

TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization
Thursday, May 6, 2021
City of Cape Coral Public Works Building
815 Nicholas Parkway East, Cape Coral, FL 33990
9:30 a.m.



Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Chair Persides Zambrano.

Roll Call

The roll was recorded by MPO staff. There was a quorum. Those members in attendance included Rick Burris with the Lee County Department of Community Development; Ian Sikonia with Lee County Port Authority; Dawn Huff with LeeTran; Persides Zambrano with the Cape Coral Department of Public Works; Carl Karakos and Barb Carr with the City of Fort Myers; Anne McLaughlin with the Collier MPO; and Mike Cook with the Lehigh Acres Municipal Services Improvement District. Others in attendance included Don Scott, Ron Gogoi, and Calandra Barraco with the Lee County MPO; David Dangel with Inwood Consulting Engineers; Allison Evanitz with Commute Connector; and Victoria Peters and Patrick Bateman with FDOT.

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

There were no public comments on items on the agenda.

Agenda Item #2 – LeeTran Report

Ms. Dawn Huff with LeeTran provided the LeeTran report. Referring to the minutes regarding the LeeTran report from the prior meeting, she said she had renderings of the LeeTran projects that she could email. Chair Zambrano suggested Ms. Huff email them to MPO staff who could then forward them to the committee members. Ms. Huff agreed. Ms. Huff then gave dates for the completion of the ongoing LeeTran projects. The committee briefly discussed transit oriented design, funding opportunities, density, and other grant/funding sources.

Agenda Item #3 – FDOT Report

Ms. Victoria Peters with FDOT provided the FDOT report. She said she would be leaving FDOT to work for the Collier MPO in June. She asked the committee to refer qualified candidates to FDOT. Mr. Scott commented there were two positions open at FDOT. Ms. Peters replied yes, one for Lee and Charlotte and one for Collier. Ms. Peters then introduced Mr. Patrick Bateman with FDOT to share a presentation on the US 41/Bonita Beach Road project. Mr. Bateman provided a brief Power Point presentation that included slides with information on project overview and the study schedule. He asked if there were any questions. The committee discussed the deciding factor for the best operational plan, Colonial example in Lee County, funding design phase, prioritization by Bonita council, costs for different alternatives, hurricane evacuation issues, sidewalks, continuous flow intersections (CFI), acquisition of right of way, cost of right of way, Cape Coral example, classification of Bonita Beach Road, flipping lanes with CFI, potential modification to canal, matrix for best option, stakeholder opinion, workshop presentation of multi-simulation with all alternatives, recommendation coming later at public hearing in 2023, and design of project being fully funded. Chair Zambrano thanked Mr. Bateman for his presentation. His presentation can be viewed here:
<https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/FDOT-Report-US-41-at-BBR-Project-Update.pptx>

New Business

Agenda Item #4 - *Review and Approval of the March 4, 2021 TAC Meeting Summary

Mr. Carl Karakos made the motion to approve the March 4, 2021 Meeting Summary. Mr. Rick Burris seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #5 - *Review and Approval of Transportation Improvement Program Amendment

Mr. Don Scott presented this agenda item to amend the FY 2021 through FY 2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the San Carlos Boulevard project to match the funding, project length and project limits description included in the FDOT Tentative Work Program. The draft TIP page and the FDOT request letter were attached to the agenda packet and posted to the MPO website.

Mr. Carl Karakos made the motion to approve the TIP Amendment for the San Carlos Boulevard project. Ms. Dawn Huff seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #6 - Update on the MPO Board Caloosahatchee Bridge Pedestrian Facility Discussions

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item as an update on the MPO Board Caloosahatchee Bridge Pedestrian Facility discussions. He said at the MPO Board meeting in January, the Board voted to bring back an agenda item for FDOT to present potential options for adding a pedestrian facility to the US 41 Caloosahatchee Bridge. He noted currently there are no bicycle and pedestrian facilities on the bridge and there are signs prohibiting pedestrians and bicyclists. He continued that at the March MPO Board meeting, FDOT presented three sidewalk options for the west side of the bridge and referred to the presentation that was attached to the agenda packet and posted to the MPO website. The staff report and FDOT presentation can also be viewed here: <https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/T06-8.pdf> He explained these options range in width from 6' to 8' with an estimated cost ranging from \$9.9 to \$15.05 million. He said following the discussion, the MPO Board approved, with one objection, bringing the item back as a priority with additional information. Mr. Scott again referenced the presentation that was included in the agenda packet, posted to the MPO website, and link provided above. He discussed the age of the bridge and replacement. He mentioned funding opportunities and the recommendation that the MPO Board includes this project on the priority list to make it eligible for funding. The committee briefly discussed other possible grant funding opportunities, CARES Act funding for our area, focus on completion of existing priorities for use of additional funding, bridge replacement lists, ear marks, and reauthorization of current transportation bill.

Agenda Item #7 - *Review and Approval of the Federal and State Transportation Priorities

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the review and approval of the updated Federal and State Funded Priorities that were attached to the agenda packet and posted to the MPO website. The staff report and priorities can also be viewed here: <https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/T07-6.pdf> He commented that the project priorities are updated each year for submittal to FDOT for consideration of funding. He noted the federal and state priority list has been updated to include the US 41 Caloosahatchee Bridge Pedestrian Infrastructure project seeking funds to build this project as a design build project. He said most of the projects on the list are projects that have PD&E studies currently underway where we are seeking funding for the design phase. The committee briefly discussed Fowler improvements, need for request from Fort Myers to move Fowler project forward, financial commitment from Fort Myers, classification of Fowler, and possible improvements to side streets along Fowler. Chair Zambrano restated that this was just to add the Caloosahatchee Pedestrian Bridge to the priorities and asked for a motion.

Ms. Dawn Huff made the motion to approve the Federal and State Transportation Priorities. Mr. Carl Karakos seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #8 - *Review and Approval of the Joint Regional TRIP Priorities with Collier and Charlotte

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the review and approval of the updated Lee and Collier and Lee and Charlotte-Punta Gorda MPO TRIP priorities that were include in the agenda packet, posted to the website, and can be viewed at the following link: <https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/T08-4.pdf> He explained the Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) provides funding for roadway and transit projects on the previously adopted regional roadway network map. He said the TRIP priorities have been updated to be consistent with the current eligible projects included in the local Capital Improvement Elements. He noted the TRIP priority projects require a minimum fifty percent local funding match. He discussed the projects on the lists noting that Collier projects are based on a ranking order and Charlotte projects just alternate with Lee projects. The committee briefly discussed Veterans, Santa Barbara overpass, including projects in the CIP, and ensuring Lee County is aware of upcoming projects. Chair Zambrano asked if there were any comments. There were none. Chair Zambrano asked for a motion.

Mr. Carl Karakos made the motion to approve the Joint Regional TRIP Priorities with Collier and Charlotte Counties. Mr. Mike Cook seconded the motion. There were no objections, and the motion passed unanimously.

Agenda Item #9 - Presentation on the SR 31 Project Development and Environment Study

Mr. Patrick Bateman with FDOT presented this agenda item on the SR 31 Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study from SR 78 in Lee County to Cook Brown Road in Charlotte County. Mr. Bateman introduced Mr. David Dangel with Inwood Consulting Engineers as FDOT's consultant on the project. The presentation was attached to the agenda packet, posted to the MPO website, and can also be viewed here: <https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/T09-6.pdf> Mr. Bateman's presentation included slides with information on study area/limits, need for project, proposed improvement, existing conditions, selected alternative – segments 1 through 4, public hearing, evaluation matrix, project costs, remaining study schedule and contact information. The committee briefly discussed speed limit, private property, public trails in Babcock, Babcock as ISD, maintenance of trails, FDOT's role through SIB loan, movement of gas line, FDOT payment of CEI costs to avoid conflicts, comments and issues with project, frontage roads, connections, commercial development in area, calculating design speed, six entry points to Babcock, priority of safety tied to speed by FDOT Secretary, speed fitting application and road, roadway volume, trips into and out of Babcock, accidents in area, SR 78 project, SR 31 bridge project, interim intersection at SR 78 and SR 31, and using east alignment for bridge due to gas line. Chair Zambrano asked if there were additional comments. There were none. She thanked Mr. Bateman for his presentation.

Agenda Item #10 - Commute Connector Program Update

Mr. Ron Gogoi introduced Ms. Allison Evanitz with FDOT's Commute Connector to provide an update on the program. Ms. Evanitz gave a brief Power Point presentation that included slides with information on an introduction to the program, history of the program, stakeholders/planning agencies, top takeaways, stakeholders/transit agencies, mission statement/goals, ride matching and incentives software solution, and new Commute Connector program. The committee briefly discussed who participates in the program and the incentives to participate. Ms. Evanitz continued her presentation with information on the regional van pool program, employer services, LeeTran advertising, recorded

trips data, and contact information. The committee then discussed the method for recording trips, number of people in Lee County that have downloaded the app, regional van pool routes and area covered, van pool processes, and FDOT subsidy of van pool vehicles. Chair Zambrano thanked Ms., Evanitz for her presentation. Ms. Evanitz said any questions could be emailed. Chair Zambrano noted that Ms. Evanitz was also meeting with Cape Coral Human resources. The entire presentation can be viewed here: <https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/Agenda-Item-10-Lee-County-MPO-updates-532021-updated.pptx>

Agenda Item #11 - Review of the Draft FY 21/22 through FY 25/26 Transportation Improvement Program

Mr. Scott presented this agenda item for the review of the draft FY 2021/2022 - FY 2025/2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The draft TIP can be viewed at the following link: <https://leempo.com/wp-content/uploads/T11a.TIP-Tool-5th-Draft-Run.pdf> He provided a brief overview of the projects and said the final version of over four hundred pages will be brought back for approval at the June meeting. Mr. Gogoi said the length of the document relates to additional information requested by FDOT and FHWA. Chair Zambrano mentioned changes to sidewalk projects. Mr. Scott said he was trying to process the changes. Ms. Peters said she would work to complete the drafts so they are ready to submit July 1. Mr. Scott explained funding and adding design programmed. Chair Zambrano clarified that this agenda item was just for feedback at this point. Mr. Scott replied yes and asked for comments to be sent to him. Chair Zambrano asked everyone to review the projects to ensure they are correct.

Agenda Item #12 - Proposed Amendments to the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan

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 said MPO staff is proposing LRTP amendments/modifications to be voted on at the June meeting to be consistent with recent project discussions. He reviewed the following amendments that are being considered: Amend the Federal and State list to include the potential construction of a pedestrian facility on the US 41 Caloosahatchee Bridge as the design phase was included within the Bicycle Pedestrian project list but the construction was too much money to come from that pot of money; Add language in the transit element to include the implementation of technology for the buses, like on board units for the buses, to take advantage of the US 41 Florida Regional Advanced Mobility Elements (FRAME) project that is currently being implemented. The committee discussed the FRAME project and acronym, connected vehicles, mobility on demand, midtown or downtown services for Fort Myers, unfunded LeeTran projects, designing for Uber/Lyft and LeeTran in the midtown project, use of the FRAME project for emergency vehicles, and queue jumps.

Other Business

Agenda Item #13 - Public Comments on Items not on the Agenda

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

Agenda Item #14 – Announcements

Chair Zambrano announced the commencement of the SUN Trail project in Cape Coral on Kismet Parkway.

Agenda Item #15 - Topics for next meeting

Topics suggested for next meeting included the approval of the TIP.

Agenda Item #16 - Information and Distribution Items

The Information and Distribution Items included the latest MPOAC Legislative Update and an article on vehicle miles travelled.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:19 a.m.

An audio recording of the entire meeting can be accessed here: <https://soundcloud.com/user-390911534/05-06-2021-tacwma>

*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.