

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD

9:00 a.m., Friday, February 17, 2017
Lee County Administration East Building
2201 Second Street, Room 118
Fort Myers, FL 33901
239-244-2220



Meeting Summary

The meeting was called to order at 9:02 a.m. by Rick Williams, Chair.

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The roll was called and a quorum was present.

Lee County MPO Board Members in attendance included Lee County Commissioners Hamman, Kiker, Manning, Pendergrass, and Mann; City of Cape Coral Councilmembers Williams, Carioscia, Stout, and Burch; City of Cape Coral Mayor Sawicki; City of Fort Myers Councilmembers Flanders and Anthony; Town of Fort Myers Beach Councilmember Tracey Gore; Village of Estero Mayor Batos; City of Sanibel Vice-Mayor Denham; City of Bonita Springs Deputy Mayor O'Flinn; and City of Bonita Springs Councilmember Forbes. Others in attendance included Lee County MPO staff Don Scott, Ron Gogoi, and Calandra Barraco; MPO legal counsel Derek Rooney; L. K. Nandam, D'Juan Harris, Zach Burch, Steve Walls, Laura Herrscher, and David Jones with FDOT; Persides Zambrano with the City of Cape Coral; Larry Cripps with Beach Area Civic Association; David Loveland and Randy Cerchie with Lee County; Lee Combs and Wayne Gaither with LeeTran; Mark Gillis, Victor Lee, Deven Long, Andrew Newman, and Stephen Leung with David Plummer; Michael Wallwork; and Alan Mandel with GoodWheels.

Agenda Item #1 - Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinating Committee Report (BPCC)

Mr. Don Scott gave the Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinating Committee Report. He announced that the BPCC meeting on February 28th will be at 2:00 p.m. instead of the regular time of 10:00 a.m.

Agenda Item #2 - Citizens Advisory Committee Report (CAC)

Mr. Scott gave the Citizens Advisory Committee Report. He noted at the February 2, 2017 meeting the CAC approved the draft Public Involvement Plan and SUN Trail revisions and also received a presentation from Ann Pierce on separated/protected bicycle lanes.

Agenda Item #3 - Public Comments on Consent Agenda Items

There were no public comments on the consent agenda items.

Agenda Item #4 - Consent Agenda

- A. Approval of the January 20, 2017 Meeting Minutes
- B. Approval to Open the Public Comment Period for the Revised Public Involvement Plan (PIP)

**Commissioner Manning made the motion to approve the consent agenda items.
Commissioner Hamman seconded the motion. There were no objections and the motion carried unanimously.**

Agenda Item #5 - Public Comments will be Taken at Each Item

New Business

Agenda Item #6 - *Approval of the Joint Lee and Collier Resolution Documenting the Previously Approved TRIP Priorities and Regional Map

Mr. Scott introduced this agenda item for the approval of a Joint Lee and Collier MPO resolution documenting the previously approved Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) priorities and the corresponding Regional Roadway Map (the resolution, TRIP priorities and Regional Roadway Map were attached to the agenda packet).

Mr. Scott explained the Lee and Collier MPO's are approving a Joint resolution documenting the previously approved TRIP priorities and Regional Roadway map to be used by the local agencies when they are entering into TRIP agreements with FDOT. The TRIP agreements now require a resolution from the Joint MPO's stating that the project receiving funding is a regional facility approved by the two MPO's. The TRIP priority list was previously approved at a Joint Lee and Collier meeting in March of 2015 and the Regional Roadway Map was previously approved at a Joint meeting in October of 2011.

The floor was opened for Board member comments or questions.

Vice-Chair Tracey Gore asked about the wording for Big Carlos Bridge and if it meant the bridge would be repaired or replaced. Mr. Scott said all the options will be considered as part of the ongoing PD&E study.

There was a brief discussion regarding the lack of communication and incorrect information that has surrounded this study. Commissioner Kiker stated this needed to be addressed.

The floor was opened for public comment and there was one public comment card turned in.

Mr. Larry Kripps spoke on behalf of the Beach Civic Association. He read a letter from the association requesting the FDOT study not be postponed. He stated they would like the study back in the system so that the study can move forward and help the beach.

Councilmember Burch felt items needed to be prioritized.

Vice-Chair Gore clarified that it was Big Carlos Bridge she was referring to.

Commissioner Manning made the motion to approve this agenda item. Mayor Batos seconded the motion. There were no objections and the motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item #7 - *Review and Approval of a Resolution asking the Florida Greenways and Trails Council to Add the Coastal Loop to the Southwest Coast Connector

Mr. Scott introduced this agenda item and then handed the presentation over to Mr. Ron Gogoi who further explained this agenda item to review and adopt the Resolution attached to the agenda packet asking the Florida Greenways and Trails Council to add the Coastal Loop to the Priority Land Trail Map during the ongoing update of the Florida Greenways and Trails Master Plan. This plan is updated every five years and \$25 million a year has been allocated for SUN Trail projects.

Mr. Gogoi first presented a slide show on the history of the trail system. The history was also included in a packet that Mr. Gogoi handed out. The Southwest Coast Connector (aka Southwest Coastal Regional Trail aka Gulf Coast Regional Trail) is a 270 miles long regional trail stretching from St.

Petersburg in Pinellas County to Naples in Collier County, see Attachment A of the agenda packet. It is part of the Florida Shared Use Non-Motorized (SUN) Trail Network and therefore eligible for dedicated State funds. The alignment within Lee and Collier County was approved at a joint Lee and Collier MPO Board meeting on March 20, 2015.

The proposal was also presented at the Gulf Coast Trail Summit on January 23rd.

There was a brief discussion on trail funding for Cape Coral.

Vice-Mayor Denham asked how this agenda item affects current funding. Mr. Scott responded that these are state funds specifically set aside for SUN Trail. Mr. Gogoi said we would compete with other MPOs in the state for this type of discretionary funding. Mr. Denham then asked what the approval and signing of this resolution means. Mr. Gogoi stated it will make it possible, if approved by the Florida Greenways and Trail Council, to be eligible for SUN Trail funding.

Councilmember Forbes asked about phases and design money. Mr. Gogoi said they can see where the trail would go through Bonita Springs but cycle paths are not eligible for SUN Trail funding as the paths must be shared use to qualify.

Mr. Gogoi continued with a slide show on the Coastal Loop. Recently, the MPO staff and the President of the Florida Greenways and Trails Foundation discussed an idea about adding a loop to the Lee County portion of the Southwest Coast Connector that would run along Gladiolus Drive, Summerlin Road, San Carlos Boulevard, Estero Boulevard and Hickory Boulevard as shown in Attachment B of the agenda packet. While the original route along the Seminole Gulf Railroad (SGL) will continue to remain the primary spine for the Southwest Coast Connector, the loop will provide a coastal detour that provides a scenic alternative while the project development issues are addressed along the SGL right of way. The loop will expand the SUN Trail network in Lee County providing us with additional opportunities for SUN Trail funds and will also facilitate the promotion of bicycle/pedestrian tourism activities along the scenic coastal route. The proposal has been vetted and approved by the Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinating Committee, the Technical Advisory Committee, and the Citizens Advisory Committee. MPO staff has also been coordinating with the Office of Greenways and Trails in Tallahassee to add the Loop in the Priority Trails Map during the ongoing update of the Florida Greenways and Trails Master Plan, which is the first step to have this alignment added to the SUN Trail Network.

Councilman Forbes asked if the local municipalities put up money there might be a better chance of receiving funding. Mr. Gogoi said yes that would improve their chances.

Councilmember Burch asked about the type of paths that these regionally based routes along SUN Trail are. Mr. Gogoi said they are paved shared use paths and an existing sidewalk could be modified to make a shared use path as there is some flexibility.

Chair Rick Williams asked about the green on and red off the map and what type of funding. Mr. Scott said they are state dollars.

Mr. L. K. Nandam reminded the Board that when funding is allocated there must be maintenance agreements in place stating that the local jurisdictions will maintain the path.

Vice-Chair Gore asked how this changes what is on Fort Myers Beach. There were comments as to whether this was consistent with the Bike Ped Master Plan and if it is practical. Mr. Gogoi stated the county has already put money into this and they would be trying for additional funding from the state, discretionary dollars/TRIP funds. Commissioner Hamman further clarified that this doesn't commit us

to fund it but opens up other funding sources. Vice-Chair Gore asked if there would be unintended consequences and Mr. Gogoi said there are not.

Commissioner Hamman made the motion to approve this agenda item and Councilmember Forbes made the second. There were no objections and the motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item #8 - +Presentation on the Lee County Round-a-bout Study Final Report

Mr. Gogoi introduced this agenda item for the acceptance of the Final Roundabout Report and to provide staff direction, if needed. He introduced the team from David Plummer and Associates to continue the presentation.

Mr. Mark Gillis with David Plummer continued the presentation on the Lee County Roundabout Study. At the April 22, 2016 MPO meeting, the consultants, David Plummer and Associates, presented conceptual roundabout plans for all eighteen locations in the Roundabout Feasibility Study, and the top five roundabout project priorities for future funding. They were as follows (by order of priority):

1. *Periwinkle Way/Causeway Blvd Roundabout*
2. *Winkler Ave/Challenger Blvd Roundabout*
3. *Buckingham Rd/Gunnery Rd Roundabout*
4. *McGregor Blvd/Colonial Blvd Roundabout*
5. *Michigan Ave Link/Marsh Ave Roundabout*

Of the top 5, the MPO had picked the Periwinkle Way/Causeway Blvd and the Winkler Ave/Challenger Blvd locations for development of 30% roundabout design drawings. Since that presentation in April, the consultant has completed the 30% design plans, conducted computer simulations of the proposed roundabouts at the intersections of Periwinkle Way/Causeway Blvd and McGregor Blvd/Colonial Blvd, and completed the final report. A drone was also flown on February 1, 2017, to take video footage of traffic backups at the intersection of McGregor Blvd and Colonial Blvd during the AM and PM peak hours.

The consultant presented the highlights of what was done as part of the final report, the computer simulations, aerial videos, the 30% design plans, and the next steps. The consultant also reported on the efforts to secure funds to develop 30% design plans for the McGregor/Colonial roundabout following the Boards' direction from the April meeting. The Draft Final Report is located at: http://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/FinalReport_TextExhibits_02092017.pdf

Commissioner Hamman asked if a roundabout at Winkler and Challenger would make it safer for drivers in times of high sun. Mr. Gillis said the traffic would be slower and it would be easier to see. Mr. Wahlberg clarified that the drivers would be looking down at the curved line of the roundabout and road level not up at traffic signals, which should help with the issue.

Councilmember Flanders asked if the roundabout at McGregor would be under the overpass and Mr. Gillis said it would be.

Councilmember Burch felt that unless the intersection at Summerlin was also fixed, the roundabout at McGregor wouldn't solve problems.

Mr. Gillis said the next steps would be a final report based on today's meeting.

The floor was then opened for questions and comments.

Councilmember Carioscia asked about the intersection at Summerlin and Colonial. Mr. Scott said there is an operational study from US 41 to McGregor and a Summerlin study programmed for FY 18/19 (now confirmed that it moved up a year to FY 17/18). Mr. Carioscia said he hopes it would address the problem entering Fort Myers from the Cape on Colonial.

Vice-Mayor Denham asked if there were additional funds available for Sanibel. Mr. Gogoi said there are safety funds and Federal funds available. Mr. Gogoi continued that Sanibel Federal Aid roadway didn't meet the threshold for safety dollars but they could go after MPO safety dollars, local dollars, and general revenue funds. Mr. Gogoi said there are still external factors like the left turn lane and Vice-Mayor Denham said there are fundamental planning issues. Mr. Gillis added that the roundabout works better than the four way stop. Vice-Mayor Denham said they would like to fix the Periwinkle problems before they put in the roundabout. Mr. Wahlberg suggested they install the roundabout now and make other improvements later as this would allow people to get off the island faster providing a benefit now.

Councilmember Flanders disagreed with the McGregor roundabout being useless unless Summerlin is taken care of since both work together. He questioned the percentage of cars continuing straight on McGregor and those turning onto Colonial. Mr. Gillis said it is about 30% to Colonial and 70% to McGregor during the a.m. peak hours and 25% to Colonial and 75% to McGregor during the p.m. peak hours. Councilmember Flanders said that was good to know.

Councilmember Flanders asked about the roundabout at Virginia and if the price of \$450,000-500,000 included the land acquisition or if it was just a construction estimate. Mr. Gillis said the estimate is based on conceptual costs from preliminary plans and information from the property appraiser. He said it doesn't necessarily represent the cost to acquire the right of way and would need to be updated based on 30% design plans. Councilmember Flanders asked if Mr. Gillis could provide the City of Fort Myers with itemized costs separating land acquisition costs. Mr. Gillis said they could provide this to the City of Fort Myers.

Commissioner Pendergrass asked the timeline for Periwinkle. Mr. Scott said there is no timeline as it depends on prioritizing the next phase for funding. Vice-Mayor Denham said the City of Sanibel is reviewing that now.

Councilmember Burch commented that he felt the ranking was good and asked if the McGregor roundabout design took into consideration the existing bridge columns. Mr. Gillis said the roundabout will not encroach on the columns.

Councilmember Anthony asked about beginning the Challenger/Winkler roundabout since Periwinkle isn't ready. Mr. Gillis said they are recommending the top five in the study for future funding. Mr. Gogoi said the MPO has also put a preapplication in to FDOT to evaluate the projects. Mr. Scott said we will have the priorities in June for submission to FDOT but the funding is still five to six years out. Commissioner Hamman asked the cost.

Mr. Scott asked if the Board needed to vote on the acceptance of the study. Mr. Gogoi said acceptance was necessary for highway safety dollars.

Councilmember Burch made a motion to approve the agenda item. Councilmember Flanders made a second to approve the agenda item. There were no objections and the motion carried unanimously.

Agenda Item #9 - Information on a Proposed Multi-use Trail Feasibility Study between John Yarbrough Linear Park and Littleton Road

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item. Senator Benacquisto and Representative Caldwell will be the co-sponsors of a Fort Myers Multi-Use Trail Feasibility project in the upcoming FY 2017/18 Appropriations Bill. The MPO staff filled an appropriations request form which was then subsequently submitted by the two legislators' offices to meet a February 7th deadline. The estimated cost of the study is \$1.90 Million.

The Study will evaluate (1) existing bike ped facilities along the Southwest Coast Connector (SW2C) (aka the Gulf Coast Regional Trail) in Fort Myers as to whether they meet acceptable standards and to address safety issues (2) constructability of new shared use paths to fill existing gaps (3) alternative alignments (4) bike ped connections between the SW2C and Downtown Fort Myers, and (5) the possibility of a pedestrian bridge/facilities next to/along the Caloosahatchee Bridge connecting North Fort Myers and Downtown Fort Myers. The project concept was initiated by the Florida Greenways and Trails Foundation and has been vetted by the MPO Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinating Committee.

Councilmember Flanders asked if Cleveland Avenue could be included. Mr. Scott said there is a rectangle from 41 to Business 41 to Littleton and Hanson. Councilmember Flanders said it should include Cleveland and examine the possibility of a pedestrian structure along the bridge on the Caloosahatchee. Mr. Scott said it may be a separate facility like the Courtney Campbell Causeway. He said they are performing rehab on the Caloosahatchee bridge now. Councilmember Flanders clarified that it does involve the bridge and US 41. Mr. Gogoi said he had a discussion about this with the City Manager, Saeed Kazemi. Mr. Scott said if we get funding, the scope would come back to the MPO Board for input.

Commissioner Hamman thanked Senator Benacquisto and Representative Caldwell for co-sponsoring this.

There were no public comments on this agenda item.

Agenda Item #10 - Update on the MPO Projects

Mr. Scott gave an update on the MPO projects. He said the TIGER project has all pathways and bike ways complete. They are coordinating with FDOT on the Wayfinding plan and that it must be signed by a Professional Engineer to finalize the design plan. Mr. Scott said the resolutions will be out later today or early next week.

There were no questions or comments from the Board or public.

Other Business

Agenda Item #11 - Public Comments on Items not on the Agenda

Mr. Larry Kripps from the Beach Civic Association spoke again to clarify that he was referring to the Matanzas Pass Bridge and the San Carlos Boulevard study. He wanted to make sure the San Carlos PD&E study continues and that public input moves forward.

Agenda Item #12 - LeeTran Report

Wayne Gaither with LeeTran gave the LeeTran report. He reported that preliminary numbers for the month of January indicates ridership was up 5.22% from last year's numbers. Mr. Gaither also

announced they have been receiving positive feedback for the new Route 595 that goes to the County Recreation Center/Library in North Fort Myers.

Agenda Item #13 - TD Report

Alan Mandel with GoodWheels gave the TD report. He said they requested \$225,000 for scheduling/routing software to help the fleet with more efficient routing and better fuel management. Mr. Mandel said they also signed a coordination agreement with Collier. Mr. Mandel said that ridership was up. There is \$76,000 allocated every month and they are using all of it. He said they would appreciate an increase. They have grown from 50 to 108 employees.

Agenda Item #14 - FDOT Report

L. K. Nandam with FDOT addressed the San Carlos study topic stating that they have held off on the public workshop at the request of the MPO so the stakeholders can be brought together and discuss recommendations. The goal is to manage congestion and the outcomes must be acceptable to the community. He reiterated that the study is not stopped.

Vice-Chair Gore relayed a message that Councilmembers Cereceda and Hosafros would like the decision to pause the study reversed. She also stated for the record that the Town of Fort Myers Beach reached a consensus 3 to 2 in support of the MPO decision to pause the study.

Mr. Nandam again stated the study has not been paused they are only in the process of engaging the stakeholders.

D’Juan Harris with FDOT also gave a brief report. He informed the Board that SR 31 just received the designation of an emergent SIS facility as it shows regional connectivity. This opens the corridor for additional funding. He also announced that Secretary Boxold is no longer the FDOT Secretary as of February 3 and Rachel Cone has replaced him as Interim Secretary.

Agenda Item #15 – Announcements

Commissioner Hamman asked the Board if they would consider a time limit on public speakers. There was a brief discussion on the topic and the general consensus was it could be at the discretion of the Chair.

Agenda Item #16 - Information and Distribution Items

Mr. Scott let the Board know that the information and distribution items included information on the infrastructure program. The White House provided a list of fifty proposed infrastructure projects from around the Country (link is below) as a starting point for a potential infrastructure program. The projects listed are planned to be funded with 50% federal funding (at a cost of \$137.5 billion) and 50% from the private sector. These projects are listed as Emergency and National Security projects and are all very large projects. There is one project in Florida (number 35 on link below), which is the reconstruction of I-395/I-95 at an estimated cost of \$800 million.

In addition to the list, other information that has been discussed about the requirements are the following:

- A national security or public safety emergency
- Shovel ready with at least 30% of the initial design and engineering work complete
- Direct job creator
- Project with potential for increased US manufacturing
- Provides national economic benefits
- Improves truck mobility

Initial Infrastructure Project List:

<http://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/MEC03a.Emergency-NatSec50Projects-.pdf>

In addition, Mr. Gogoi handed out a packet on the history of the Florida Greenways and Trails System and the SUN Trail network.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:05 a.m.

^Roll Call Vote *Action Items +May Require Action

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, 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 Calandra Barraco with the Lee County MPO at 239-330-2243 or by email at cbarraco@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 they have been discriminated against because of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, religion, or familial status may file a complaint with the Lee County MPO Title VI Coordinator, Calandra Barraco, at 239-330-2243, or in writing at P.O. Box 150045, Cape Coral, Florida 33915-0045.