

TECHNICAL 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
9:30 a.m.



Meeting Summary

The meeting was called to order by Mrs. Persides Zambrano, Chair, at 9:35 a.m.

The roll was called. There was not a quorum. The meeting continued as committee of whole. The agenda items were taken out of order in the event additional committee members arrived and quorum was met.

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

There were no public comments on items on the agenda.

New Business

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

David Jones, FDOT, gave a power point slide presentation on the US 41 Corridor Improvements. The FDOT corridor improvement 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 adopted the plan in 2010. In 2012, the City Council requested that FDOT prepare plans for medians/pedestrian safety. In 2014, a road safety audit was conducted and it was recommended that the medians and several pedestrian crossings be added. This project incorporates these and other 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**K**. There will be a total of six of these 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.

Mr. Jones then showed a slide with a project "Fly-Thru" video presenting a rendering of what the proposed project would look like from Grace to Canal. It showed what the street would look like and showed a HAWK. It included the new signal at Linhart. A question was asked about the speed in that area. Mr. Jones replied that it is 40 mph. Another question was asked if the speed would be reduced. Mr. Jones responded that they are not reducing the speed although there may be a speed study done afterwards to develop the speed.

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 extra 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 project cost is estimated at \$12 million. It is scheduled to begin in the Fall of 2017. FDOT understands that the McGregor project is up for bid and according to the City of Fort Myers it will take 18 months to complete. There will be overlap in the US41 and McGregor projects. They are working internally to see if there is something they can do to alleviate that. It will be made known if there are any changes in the schedule.

At the request of the City of Fort Myers, when construction is complete, a “road diet” test, to determine where traffic will divert, will be conducted by FDOT for approximately two months. 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. They will use blue-tooth counters to do an Origin Destination Study. They will study McGregor, Fowler, Metro Extension, Winkler, Hanson, and Evans as well. 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 that FDOT has planned for this project includes presentations, meetings, and finally a public hearing.

Mr. Jones then opened the floor to questions or comments.

There was a question from LeeTran about how the new ADA curbs would affect the current bus stops and if the bus stops would be moved. Mr. Jones stated the bus stop locations may be moved and FDOT would communicate further with LeeTran to coordinate that.

A question was asked if the right of way had to be dealt with and Mr. Jones stated that the project did not involve right of way issues since it was just milling, resurfacing, and putting in medians. The roadways are already tight with nine-foot turn lanes and one-foot traffic separator. This is one of the reasons the City is pushing for a lane diet, to provide more space for wider sidewalks, or wider lanes, or median. Mr. Jones has spoken with Mr. Karakos, with the City of Fort Myers, at length and the future plans for the corridor are to make it a four-lane facility. FDOT feels there need to be improvements made to the system to accommodate that. This is the reason it will be tested in peak season.

A comment was made about providing the public with a clear focus of what a road diet is. There should be a specific presentation that covers that topic.

A question was posed about how the outer lanes would be obstructed during the road diet test. Mr. Jones stated that it will be the inner lanes that will be obstructed and it hadn’t been determined yet as to how they would be obstructed. Mr. Jones then consulted Mr. Leep from Kimley-Horn, the project EOR, and he verified that it hadn’t been determined. Mr. Jones then stated that striping and/or quick curbing may be options.

A suggestion was made to present visuals of the road diet curbing options to give the public a better understanding. Mr. Jones added that the success stories of where there have been road diets need to be conveyed as well. The purpose is to drive economic development in the area. Most of the places where road diets have occurred have been stimulated even though the commutes might be longer.

A question was asked about where the idea of the lane reduction originated. Mr. Karakos explained the idea for a road diet is part of the Complete Streets concept. It is just a test. When the road diet is over, Cleveland will go back to three lanes in each direction. Mr. Jones stated that models have been run and Origin and Destination studies have been conducted. Mr. Karakos added that the City’s CRA hired Johnson Engineering to do a conceptual of the road diet.

A question was asked about how larger trucks will be able to turn if the lanes are nine feet and if a truck template had been applied to this road scenario. Mr. Jones deferred to Mr. Leep who stated they have run truck templates all along the corridor. The corridor is tight and restricted to the edges of the pavement and larger trucks may have to reroute. Mr. Karakos added that the same problem existed on SR80 when it went down to two lanes and they created areas for turns. It is possible to put a cut out for turns or even restrict trucks altogether.

A question from LeeTran was posed as to the existing lanes that are ten feet and if they will remain ten feet. Mr. Jones said they will remain ten feet. The question continued with the inquiry as to whether the width of the left turn lanes would be reduced. Mr. Jones stated the left turn lane would be reduced to nine feet and there will be a one foot separation from the oncoming traffic to minimize risk of sideswipes. LeeTran went on the record stating that their vehicles with mirrors extended are right on that nine foot range. This a point of concern for mirror to mirror contact. This is a busy area for LeeTran since they have 20 minute headways along this section of the US 41 corridor. Mr. Karakos stated that the curbs will become a buffer and replace the stripes, the travel lanes will be the same size.

Mr. Scott brought up the point that once the Public Hearing takes place it is based on State statute and will be closing access for the public. The neighborhood meetings would be the time to touch on any concerns.

Mr. Karakos commented that the topic could be - learn about the road diet because it is the future. It should be something to spark their interest instead of just a construction project.

A question was asked as to the length of the project. Mr. Jones stated that it is just under two and a half miles.

A question was posed as to when the public involvement starts. Ms. Kris Cella answered that it started right now. She further commented that the neighborhood meetings would be scheduled in December but they will be out talking to businesses before that. The meetings were previously scheduled but are being rescheduled to give FDOT and City of Fort Myers time to discuss and coordinate the McGregor project. The project on McGregor is a city project.

The Chair, Mrs. Presides Zambrano, asked if we had reached a quorum. She was informed by MPO staff that they were still one member short. Mrs. Zambrano then decided to move to Agenda Item #5.

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

Mr. Don Scott with Lee MPO introduced D'Juan Harris from FDOT to present the Draft Tentative Work Program for FY 2018 through FY 2022.

FDOT has published the draft tentative Work Program covering fiscal years 2018 through 2022 that was attached to the agenda. Mr. Harris handed out the most current additions, re-schedulings, and deletions table, **Add/Defer/Delete**, which provides a good overview of the program and which also includes a few project phases that were not included in the Work Program document. The programming of the projects is a work in progress. Mr. Harris went over the **Add/Defer/Delete** sheet explaining that it is a draft and it will not be adopted until July 1, 2018. Changes will continue to be made until then. He also stated that the good news is they are on an uptake of DDR funds. It is attributable to all SR 82 project segments being fully funded, except for one segment in Collier County that had environmental issues. The total transportation investment in SR 82 is over \$265 million with \$160 million of that being in Lee County. He then went down the list and read the projects in order, explaining and taking comments at each project.

Mrs. Zambrano commented that Burnt Store Road was funded from SR 78 to Tropicana so four lanes will be fully funded from Van Buren to SR 78.

A question was asked if the SRTS projects would be built by FDOT. The Mariner, Tanglewood projects are not LAP and FDOT is designing and constructing. FDOT is doing the projects to accelerate. The construction for those projects is scheduled for 2018.

The Department was aware there was a gap in LeeTran funding for FY19 and FY18 and were able to locate funding for LeeTran. They are trying to procure additional funds for LeeTran as well.

Mr. Harris explained that there were several sidewalk projects deleted due to local jurisdictions requesting their deletions. These projects will seek SRTS or local funding.

Mr. Harris opened the floor for questions.

Mr. Scott noted regarding TRIP funds, Estero Boulevard, Aberdeen to Albatross, received TRIP funding and this area is doing well with receiving TRIP funds.

LeeTran wanted to thank FDOT for the work they have done trying to address the issues with funding.

Mrs. Zambrano also expressed thanks to FDOT for supporting sidewalks in Cape Coral.

A question was asked about SunTrail funding for current year and if it was planning. Mr. Harris responded that it was for design. A follow up question was asked regarding when SunTrail will be following along for construction. Mr. Harris responded that Central Office conveyed there was no guarantee that there would be subsequent funding for the first round of SunTrail projects but he has heard they will make announcements later this month about additional funding. The initial announcements were made current year, 2017. When the design or PD&E phases were programmed, they did a budget outlook for subsequent phases.

Mr. Ron Gogoi then presented and explained slides on the project priorities, funding received, and SU/TA funds available. Mr. Gogoi suggested there is \$700,000 for FY 2022 that has not been used for project priorities. Mr. Harris stated that a contingency fund is kept for ongoing projects in case there are project overruns. Certain funds can only be applied to certain projects. The money is kept in contingency so there are no project delays or deferrals. When the next work program development cycle comes, priorities can be looked at again and projects can be programmed accordingly.

Mr. Gogoi asked Mr. Harris to send the breakup of the SU/TA dollars. Mr. Harris responded that the snapshot changes nightly. Mr. Gogoi asked to be sent whatever Mr. Harris has.

Mr. Scott asked if projects were not submitted last year because they didn't get very far the year before. Mrs. Zambrano stated they did submit projects. Mr. Gogoi stated that they did not get any of the capacity projects for bike/ped funded and they could address that at a later date.

Mrs. Zambrano asked the Committee to review the funding allocation for their jurisdiction and let Mr. Harris know if they had any comments.

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

There were no objections or corrections to the October 6, 2016 Meeting Summary/Minutes. They were accepted by consensus.

Agenda Item #3 - *TIP Amendments

Mr. Don Scott 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 sidewalk projects, FTA section 5310 grant awards for vehicles, and the Federal Annual Obligation Report. He also handed out the funding amounts.

The TIP is being amended to add the new projects listed below and described in the letter attached to the agenda packet. In addition, the federal annual obligation report that was attached to the agenda packet is also being added to the TIP.

- 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 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

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 and Charlotte Regional Roadway network, attached to agenda packet, and reviewed the proposed Joint Resolutions.

The regional roadway network, separate map pages were attached to the agenda packet but a combined map was handed out at the meeting, is being developed consistent with the regional network 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 designating the network, attached to the agenda packet, 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 that was 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. We included a resolution that covers the TRIP priorities as well to help show the approval of the project.

Mr. Bob Herrington with the Charlotte MPO said the resolution was sent to their legal staff and some minor spelling changes were made such as the formal name of the Charlotte MPO. They have the final version and it is out for signature. They are having four copies signed of both resolutions that were sent over so both Charlotte and Lee will have two originals of each.

A comment was made by Mr. Gary Harrel with the Charlotte MPO that the wrong regional map was sent. Mr. Scott acknowledged that he knew a change may have to be made but the most important aspect was that the lines that crossed the counties matched up.

There were no objections from 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

Mr. Wayne Gaither with LeeTran gave a short report. He stated the passenger trips for FY 2016 totaled 3.3 million making it the fifth top year for passenger trips.

Agenda Item #9 - FDOT Report

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

Agenda Item #10 - Announcements

There were no announcements.

Agenda Item #11- Topics for next meeting

There were no topics suggested for next meeting.

Agenda Item #12 - Information and Distribution Items

The information and distribution items were included in the agenda packets with the exception of the print out of the slides from Mr. Jones presentation on Agenda Item #6, a revised **Add/Defer/Delete** table from Mr. Harris for Agenda Item #5, and a combined Charlotte/Lee Regional Map from Don Scott with the Lee County MPO for Agenda Item #4.

Mr. Harris asked for the 2017 MPO Meeting Schedule. The schedule is completed and will be posted to the website but the meeting dates are on the website calendar now.

Mrs. Zambrano asked about the joint Charlotte/Lee MPO meeting location. Mr. Harrel stated it is at the Burnt Store Presbyterian Church.

Mrs. Zambrano reminded everyone that attendance is important and thanked those who did attend.

The meeting was adjourned by Mrs. Zambrano at 10:37 a.m.

*Action Items +May Require Action

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