

MINUTES OF THE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AND OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Held on October 12, 2016

CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

The meeting of the Traffic Management and Operations Committee was held on October 12, 2016 at the LeeTran Headquarters, 3401 Metro Parkway, Fort Myers, Florida. It was called to order at 1:00 p.m.

Members Present

April Russ	LCPA
Bill Floyd	Lee County Emergency Management
Brandy Otero	Collier MPO
Carl Karakos	Fort Myers Engineering
Dan Moser	MPO BPCC
Dominic Konieczki	LCSD – Transportation
Gladys Gonzalez	LCSD – Transportation
James Buchanon	Lee County CTST
Jay Anderson	City of Cape Coral PD
Jon Kulko	Fort Myers Engineering
Marinko Gnjidic	School District of Lee County
Roger Lloyd	Lee County DOT, Chair
Steve Jansen	

Those in attendance also included: Ron Gogoi and Brian Raimondo with the Lee County MPO; Christine Diaz-Pagan with Commuter Services via conference call; Syndi Bultman with Lee Trauma; David Jones with FDOT; and Kris Cella with Cella, Molnar, & Associates.

PUBLIC COMMENTS ON ITEMS ON THE AGENDA

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Agenda Item #1 – MINUTES FROM THE AUGUST 10, 2016 TMOC MEETING

Bill Floyd moved to approve the minutes from the August 10, 2016 TMOC meeting and Jay Anderson seconded his motion. The motion carried unanimously.

NEW BUSINESS

Agenda Item #2 – COST OF TRAFFIC CRASHES

The Lee County Health System has done an analysis, with some crash data gathered through the assistance of Lee County MPO's Brian Raimondo, on traffic crashes in Collier, Lee, and Charlotte County, and calculated some costs attached to crashes. Syndi Bultman with the Lee County Health System presented the results of this analysis. In the United States, traffic related crashes are the top ten cause of death for ages one to fifty-four and the cost is over \$44 billion to care for these injuries. Florida paid out \$32 million in medical costs, \$2.99 billion in work loss costs, and \$3.02 billion in total crash related deaths in one year. The median cost for Lee County in 2014 was over \$6 million. The cost for 2015 was \$9.3 million. According to the State of Florida Health Department, the average cost per person for a minor accident was \$60,392. As of September, there were 11 fatalities, 111 bicycle injuries, and 153 pedestrian injuries. Lee County generally has the highest numbers of the three counties for injuries. Regardless of county, driver behavior is the main cause. Preventative measures including education, DUI checkpoints, and new laws/regulations are being implemented to help decrease the current numbers.

A comment was made about the validity and source of the data used. The data used comes from the trauma unit and from maps provided by Brian Raimondo with the Lee County MPO.

Agenda Item #3 – PRESENTATION OF THE US41 PROJECT IN FORT MYERS

David Jones with the FDOT, presented an overview of the FDOT project on US 41 that is located along Cleveland Ave (US41) from Winkler Avenue to just south of SR 82. The project began with the Master Plan for the area that was approved in 2010. City Council requested full medians in 2012. The project was re-evaluated in 2014 with data collection and road safety audits conducted. The current project incorporates 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, lighting upgrades, resurfacing, high emphasis crosswalks, new signing, and pavement markings. Driveways and curb ramps will be replaced where practical to bring the corridor in compliance with current ADA standards. In addition, the extension of the dual box culvert at Canal Street will provide additional room for pedestrian connectivity and increase safety for road users. The City of Fort Myers is also designing the replacement of utility systems along the corridor which will be constructed in conjunction with the roadway improvements. The total FDOT project cost is programmed for \$12 million. Construction is expected to start this time next year.

A comment was made about the reason for the use of a strain pole instead of a mast arm at Hill Avenue and US 41. There is no right of way for a mast arm. A suggestion was made to evaluate this decision and check the right of way for the signal design.

Another comment was made about eliminating the northbound turn at the Oakley Avenue signal and extending the US 41 to Winkler turn lane to alleviate congestion and crashes at the Winkler Avenue light. David Wheeler in Safety is evaluating that proposal.

There was a question about the time frame for the City of Fort Myer's Edison Avenue realignment project and it will be completed after the US 41 project is done. They do not anticipate the closure of Edison Avenue at this time.

At the request of the City of Fort Myers, when construction is complete a "road diet" test 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. 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.

There was a comment about the lack of bicycle improvements that the project will add. There are no bicycle improvements. The comment continued with a request to fix Fowler Avenue. All of this is being evaluated since the Complete Streets concept is part of the Master Plan. How funding moves forward is still being worked on.

The lane diet is one of the tools used in the Complete Streets plan to evaluate the current traffic and safety conditions. After the lane diet is conducted, there are a lot of options for the use of the lane space. One would be to merge traffic or change the size of the lanes. Concerns were raised about the problems that merging lanes would cause with traffic on both the north and south ends of the US41 project.

There is a public involvement phase that includes presentations to local government, groups, and committees. It also includes one on one meetings with business owners and neighborhood meetings. The public hearing will follow tentatively in January. All public comments will be responded to. The road diet/lane closure test will be done to evaluate the functionality of the road.

Cleveland Avenue is not part of the Master Plan. If a specific corridor is requested by citizens, then it needs to be included in the future development of the Master Plan.

Agenda Item #4 – CITY OF FORT MYERS COMPLETE STREETS PRESENTATION

Carl Karakos, Transportation Engineer with the City of Fort Myers, presented on the Guidelines of Fort Myers Complete Streets. This presentation was recently given to the City Council as part of a workshop and to the Economic Development Board. Due to the Mayor's Challenge started in 2015 by Secretary Foxx, the bar was raised for cities to develop better ways to provide bicycle and pedestrian safety. A way to accomplish this is through developing Complete Streets that include bicycle and pedestrian options like sidewalks and bicycle lanes. These increase the connectedness of the community. The City of Fort Myers just completed its Complete Streets Guidelines. There are almost 600 miles of bicycle and pedestrian paths currently in the City of Fort Myers but the continuity of these paths could be developed and their usage would be increased. Incomplete streets are unsafe and many pedestrian deaths were due to the fact that no crosswalks were available. The Complete Streets guidelines cover all development and redevelopment in the public domain, and all street improvement assessment wards within the City, with the focus on regional connectivity. Every year these guidelines can grow and change based on the needs of the community. They include performance measures that can be evaluated every year. The next steps will be a Planning Board presentation, public hearings, and implementation in early 2017.

OLD BUSINESS

Agenda Item #5 – REPORT ON CTST INTERSECTION REVIEWS

The TMOC Chair Steve Jansen, Lee County DOT, presented the results of intersection reviews conducted since August. The Lee County Community Traffic Safety Team (CTST) periodically conducts field reviews of intersections for operational and safety deficiencies on request. The intersection reviews typically result in recommendations addressing deficiencies which are then transmitted to FDOT and/or the local jurisdictions for action. They observed Independence Circle at Six Mile Cypress Parkway and are asking FDOT to look at that intersection for a traffic signal. The State has installed the diverter at Pine Island Road and 24th Avenue to help resolve right angle crash problems there. A traffic signal is programmed to be put in next year.

Agenda Item #6 – UPDATE ON COMMUTER SERVICES ACTIVITY IN LEE/COLLIER COUNTIES

At the beginning of the meeting, Christine Diaz-Pagan, Commuter Services Program Director gave an update via conference call on the commuter services activity in Lee and Collier Counties, FDOT District 1. Lee County has 33 of the 173 Partners and Stakeholders for District 1. There are 22,368 registered commuters district-wide with over 5,000 registrants in Lee County. Collier County has 17 Partners and Stakeholders and 1,861 registrants. A “Best Workplace for Commuters” designation was given to 20 employers districtwide.

Agenda Item # 7 – LOCAL GOVERNMENT REPORTS ON TRAFFIC OPERATIONS RELATED PROJECTS

Lee County Port Authority reported that Terminal Access Road will have all lanes open October 13th with substantial completion next week.

The City of Cape Coral reported they would receive the Bike/Ped grant shortly. The pedestrian greenway grant will allow \$1.78 million for Kismet Parkway. There is another sidewalk grant for Mariner Middle School with project to begin summer of 2018. They are also stepping up speeding enforcement and will have a few DUI checkpoints.

The City of Fort Myers reported they are updating the north Colonial Trail crossing at Veronica Shoemaker which includes signage that will make it much more visible to users. Fort Myers High School/Cortez Boulevard may have a shared use path to compliment the bicycle lane that is currently in place. The existing bicycle lane will be buffered and a few other safety improvements will be added.

OTHER BUSINESS

Agenda Item #8 - PUBLIC AND MEMBER COMMENTS ON ITEMS NOT ON AGENDA

There were no public comments.

Agenda Item #9 – FDOT REPORT

There was no FDOT report.

Agenda Item #10 – ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements.

Agenda Item #11 – TOPICS FOR NEXT MEETING

There were no topics suggested for the next meeting.

Agenda Item #12 – INFORMATION AND DISTRIBUTION ITEMS

Information and distribution items were included in the agenda packet.

ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made to adjourn the meeting and was approved unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 3:00 p.m.