

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD

9:00 a.m., Friday, November 19, 2021
Lee County Administration East Building
2201 Second Street, Room 118
Fort Myers, FL 33901



Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at approximately 9:03 a.m. by MPO Board Chair/Village of Estero Mayor Katy Errington. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

The roll was called by MPO staff. A quorum was present. Lee County MPO Board Members in attendance included Lee County Commissioners Frank Mann, Kevin Ruane, and Cecil Pendergrass; City of Cape Coral Councilmembers Dan Sheppard, Gloria Tate, and Keith Long; City of Fort Myers Councilmembers Teresa Watkins Brown and Johnny Streets Jr.; MPO Board Chair/Village of Estero Mayor Katy Errington; City of Sanibel Vice-Mayor Richard Johnson; and City of Bonita Springs Councilmembers Fred Forbes and Laura Carr.

Others in attendance included the following - L. K. Nandam, Wayne Gaither, Victoria Peters, Steven Davis, Mark Mathes, and Tanya Merkle with FDOT; Dale Cody with Metric Engineering; Persides Zambrano with the City of Cape Coral; Derek Rooney with GrayRobinson; Lee County MPO staff Don Scott and Ron Gogoi; Robert Codie with LeeTran; Lee County IT staff; and Dave Loveland, Randy Cerchie, and Rob Price with Lee County.

Agenda Item #1 - Public Comments on Consent Agenda Items

There were no public comments on Consent Agenda Items.

Agenda Item #2 - *Consent Agenda

- A. Approve the September 17, 2021 Meeting Minutes
- B. Approve Appointments of Two CAC Members
- C. Approve the TIGER Project Data Collection Scope of Services

Councilmember Fred Forbes made the motion to approve the Consent Agenda Items. Vice-Mayor Richard Johnson seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #3 - Public Comments will be Taken at Each New Business Item

Chair Katy Errington noted that public comments will be taken at each agenda item.

Public Hearing Item

Agenda Item #4 - ^Approval of Amendments to the FY 2021/2022 through FY 2025/2026 Transportation Improvement Program to Advance the McGregor and US 41/Crystal Drive Safety Projects and to Add the Design Phase for a Sidewalk on the US 41 Caloosahatchee Bridge

Mr. Don Scott presented this agenda item for the approval of amendments to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to advance the McGregor and US 41/Crystal Drive Projects and to add the design phase for a sidewalk on the US 41 Caloosahatchee Bridge. The amended TIP pages were attached to the agenda packet, posted to the MPO website, and presented as slides at the meeting. Mr. Scott reviewed the following projects: The first project is a median modification project on McGregor Boulevard from Cypress Lake Drive to Edinburgh Drive that is being advanced from FY 2024 to the current fiscal year and will be constructed under a Design Build project, the second project is the US41/Crystal Drive intersection safety project that is being advanced from FY 2025 to

the current fiscal year and will also be constructed under a Design Build project, and the third project is new and is adding the design phase in FY 2022 for the addition of a sidewalk to the US 41 Caloosahatchee Bridge. He asked if there were any questions. The committee discussed the American Rescue funding, priorities for use of funding, feasibility study for Caloosahatchee Bridge, cost estimate for Caloosahatchee Bridge, projected/anticipated use of facility, inaccuracy of cost estimates, design build, merit of project, investing money in bridge at right time, use of project to encourage economic development, perceived lack of amenities in North Fort Myers, history of adding project to list, possible removal of project to next meeting, benefits of completing project and making bridge walkable, growth of Lee County, historical effectiveness of facilities built in Lee County, high rate of bike ped crashes in Lee County, connection of communities through project, age of bridge, and replacement schedule.

**Councilmember Laura Carr made a motion to approve the Amendments to the TIP.
Councilmember Teresa Watkins Brown seconded the motion.**

The committee discussed the total cost of the project, impacts on flow of traffic and lane size, funding other projects instead, sources of funding, shovel ready projects for Federal funding, loss of opportunity and funding if project doesn't get approved, time frame for funding, MPO priority list, lack of other projects that are ready to construct, quickness of project advancement, possibility that local jurisdictions might have projects to submit as well, lack of projects on priority list that qualified for this specific type of funding, increase of project costs, splitting this project off and approving at a later meeting, return on investment for project, additional information needed to make better informed decision, bridge life expectancy longer than projected, ensuring all available funding is used, accelerating projects to qualify for funding, candidate projects for discretionary funding and timeline for those production ready projects, loss of funding for community if project is voted down, and possibility that another project could be used that might have larger return on investment.

Commissioner Frank Mann made another motion to split the approval of the TIP amendments into individual votes.

The committee further discussed the definite loss of funding if the Caloosahatchee Bridge project is not approved, possibility of workshop to discuss other projects and needs due to higher growth in certain areas, confusion as to funding sources, and motions on floor. Mr. Derek Rooney clarified the motions and options available. The committee discussed withdrawing the original motion and second. Chair Errington asked if the original motion maker and second would like to withdraw. Councilmember Carr replied no. Councilmember Watkins Brown replied no.

Commissioner Kevin Ruane made a second to Commissioner Frank Mann's motion to split the approval of the TIP amendments into individual votes.

The committee again discussed the funding amount and sources and the lack of shovel ready projects. Mr. L. K. Nandam asked the MPO Board to allow FDOT to develop a report on the return of investment for the project and bring it back to the MPO Board in January. Chair Errington asked for clarification on the motions. Mr. Rooney clarified, and Commissioner Mann restated his motion. The committee further discussed the project, funding, separating the votes, shuffling of funding, lack of concern for loss of millions of dollars of funding, and additional clarification of the motion and process.

Mr. Scott took a roll call vote to separate the TIP amendments into individual votes. The motion passed with ten in favor and two opposed.

Mr. Scott said the first TIP amendment for approval was for the median modification project on McGregor Boulevard from Cypress Lake Drive to Edinburgh Drive.

A roll call vote was taken to approve the TIP Amendment for the median modification project on McGregor Boulevard from Cypress Lake Drive to Edinburgh Drive. The motion passed with ten in favor and two opposed.

Mr. Scott said the second TIP amendment for approval was for the US41/Crystal Drive intersection safety project.

A roll call vote was taken to approve the TIP Amendment for the US41/Crystal Drive Intersection Safety Project. The motion passed with all in favor.

There was a brief discussion to determine if this TIP amendment for the Caloosahatchee Bridge could be brought back at the January meeting and the availability of funding. Commissioner Mann asked for the Caloosahatchee Bridge TIP Amendment to be brought back as an agenda item at the January meeting. Mr. Scott said he would add it to the agenda.

A roll call vote was taken to approve the TIP Amendment for the addition of a sidewalk to the US 41 Caloosahatchee Bridge. The motion failed with eight opposed and four in favor.

Commissioner Frank Mann made the motion to add the Caloosahatchee Bridge TIP Amendment to the January meeting agenda.

Mr. Scott said he would add the item to the January agenda. Councilmember Carr clarified that the \$15 million in funding would not be available then. Mr. Scott responded that was what was currently being said.

New Business

Agenda Item #5 - Review of the Draft Tentative Work Program for FY 2022/2023 through FY 2026/2027

Mr. Nandam with FDOT presented this agenda item for the review of the Draft Tentative Work Program for FY 2022/2023 through FY 2026/2027. The Draft Tentative Work Program can be viewed here: https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/LEE-COUNTY_Draft-Tentative-Work-Program_FY2023-to-FY2027.pdf Mr. Nandam turned the presentation over to Ms. Tanya Merkle. Ms. Merkle first showed FDOT's state work program video. The state video can be viewed here: <https://youtu.be/Lpp4WaLRhr8> Ms. Merkle then provided an overview of the Draft Tentative Work Program for District One. She also showed FDOT's District One video. The District One video can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vi5OdUrrSVw> Mr. Gogoi provided a presentation with slides that included information on multimodal box fund priorities, federal and state funded priorities, and highway safety fund priorities. Mr. Scott asked if there were any questions. There were none. The MPO staff presentation can be viewed here: <https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/Agenda-Item-5-11192021-Work-Program-MPO-Presentation.pdf>

Agenda Item #6 - Presentation on the US 41 Florida Regional Advanced Mobility Elements (FRAME) Project

Mr. Steven Davis with FDOT presented this agenda item on the US 41 Florida Regional Advanced Mobility Element (FRAME). He introduced Mr. Mark Mathes with FDOT and Mr. Dale Cody with Metric Engineering. Mr. Davis then provided a Power Point presentation that included slides with information on project details, project approach, and stakeholders. Mr. Cody continued the presentation with slides on pilot project locations, plan development, system engineering, evaluation of connected vehicle applications, equipment used, contractors used, procurement analysis, timeframes, and next steps. Mr. Cody asked if there were any questions. The presentation can be viewed here: https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/Agenda-Item-6-US-41-FRAME_FINAL_11-15-2021-compressed-002.pdf Mr. Nandam mentioned the history of US 41 as a high crash corridor and

the selection of the location for safety purposes. The committee discussed the timeframe for implementation on vehicles, timeframe for FRAME projects on local roadways, and example of Tesla use in Orlando. Chair Errington thanked the presenters.

Agenda Item #7 - Review and Comment on the Proposed 2045 Long Range Plan Amendments

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the review of and input on the proposed amendments to the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). He mentioned MPO staff is proposing LRTP amendments/modifications to be voted on at the January MPO Board meeting. He reviewed the following amendments that are being considered: Amend the Lee County project list to add in the widening of Corkscrew Road from Alico Road to Verdana Village (About 4.5 miles), Add in the list of City of Fort Myers bicycle pedestrian projects matching the amount of \$5,000,000 in funding that was set aside for projects once the Fort Myers Bicycle Pedestrian Plan was completed, Add in a project identification column to provide a reference for reviewers that are not familiar with local road names, and Advance the SR 31 design phase to match the FDOT Tentative Work Program. The committee discussed the fatalities in the Corkscrew area. The presentation can be viewed here: <https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/Agenda-Item-7-LRTP-Amendments.pdf> The committee further discussed the Corkscrew area and development, lack of infrastructure, history of the Corkscrew area and growth, growth projections, and traffic.

Agenda Item #8 - Information on the Recently Passed Federal Infrastructure Bill

Mr. Scott presented this information only agenda item on the recently passed Federal Infrastructure Bill. He mentioned the extension of the Federal Transportation Act (FAST Act) for the next five years. The following link provides an overview of the sections of the bill from NARC's Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act Bill Analysis: <https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/M08a.Bipartisan-IIJA-Analysis.pdf> Mr. Scott then reviewed the percent funding increases. The slide on Federal Bill percent increase can be viewed here: <https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/Agenda-Item-8-Federal-Bill-percent-increase.pdf> Mr. Scott also discussed other funding sources, issues with the bill, increase in construction costs and projections, and upcoming tasks. Mr. Scott asked if there were any comments. Mr. Nandam commented on determining opportunities to go after discretionary programs, building a list of projects, and ensuring shovel ready projects. The Board discussed clarification on the process, and possible modification of procedures to move projects forward.

Other Business

Agenda Item #9 - Public Comments on Items not on the Agenda

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

Agenda Item #10 - LeeTran/TD Report

Mr. Robert Codie with LeeTran provided the LeeTran/TD report.

Agenda Item #11 - FDOT Report

Ms. Tanya Merkle with FDOT presented the FDOT report.

Agenda Item #12 - Announcements

Mr. Scott reminded the Board that there was no December meeting this year and that the next meeting was on January 21, 2022.

Agenda Item #13 - Information and Distribution Items

There were no information and distribution items.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 11:00 a.m.

An audio recording of the entire meeting can be accessed here:

<https://soundcloud.com/user-390911534/11-19-2021-mpowma?si=de4cf45900054b278f6ba3b80733097d>

^Roll Call Vote *Action Items †May Require Action

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