural route that would provide public transportation service between the counties as well as connecting with Glades County. Good Wheels will be awarded a grant from the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) to provide this service. Additionally, Don Scott added that there has been some discussion about connecting Labelle to Riverdale or from Lehigh to Immokalee. This would require getting funding money from other grant sources.

Omar noted that the connection between Lee and Collier has been very successful in the urban area with the LinC. A connection between counties in the rural area should also be made a priority. This planning effort will provide opportunities for grant funding such as Service Development Grants (SDG) towards the implementation of this regional public transportation system.

The funding level has remained stable with a possibility of slight increase if later service is available.

Both counties will continue to coordinate to expand on regional opportunities to improve access across county lines.

**C. Update on the District One MPO Chair Summit and Coastal MPO Alliance**

Don Scott discussed the Charlotte County – Punta Gorda MPO proposal of holding a District One MPO Chair’s Summit to discuss regional planning concerns and the formation of a Coastal MPO Alliance. FDOT has agreed to host the Chair’s Summit at its new operations center in Manatee County. The current proposal is to have the Chair’s Summit coincide with the Coordinated Urban Transportation Studies (CUTS) meeting on January 10, 2017. The agenda will be discussed at the CUTS meeting scheduled for October 11, 2016. The March 15, 2016 Letter from Charlotte County – Punta Gorda MPO was included as an attachment to the agenda.

A comment was made that regional projects wouldn’t be a concern but the local projects may be adversely affected since the larger MPOs might out vote smaller MPOs. Another comment was made that local groups should get together without Bartow. Yet now with SR 82 funding, Lee County is receiving a larger share of the funding. This is an information only item and doesn’t require a motion.

**D. Update and Discussion on the FHWA/FTA Notice of Proposed Rulemaking for MPO Coordination and Planning Area Reform**

Don Scott explained the planning area reform. He explained that the Collier and Lee County MPOs have already provided comments to them indicating there is excellent collaboration between the area MPOs and there are formal coordination agreements. Additionally, it would be difficult to provide answers to questions asked without more specific information on the questions everybody asked from around the Country. The TAC recommended that issues should be dealt with by clarifying the questions that are being asked. The MPO Boards, when previously asked, did not want to combine.

On June 27, 2016, the United States Department of Transportation (Federal Highway Administration and Federal Transit Administration) proposed a draft rule proposing changes to the transportation planning regulations to “promote more effective regional planning by States and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPO)”. Comments on the proposed rule were due by August 26, 2016. A summary of the proposed rule requirements are listed below:

* Changes to the definition of Metropolitan Planning Area would clarify that it must include the entire urbanized area, plus the contiguous area forecast to become urbanized within the 20 year planning horizon.
  + In practice, the Metropolitan Planning Area has been synonymous with the MPO boundary.
  + But in statute, the Metropolitan Planning Area is intended to be the entire urbanized area. In complex areas, the statute envisions there could be multiple MPOs within one metropolitan planning area.
* Governors and MPOs would determine whether multiple MPOs are warranted within a single Metropolitan Planning Area, based on the size and complexity of the area.
* Multiple MPOs within a metropolitan planning area would jointly develop planning products including a single metropolitan transportation plan, TIP, and performance targets.
* In order to improve State coordination with MPOs, States and MPOs would be required to maintain a current planning agreement, which would include a dispute resolution process, and would be required for coordination for analyses of areas within the metropolitan planning area.
* Metropolitan planning agreements must include coordination strategies and dispute resolution procedures between the States and the MPOs and, MPO to MPO for those sharing UZA boundaries.
* Planning data must be consistent between States and MPOs.

The proposed rule is lengthy so a link to it is provided here: <https://www.federalregister.gov/articles/2016/06/27/2016-14854/metropolitan-planning-organization-coordination-and-planning-area-reform>.

Both MPO’s provided comments on the proposed rule by the due date but now the FHWA and FTA have re-opened the comment period through October 24, 2016 to allow the opportunity for reviewers to provide more detailed comments on two areas:

* Specific and detailed comments on the expected costs of implementing the proposed rule.
* Specific and detailed comments that contribute to the understanding of the impact of the proposed requirements for unified planning products where multiple MPOs serve the same urbanized area, potential exceptions that should be included in the final rule, and criteria for applying such exceptions.

The updated notification was attached to the agenda packet. The Collier County Board, MPOAC, NARC, FDOT, Charlotte MPO, and Lee MPO are opposed to combining. There are existing agreements to coordinate with other MPOs. A combination of MPOS would require a change in funding formulas and an overhaul of the existing system. It would also require a reduction of membership from each Board. It might require lines to be redrawn. A Lobbyist was used by Charlotte MPO to write letters and might be an option for the other MPOs. A suggestion was made to draft a letter of opposition or draft a resolution of opposition.

A comment was made that it wouldn’t meet the needs of smaller areas. Another comment was made that the CAC may lose support and citizen input if combined since they would have to drive a long distance.

**Agenda Item #8 – Florida Department of Transportation Report**

D’Juan Harris with FDOT informed the committee that Secretary Hattaway gave his resignation notice and November 23rd is his last day. Mr. Harris also informed the committee that they are wrapping up the FY2018-2022 work program. It will kick off with an ePublic hearing that will be taking place October 17th at 9 a.m. through October 24, 2017 at 9 a.m. and the website is [www.swflroads.com](http://www.swflroads.com). They will also be soliciting comments from the public in person at South Regional Library in Collier County on Wednesday, October 19th from 12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. and in Lee County at Lakes Regional Library on Thursday, October 20 from 12:30 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. These events are part of a 21-day public notice process. Mr. Harris provided a copy of the press release to the CAC members present and forwarded this information in an email to Lee County MPO (it was then forwarded by Lee County MPO to all committee members from the TAC and CAC).

**Agenda Item #9 – Transit Update**

Wayne Gaither with LeeTran reported that they finished the year with 3.3 million passenger trips. It is one of the top five passenger years. He noted that their TDP should be completed by next week.

**Agenda Item #10 – Members’ Comments**

A note was made that Lee County MPO had a quorum before we voted on Agenda Item #6B. Collier was still one short.

D’Juan Harris was thanked for coordinating the tour of the facility.

**Agenda Item #11 – Information Items**

Don Scott explained that the TIP reporter tool may show a project funded in 2022 but FDOT just places projects just outside the five year work program for future funding and it may not get funded in the next new year depending on the amount of funding available and that needs to be addressed in the searches and those projects need to be screened out.

Anne McLaughlin stated that Collier MPO will send out the Work Program to all advisory committees once they receive it. She is requesting feedback at that time as to keep FDOT apprised of questions.

**Agenda Item # 12 – Adjournment of Meeting**

Gary Shirk, elected Chair, asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting at 4:30 p.m. It was moved by Randy Krise and seconded unanimously.

All meetings of the Joint Lee County and Collier County Technical Advisory Committee are open to the public and citizen input is encouraged. Any person wishing to speak on any scheduled item may do so upon recognition by the Chairperson. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, any person requiring special accommodations to participate in this meeting should contact **Mr. Johnny Limbaugh at the Lee County MPO** at (239) 330-2239; or **Ms. Anne McLaughlin** **at the Collier County MPO** at (239) 252-8192, 48 hours prior to the meeting; if you are hearing or speech impaired, call (800) 955-8770 Voice (800) 955-8771 TDD. Or, e-mail [jlimbaugh@leempo.com](mailto:jlimbaugh@leempo.com) or [AnneMcLaughlin@colliergov.net](mailto:AnneMcLaughlin@colliergov.net).

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 that within the MPO’s planning process they have been discriminated against because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, or familial status may file a complaint with either the Lee County MPO Title VI Coordinator Johnny Limbaugh at (239) 330-2242 or by writing Mr. Limbaugh at P.O. Box 150045, Cape Coral, Florida 33915-0045 or the Collier MPO Title VI Specialist Ms. Anne McLaughlin at (239) 252-8192 or by writing Ms. McLaughlin at 2885 South Horseshoe Dr., Naples, Florida 34104.

Any person who decides to appeal a decision of this committee will need a record of the proceedings pertaining thereto, and therefore may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.