

# TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization

Thursday, February 2, 2017

City of Cape Coral Public Works Building

815 Nicholas Parkway East, Cape Coral, FL 33990

9:30 a.m.



## Meeting Summary

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The meeting was called to order by temporary Chair, Andy Getch at 9:33 a.m.

The roll was called and a quorum was present after Carl Karakos arrived at 9:41 a.m. Those in attendance included Andy Getch with Lee County Department of Community Development, Wayne Gaither with LeeTran, James Buchanon with the Lee County School Board Transportation District, Wyatt Daltry with the City of Cape Coral Department of Community Development, Carl Karakos with the City of Fort Myers Department of Engineering, Craig Chandler with the City of Sanibel Department of Planning, Matt Feeney with the City of Bonita Springs Department of Public Works, Eric Ortman with the Collier MPO, and Bob Herrington and Gary Harrell with the Charlotte MPO. Others in attendance included D’Juan Harris with FDOT and Don Scott, Ron Gogoi, and Calandra Barraco with the Lee County MPO.

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

There were no public comments as no members of the public were present.

### **Agenda Item #2 - LeeTran Report**

Wayne Gaither with LeeTran reported that preliminary numbers for the month of January indicate ridership was up 5.22% from last year’s numbers. Andy Getch asked about rate increases and Mr. Gaither stated they had changed in 2015. 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 #3 - FDOT Report**

D’Juan Harris with FDOT reported that SR 31 has been designated as an emerging SIS facility. He also informed the committee that Secretary Boxold will be leaving FDOT and his last day is February 3, 2017. Mr. Gogoi asked if an interim secretary had been named and Mr. Harris said no yet. Mr. Scott said there was someone named and it is the assistant secretary for finance and administration (Rachel Cone) and he would send that information to Mr. Harris.

### **New Business**

Agenda Item #9 was an information only item and it was taken out of order to allow time for additional committee members to arrive and reach a quorum.

### **Agenda Item #9 - Information on the Dangerous by Design Report**

Don Scott provided information on the Dangerous by Design Report that just came out that ranked the Cape Coral-Fort Myers Urbanized area the most dangerous place to walk based on their Pedestrian Danger Index (PDI) index.

The Dangerous by Design report that is put out every two years by Smart Growth America ranked the Cape Coral Fort Myers area the most dangerous place to walk based on their PDI index (the

report can be found within the MPO Board agenda item here: <http://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/M09.pdf>). The PDI index takes into account pedestrian fatalities within the urbanized area, population and the share of local commuters who walk to work. The report was just released on January 10<sup>th</sup>. The MPO staff updated Bicycle and Pedestrian fatality and injury charts and FDOT's Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Coalition talking points were **attached** to the agenda packet for additional information on this item.

Mr. Scott went over the equation used to calculate the PDI and explained that even if fatalities were reduced by 10%, our area would still be near the top. He said an increase in the number of people that walk to work would greatly reduce the PDI.

Mr. Scott also explained that the Fort Myers-Cape Coral area was included in the list this year because Smart Growth America expanded the list to include the top 104 urbanized areas instead of the previous 50 urbanized areas.

Mr. Scott said the pedestrian injuries and fatality trends have been tracked since 2000 and for years the overall fatality and injury trend was downward but it is now increasing. These numbers are compared per capita. He showed several graphs related to these statistics.

Carl Karakos arrived at 9:41 a.m. and at that time the TAC attained a quorum.

Mr. Scott explained that many infrastructure improvements have been completed recently and they may have an effect on the numbers in the future. He also named other factors that might help improve the numbers such as planning activities, outreach activities, engineering, and additional local planning activities. Mr. Scott then discussed the crash causes and related safety messages. Time of day, drugs/alcohol, and distracted driving were all major factors in these accidents.

Mr. Karakos made a comment that Florida has roads that are superior to most other places in the Country. The roads are straight and the weather is good and he questioned what is causing this disproportionate amount of accidents. Mr. Scott said it comes back to the land use and the older cities up north are safer to walk in. Mr. Scott continued that the biggest difference is the amount of people we have walking to work and if that number increased to even 2% we wouldn't be near number one. Mr. Scott said there is bike ped data that should be put together as a background. Mr. Karakos said our weather is more conducive to walking and that may increase fatalities. Mr. Scott added that we also have faster arterial roadways and not many collectors and this doesn't help. Mr. Karakos explained that part of Complete Streets is putting in sidewalks. Mr. Scott said there are some areas, of Lehigh for example, that may never have sidewalks.

Mr. Scott stated they will go forward with updating the Bike Ped Safety Action Plan. He is hopeful that more recent data will be better filled out. He also feels education is important especially for visitors.

Gary Harrell commented that the accident rate being based on people walking to work really skews that data.

There was a brief discussion on the best areas in Florida for bicycle pedestrian safety according to the report and how overall the State of Florida has been ranked high. Andy Getch gave a

background of the report. The discussion continued with comments on how the data is skewed or manipulated. The amount of people walking to work, mass transit, how data is reported, and land use were factors mentioned that influence the data.

Mr. Harrell added that being at the top of the list might mean more money to fix. Mr. Scott wasn't sure because even with TIGER it depends on who is analyzing the data as to how it is represented.

#### **Agenda Item #4 - \*Review and Approval of the November 3, 2016 Meeting Summary**

Calandra Barraco introduced this agenda item and asked if there were any corrections to the minutes. The committee did not propose any corrections.

**Carl Karakos made a motion to approve the minutes and Wayne Gaither seconded the motion. There were no objections and it was approved unanimously.**

#### **Agenda Item #5 - \*Review and Approval of the January 5, 2017 Meeting Summary**

Calandra Barraco introduced this agenda item and asked if there were any proposed corrections to the minutes. The committee did not suggest any corrections.

**Bob Herrington made a motion to approve the minutes and Wayne Gaither seconded. There were no objections and it was approved unanimously.**

#### **Agenda Item #6 - \*Election of Officers for 2017**

Don Scott introduced this agenda item to elect a Chair and a Vice-Chair for 2017.

Consistent with the TAC bylaws, a Chair and Vice-Chair are to be elected at the first regularly scheduled meeting (and where there is a quorum). Any voting member or his or her alternate may nominate another voting member to be an officer. The current voting members of the TAC who are eligible to serve as officers are listed on the **attached** roster.

Nominees should be primary members who attend meetings on a regular basis. Any member who would be unable to fulfill the duties of an officer should so state before nominations are taken, or notify the Chair before the meeting if unable to attend. Any alternate member who attends meetings regularly who would be willing to serve as an officer may bring a letter to the meeting from his or her agency's director, appointing him or her as the agency's primary TAC representative (in which case a new alternate should also be appointed at the same time).

**Matt Feeney made the motion to nominate Andy Getch as Chair for the TAC and Wayne Gaither seconded. There were no objections and the nomination was approved unanimously.**

**Andy Getch nominated Wayne Gaither as Vice-Chair and Matt Feeney seconded the motion. There were no objections and the nomination was approved unanimously.**

## **Agenda Item #7 - \*Review and Comment on the Revised Public Involvement Plan**

Calandra Barraco introduced the agenda item to review and approve the updated draft Public Involvement Plan to send it out for public comment prior to final approval (**attached to the agenda packet**).

The MPO staff has updated the *Public Involvement Plan* (PIP) to address previously discussed items that need to be changed along with suggestions that were made following Federal Highway recommendations. The recommended additions and deletions are shown in underline and strike through format. We are seeking approval of the draft prior to advertising and sending it out for public comment. The changes to the document include the following:

- Adding an introduction describing what we do and identifying the communities that are covered
- Adding our standard public participation language and contact information
- Adding language to the TIP section to cover public involvement activities as part of LeeTran's transit Program of Projects requirements
- Adding language in the UPWP section to cover local planning projects
- Updating PIP approval language to match current proposed schedule
- Updating survey language to match what is being done
- Updating the Collier regional coordination activities and references
- Developing the Charlotte regional coordination section

Mr. Getch said he had a correction and would email it to MPO staff.

Calandra Barraco asked the committee to email MPO staff if they found any errors or had any corrections. Mr. Scott added that the PIP had to go out for a 45-day public comment period so the committee would be seeing it again.

**Wayne Gaither made the motion to approve the agenda item. Wyatt Daltry seconded the motion. There were no objections and it was approved unanimously.**

## **Agenda Item #8 - \*Review and Approval of a Proposal to Add the Coastal Loop to the Southwest Coast Connector**

Ron Gogoi introduced the agenda item to review and approve a proposal to add the Coastal Loop to the Lee County portion of the Southwest Coast Connector.

The MPO staff and the Florida Greenways and Trails Foundation discussed the idea of about adding a loop to the Lee County portion of the Southwest Coast Connector (aka Southwest Coastal Regional Trail) that would run along Gladiolus Drive, Summerlin Road, San Carlos Boulevard, Estero Boulevard and Hickory Boulevard as shown in the documents attached to 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 tourism along the scenic coastal route. The proposal has already been vetted and approved by the Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinating Committee. The MPO staff has been coordinating with the Office of Greenways and Trails to add the loop into their Priority Trails

Network as it is the first step to get the alignment included in the SUN Trail network and then it will be eligible for state funding. He presented two Alternate routes and the estimated costs for each.

Mr. Gogoi also presented a potential Downtown Fort Myers Feasibility Study that will examine connections between the Downtown River District and the Southwest Coast Connector.

Both proposals were presented at the Gulf Coast Trail Summit on January 23<sup>rd</sup>.

Mr. Gogoi asked for a recommendation from the TAC for MPO endorsement of adding the Coastal Loop to the Southwest Regional Trail.

There was a brief discussion on funding and if it only covered the main trail. Mr. Scott suggested that some parts could be developed with other money.

Mr. Gogoi asked Mr. Feeney how wide the sidewalks on Hickory are. Mr. Feeney replied they are six feet on Little Hickory and some spots towards the Lover's Key area would be easier to build a trail but others would be more complicated. Mr. Scott brought up the fact that the county is designing the bridges to the south and that may take years. Mr. Feeney wants to make sure they can accommodate.

**Matt Feeney made the motion to approve the agenda item. Wayne Gaither seconded it. There were no objections and it was approved unanimously.**

#### **Agenda Item #10 - Update on MPO Projects**

Don Scott provided an update on the current MPO projects and studies. The design and construction of sidewalks, pathways, bike lanes, and bus shelters are complete for the TIGER project. The Wayfinding Plan is complete and reflecting comments. MPO staff is coordinating with FDOT and the contractor to complete the requirements, including resolutions, for this project. Mr. Karakos asked who the resolutions will be sent to. Mr. Scott replied they will go to the City Managers and County Administrator.

The report is being finalized for the Roundabout Study and aerial video was done on February 1, 2017 during peak hours at McGregor and Colonial. The final results will go to the MPO Board.

Mr. Karakos asked about the Sanibel Roundabout. Mr. Scott said he had discussions with Sanibel Council about the process and the length of time it would take to gain Federal funding. Craig Chandler said Council was also conducting public education on this.

Mr. Gogoi said there were two other roundabouts that were being reviewed, Marsh Avenue and Gunnery in Buckingham.

Cape Bike Ped Plan will be presented to Cape City Council on March 27<sup>th</sup>.

Fort Myers Beach had their first project advisory committee meeting on January 31<sup>st</sup> and it consisted of 19 members appointed by Town Council. Mr. Gogoi explained some of the topics discussed including the existing brick pavers that were there for aesthetic purposes and how many people were actually walking in the area.

Mr. Scott added that the White House put out a list of 50 infrastructure projects and only one is in Florida. They may be requiring a minimum of 30% design from information that has been provided. Mr. Scott is working on a list.

## Other Business

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

There were no public comments on items not on the agenda as there were no members of the public present.

### **Agenda Item #12 - Announcements**

There were no announcements.

### **Agenda Item #13 - Topics for next meeting**

There were no topics suggested for the next meeting.

### **Agenda Item #14 - Information and Distribution Items**

Ron Gogoi reminded the committee that the deadline for FDOT submittals is February 2, 2017. There was a brief discussion about the projects being submitted.

Mr. Harris requested an FTP instead of a CD for the information that Mr. Gogoi will copy for him.

Mr. Harrell asked about the drone service and cost. Mr. Gogoi responded that Soaring Skies was the company and they charged around \$600.

**The meeting was adjourned at 10:43 a.m.**

\*Action Items    +May Require Action

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