

# **CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization

Thursday, November 3, 2016

City of Cape Coral Public Works Building

815 Nicholas Parkway East, Cape Coral, FL 33990

**3:00 p.m.**



## **Meeting Summary**

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**The meeting was called to order by Chairman Rick Anglickis at 3:02 p.m. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.**

**The roll was called and quorum was present.**

### **Agenda Item #1- Public Comments on Items on the Agenda**

There were no comments from the public on items on the agenda.

### **New Business**

### **Agenda Item #2 - \*Review and Approval of the October 6, 2016 Meeting Summary**

**The motion to approve the summary as presented was made by Mr. Randy Krise and seconded by Mr. Phillip Boller. The motion was approved unanimously.**

### **Agenda Item #3 - \*TIP Amendments**

Mr. Don Scott, Lee MPO, reviewed the addition of new projects to the FY 2016/17 through FY 2020/21 TIP that include intersection lighting retrofit projects, Safe Route to School (SRTS) sidewalk projects, FTA section 5310 grant awards for vehicles and the Federal Annual Obligation Report.

The TIP is being amended to add the new projects listed below and described in the letter attached to the agenda packet with additional information on the 5310 grant awards provided. In addition, the federal annual obligation report is also being added to the TIP and was attached to the agenda packet.

- Design phase for US 41 and Fowler Avenue intersection lighting retrofit project
- Design and Construction of retrofit intersection lighting at major intersections along McGregor Boulevard.
- Design phase for a sidewalk at Tanglewood Elementary funded with Safe Routes to School (SRTS) funds
- Design phase for a sidewalk at Mariner Middle funded with Safe Routes to School funds
- Capital funding for vehicles for Good Wheels Inc. funded with FTA Section 5310 funding
- Capital funding for a twenty-seven-foot bus for Hope Hospice and Community Services funded with FTA Section 5310 funding

**The motion to approve the addition of the TIP Amendments was made by Mr. Ty Symroski and seconded by Mr. Ed Blot. The motion was approved unanimously.**

#### **Agenda Item #4 - \*Approval of the Joint Lee and Charlotte Regional Network and Review of the Joint Resolutions for MPO Approval**

Mr. Don Scott recommended that the MPO approve the Lee Charlotte Regional Roadway network that was attached to the agenda packet and reviewed the proposed Joint Resolutions for Board action. Mr. Scott explained that a vote did not happen at the joint Lee Collier MPO meeting because Collier did not have a quorum.

The regional roadway network is being developed consistent with the regional network, that was attached to the agenda packet, that we share with the Collier MPO and that the Charlotte-Punta Gorda MPO shares with the Sarasota Manatee MPO. We are seeking a joint resolution, that was attached to the agenda packet, designating the network to be used with the Burnt Store Road TRIP funding agreement that needs to be finalized later this year. In addition, as part of this process the Joint Lee and Charlotte MPO Board will be asked to approve the resolution, attached to the agenda packet, for the previously adopted TRIP priorities that included the Burnt Store Road project that is receiving TRIP funds. As we discussed last month, the new FDOT TRIP funding agreement requires a joint resolution designating the facility as a regional facility. The agenda packet included a resolution that covers the previously approved, in 2013, TRIP priorities as well to help show the approval of the project.

Mr. Scott stated that the only change Charlotte County had to the resolutions was their official name is Charlotte County - Punta Gorda MPO, with a dash, and not just Charlotte Punta Gorda MPO, without the dash. These resolutions will be taken to the joint meeting so Lee County can go forward with their agreement.

There were no questions or comments from the committee.

**The motion to approve the Lee Charlotte Regional Roadway Network was made by Mr. Randy Krise and seconded by Ms. Bev Larson. It was approved unanimously.**

Item #5 was held since Mr. D’Juan Harris was not present. The committee moved on to Item #6.

#### **Agenda Item #6 - Presentation on the US 41 Corridor Improvements in Fort Myers**

Mr. David Jones, FDOT, presented on the US 41 corridor improvement project. The project is located along Cleveland Ave, US 41, from Winkler Avenue to just south of SR 82. The history of this corridor project begins in 2005/2006 with the Fort Myers Redevelopment Agency’s Master Plan for the Cleveland Avenue Redevelopment Area that included medians. The City of Fort Myers approved the plan in 2010. In 2012, the City Council requested that FDOT prepare plans for full medians for pedestrian safety. In 2014, a road safety audit was conducted and it was recommended that the medians and several pedestrian crossings be added. The data that came out of the safety audit indicated that the daily traffic for this project is greatest at the south end of the project. Between 2011-2013 there were 454 crashes on the corridor. 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, new and upgraded signals at select intersections, LED lighting upgrades, and new signing and pavement markings. The overhead mounted pedestrian traffic control devices are called HAWKs. HAWK stands for **H**igh-Intensity **A**ctivated cross**W**alk. There will be a total of six of these pedestrian activated HAWKs located as follows: just north of Earl Road, just south of Maravilla Lane, just north of Ricardo Avenue, at Coronado Road, midway between Hanson and Linhart, and just north of Lafayette Street. These HAWKs will provide more crossings at regular intervals. There will still be five foot sidewalks and ten foot lanes but there will be dedicated left turn lanes instead of two way turn lanes.

Mr. Jones then showed a slide with a project “Fly-Thru” video that presented a rendering of what the proposed project would look like from Grace to Canal traveling northbound. It showed what the street would look like and showed a pedestrian crossing with the HAWK. It included the new signal at Linhart. The visual video terminates at the hospital.

Mr. Jones stated that a majority of the signals will be upgraded to mast arms and two new signals will be added. The signals at Oakley Avenue, Collier Avenue, Carrell Road, Hanson Street, South/Llewellyn, Edison Avenue, and Victoria will be upgraded to mast arms. They are constructing new signals at Linhart Avenue and Stella Street. There will be minor upgrades at Hill Avenue but the strain pole will remain. There was not enough of a right of way to facilitate a mast arm. There will also be minor upgrades at Grace Avenue but the mast arms will remain.

In addition, the extension of the dual box culvert at Canal Street will provide more room for pedestrian connectivity and increase 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 along with the roadway improvements. The total cost for the FDOT project is roughly \$12 million. Construction is expected to start this time next year. The McGregor project will be going out to bid soon and FDOT will be coordinating with the City of Fort Myers and possibly changing some of the project schedules on the US 41 improvements.

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 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.

The public involvement for this project includes presentations to the City of Fort Myers, presentations to City and MPO committees, meeting with BikeWalkLee, small group meetings with businesses, one on one meetings with property owners, three neighborhood meetings, and a formal public hearing.

Mr. Jones opened the floor to questions and comments.

A question about the impact of increased u turns and the restriction of certain vehicles was raised. Mr. Jones stated that they have looked at the turning vehicles and most passenger vehicles and even smaller trucks can make the u turns. Some of the larger trucks will have to divert their routes. FDOT is aware that it may inconvenience some people and some may not be able to make the turns.

Mr. Scott added that when reviewing the plans, he made comments about that and the Winkler left turn that already backs up.

Another comment was made specifically about the turn at Maravilla near Allen Park Elementary and the ability of the school buses to turn. Mr. Jones consulted with Mr. Jordan Leep of Kimley-Horn, the project EOR, and he consulted the plans. Mr. Jones stated he would follow up with Lee County Schools and make sure the school buses will not be impacted.

A question was posed about whether there would be a median by Winkler to prevent the illegal left turns there. Mr. Jones stated there will be a median there to block those turns. Also, at Oakley, they are looking at blocking the road where there is a left turn. The Winkler turn lane may be lengthened as a result.

The closing of the inside lanes instead of the outside lanes in the road diet was questioned. Mr. Scott responded that they still needed access to the sidewalk because of transit and turn lanes. Mr. Jones added that they needed to keep access to all driveway locations.

A comment was made to thank FDOT for what they had done with the project. It continued with a question about the new signals and how FDOT knew they were being placed at the right locations. Mr. Jones stated there was data collected for crashes as well as bike/ped and vehicle counts.

A question was posed as to the purpose of the medians and if they were center staging areas for pedestrians or to block vehicle traffic. Mr. Jones stated it was for both but pedestrians would have enough time to cross the whole length of the road.

The time limit for the completion of the project and if there was a limit on the length of the project was asked. Mr. Jones said the project is slated for two plus years but could take closer to three years with the City's utility project. The lane diet could also extend the look of construction since it must be conducted during peak season and that is only a fourth month window.

Another question was asked about the time frames of the projects and how two projects could get approved for the same period. Mr. Jones explained that the directors and upper managers are looking at moving the US 41 project out. Mr. Scott explained that all parties involved are well aware and FDOT is not wholly to blame. FDOT has been urging the City to begin the McGregor project for some time.

A question was asked why there aren't bulb outs/buffering on some of the pedestrian crossings and if landscaping would be part of this project. Mr. Jones stated that some of the crossings do not need them because there is no turning traffic, intersections need extra turning space available for cars to maneuver turns, and landscaping will not be part of this project.

A concern was raised about the property owners, visibility of their businesses, and adverse effects to their businesses caused by this project. Mr. Jones said they had the same issues with SR 80. FDOT and the City will discuss with property owners that this is the first step in the vision to transform the City. The attempt is to reduce accidents and increase safety.

A comment was made that US 41 will not experience the same problems as SR 80 since it has more lanes. It also has a better grid to divert traffic.

A question was asked if the speed will be reduced. Mr. Jones said he believes it is a goal eventually to reduce speed and vehicles through this area and increase pedestrians and cyclists. The City would like to gradually transition the corridor into the downtown area. The future plan to use landscaping in the median and widening the sidewalks will help to facilitate this. The current medians will have sod but there may be eventual plans to add better landscaping.

The next question was about providing examples of other cities along highway 41 in Florida where this was done. Mr. Jones said Naples, Sarasota, and Cape Coral/North Fort Myers. The biggest benefit of adding medians is safety and FDOT's number one priority is safety. SR 80 has seen drastic reductions in accidents.

A question was asked if the designation of US 41 and Business 41 will be swapped and then the speed will be reduced. Mr. Jones said he did not know of that but he would check into it. Mr. Scott said that they still hadn't done anything with Fowler. He said he requested an O&D study to find out where everyone is coming from and going to. Mr. Jones stated other studies/modeling were done but they seemed to be inaccurate.

Another question was posed as to whether a whole system modeling approach would ever be used. Mr. Jones stated that was part of the reason they did the O&D study beforehand and that study encompassed a fairly large area of the region. The question continued regarding transit and its inclusion in the model. Mr. Scott answered that it is included but it doesn't do what you want it to do and it's not a big part of it. Transit ridership is down.

A comment was made that these construction projects could be an opportunity for transit and they could be part of the solution. Mr. Scott said to forget the model and in this instance they are going out and measuring traffic. This is one of the heaviest routes for transit and they could study the changes in that. Mr. Jones said he would talk to LeeTran and see if they have any way to reach out to people. Mr. Scott suggested using MOT money to increase service.

A question was posed about whether they left the public adequate time to change the design if there is good input. Mr. Jones believes they have enough time. Public/business meetings have been rescheduled due to McGregor construction coordination.

### **Agenda Item #5 - +Review and Comment on the FDOT Draft Tentative Work Program**

Mr. D'Juan Harris, FDOT, presented and reviewed the Draft Tentative Work Program for FY 2018 through FY 2022. The Draft Tentative Work Program is only a draft. The programming of the projects is a work in progress. It is an ongoing process until July 1, 2017 and then the legislature will adopt.

FDOT has published the draft tentative Work Program covering fiscal years 2018 through 2022, that was attached to the agenda packet. Also attached was the additions, re-schedulings and deletions table, **Add/Defer/Delete**, but an updated version was handed out at the meeting by Mr. Harris. It provides a good overview of the program and also includes a few project phases that were not in the Work Program document. Mr. Harris went down the list and read the projects and their explanations.

Mr. Harris further explained the LeeTran bus replacements since there was an issue with FY 2018 and FY 2019 because the \$1.5 million set aside was not in the draft tentative work program. FDOT is addressing that in 2019 and they are adding half of the money LeeTran asked for. FDOT will look at the next work program development cycle to add the additional \$750,000 LeeTran requested.

Mr. Scott stated that Estero asked to have their Bike/Ped study moved up. It could start July 1, 2018 if they had everything ready.

When he completed reviewing the **Add/Defer/Delete** sheet, Mr. Harris also explained the box funding for the MPO. A contingency box is kept for ongoing projects to address price increases. The significant funds are as follows: 2020, \$2.3 million SU; 2021, \$2.4 million SU, \$400,000 TA; 2022, \$1 million. There may be an opportunity to advance or place new projects into the common four years of the draft tentative work program next year.

Mr. Harris opened the floor to comments and questions.

The first question was if the 2022 funds will increase. Mr. Harris stated they will probably decrease and the numbers constantly change.

A question was asked regarding what the project was at Andalusia. Mr. Harris stated it is a sidewalk.

Another question was posed about why Tice sidewalks are not being implemented and if FDOT is prepared to pressure the County to fix the drainage. Mr. Harris said they have met with the County on numerous occasions and FDOT is prepared to collaborate with the County to mitigate some of the

conveyance issues. The system in Tice works and if impervious surfaces like sidewalks are added, the runoff increases and drainage will be impacted. Mr. Scott stated the District drainage engineer went to the Statewide drainage engineer and some things fell from there. Mr. Gogoi directed the members to contact Lee County Transportation and Community Development and get an update. Some members of the committee asked if MPO could arrange for a speaker from the County to come and discuss the Tice sidewalks. A related question was asked about why the Tice sidewalk project was deleted in the **Add/Defer/Delete** table. Mr. Gogoi stated that the design was so far out and when there are SRTS dollars you attempt to acquire them.

No action was required by the committee.

### **Other Business**

#### **Agenda Item #7 -Public Comments on Items not on the Agenda**

There were no public comments on items not on the agenda.

#### **Agenda Item #8 - LeeTran Report**

Levi McCollum with LeeTran had nothing new to report but did mention that they had 3.3 million passenger trips for FY2016 and it was one of their top five years.

#### **Agenda Item #9 - FDOT Report**

D’Juan Harris with FDOT had nothing further to report.

#### **Agenda Item #10 - Announcements**

There were no announcements but there was a member comment from Ms. Margaret Banyan on the SR 82 project bike/ped pathway and how the opinions of the committee were communicated. She felt the committee should pay attention to how things are communicated to the MPO and in other meetings. Other members felt it was the News Press/media that had miscommunicated to the public/Council what the committees said. Another issue Ms. Banyan had was she felt all the committees should be aware of how the other committees voted on issues, especially the BPCC for the SR 82 pathway issue. Mr. Scott explained there was not a July BPCC meeting and the July MPO Board meeting was cancelled and those were some of the issues. Mr. Scott said the bigger picture is they are building what we asked them to build based on the Master Plan. If we want something different, we need to be more specific about the descriptions in the Master Plan regarding the types of facilities we are requesting. These descriptions should be included in the Long Range Plan as well. The other issue that we still haven’t resolved is maintenance and will FDOT maintain the facility once it is constructed. Another member commented that there were avid riders on the BPCC that only represented the small minority of the users of the paths. A concern was the project would be done before those running the project had even talked with anyone from the public. A question was posed as to the new design being bike lanes off the road. Mr. Scott said no. Mr. Gogoi said the resurfacing projects will have on road bicycle facilities. Ms. Banyan also made a comment about the issue being process and communication and possibly having members on the BPCC that are more balanced. The job of the CAC is to represent the citizens.

Randy Krise mentioned he will not be able to attend the joint BPCC meeting with Charlotte on November 22 and an alternate, John Karcher, stated he will be able to attend.

### **Agenda Item #11- Topics for next meeting**

A discussion of the proposed Tice sidewalk project with a speaker from the County was suggested for next meeting.

### **Agenda Item #12 - Information and Distribution Items**

A request was made by Chairman Rick Anglickis to have an updated list of committee member names and emails for distribution at the December meeting.

**The meeting was adjourned at 4:36 p.m.**

\*Action Items    +May Require Action

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