



**CHARLOTTE COUNTY - PUNTA GORDA
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**MINUTES OF THE OCTOBER 17, 2018
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC) MEETING**

MEMBERS ATTENDING

Linda Sposito, City of Punta Gorda Public Works
Matt Trepal, Charlotte County Community Development
Don Scott, Lee County MPO
Ravi Kamarajugadda, Charlotte County Public Works
Ron Ridenour, Charlotte County Airport Authority
Joshua Hudson, Charlotte County Economic Development
Tony Conte, Charlotte County Public Schools

ADVISORY MEMBER

D’Juan Harris, FDOT Design Project Manager

MEMBERS ABSENT

Sgt. Tom Scott, Charlotte County Sheriff’s Office
Earl Hahn, DeSoto County
Vacant, Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council (SWFRPC)
Chris Whittaker, City of North Port Planning and Zoning
Mitchell Austin, City of Punta Gorda - excused
Rick Kolar, Charlotte County Transit Division – excused
Jerry Mallet, Charlotte County Emergency Management - excused

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Gary Harrell, MPO Staff
Lakshmi N. Gurram, MPO Staff
Wendy Scott, MPO Staff
Ned Baier, Jacobs Engineering, Inc.

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Gary Harrell called the meeting to order at 9:40 A.M. Members informally introduced themselves and stated their organization after signing the sign-in sheet.

2. Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no public comments on agenda items.

3. Chair's Report

Gary Harrell stated that both the Chair and Vice Chair were unable to attend the meeting, so he would chair the meeting per the TAC Bylaws. He stated that the review of the Draft Tentative Work Program would be done later this year, so it would be reviewed at the next meeting. He congratulated D'Juan Harris, FDOT, on his promotion to Design Project Manager.

4. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Report

D'Juan Harris stated that a South West Area Office (SWAO) project management team will be established with three engineers and a planner. He informed the Committee that he will oversee Local Agency Program (LAP) projects for Charlotte County and another five counties in District One.

He noted that the last segment of I-75 was now completed. The next effort would be a regional master plan study stretching from Sarasota County to the Collier County Line including service lanes and managed toll lanes. He stated that this master plan would include three proposed new interchanges (one near the Charlotte/Sarasota line between Kings Hwy and Toledo Blade Blvd, one in Lee County and one in Collier County (at Vanderbilt Drive).

Per FDOT Central Office request, all FDOT districts statewide will be presenting their FY 2020-2024 Draft Tentative Work Programs at the same time. There will be an E-Public Hearing held online from December 3-7, 2018, and all programs with additions, deletions, and modifications will be displayed. Mr. Harris said he would be available on Wednesday, December 5 at the Charlotte Mid-County Library at US41 and Forrest Nelson Blvd in Port Charlotte from 2 p.m.-3 p.m. TAC Members will be briefed at their next meeting on December 7, 2018.

D'Juan Harris noted that Sara Catala had done an FDOT SIS Cost Feasible presentation at the last MPO Board Meeting on July 30, 2018. Unfortunately, the timing was not right for TAC Members to receive a briefing beforehand. She asked that TAC Members contact her with any questions they might have.

D'Juan Harris announced that a Mobility Week event would be held at Laishley Park in conjunction with the 3rd Annual Big Orange Music Festival on November 3, 2018. Anyone having questions should contact FDOT staffer David Agacinski.

5. Consent Agenda:

A. Approval of Minutes: July 18, 2018 Meeting

B. MPO and Advisory Committees Meeting Schedule for Calendar Year 2019

Linda Sposito made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Matt Trepal seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

6. FY 2018/2019 – FY 2019/2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and FY 2018/2019 Transit & Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) / FTA Section 5305(d) Task 8 Amendments

Gary Harrell stated the MPO received notification from FDOT that the FY 2018/2019 FTA Section 5305(d) Grant was increased. The total additional funds received was \$2,323. The MPO also received notification that \$13,217 of the PL 112 grant was not used by the end of FY 2016/2017. MPO staff recommends adding those funds to Task 4 – Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) FY 2019/2020. The MPO is required to amend the FY 2018/2019 – FY 2019/2020 UPWP updating figures to reflect these funds. He walked through the document with the proposed changes.

Linda Sposito made a motion to recommend that the MPO Board adopt FY 2018/2019 – FY 2019/2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and FY 2018/2019 Transit & Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) / FTA Section 5305(d) Task 8 Amendments. Don Scott seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

7. Transit Asset Management/State of Good Repair (TAM/SGR) Performance Measures

Gary Harrell stated that the current transportation act requires the MPOs to adopt Performance Measures for safety, road and bridge conditions and transit asset management. Charlotte County Transit developed a Transit Asset Management Plan with a due date of October 1, 2018. After that date, the MPO is required to adopt regional transit asset management targets or risk the ability of amending the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) until it is done. The Transit Asset Management Plan includes an inventory that details the mileage, useful life and condition of vehicles. Also reported are the condition and life expectancy of transit facilities.

Linda Sposito made a motion to recommend that the MPO Board adopt the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO's Transit Asset Management/State of Good Repair (TAM/SGR) Performance Measures. Matt Trepal seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

8. Charlotte County Regional Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan Final Draft

Gary Harrell described the progress of the Charlotte County Regional Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan Final Draft and introduced Ned Baier from Jacobs Engineering. Ned Baier stated that at the last TAC/CAC meetings the Committees recommended changes to the Master Plan briefing and to delay the presentation to the MPO Board until the October MPO Board meeting. He gave a Power Point brief of the Master Plan, noting there were over 400 public comments on Wikimaps!

Matt Trepal noted that project number intersections on one of the slides were flipped and needed correcting. Ned agreed and stated they would be corrected.

Ravi Kamarajugadda stated that several County applications for multi-modal projects have been rejected, including most recently the Safe Routes to Schools (SRTS) application. He asked if the decisions are made based upon biking or pedestrian counts, or other figures. He noted that neighboring Counties have received funding but not Charlotte County and asked why we were eliminated. Mat Trepal noted that the numbers of walkers and bikers 15 years ago compared to today show an increased usage of recently installed Bicycle-Pedestrian facilities. He stated that

measuring criteria based on current demand is a chicken and egg argument, as there is often not usage in an area because of lack of infrastructure. He further noted the trend of past County decisions to not fund out of the general fund but preferring grants instead. Ravi stated that Charlotte County and Charlotte County Public Schools have applied for two SRTS projects and been rejected twice. He stated he met with FDOT staff and that they agreed to assist in submitting a SRTS project that is competitive. One major issue is the cost of the project, but Charlotte County is willing to share the cost, not requesting all funding from FDOT.

Ned Baier stated that projects have had a good chance of funding when part of a larger plan. He stated the Draft Regional Bicycle- Pedestrian Master Plan is a 20-year plan that identifies the greatest needs. It is also a constrained plan where the projects that would make the biggest changes are on the Functional Roadway System. In the grant process, if a proposed project is in a Master Plan, it would not automatically be discounted. Gary Harrell stated that often funding comes to projects that are planned and, on the shelf, the recent SRTS project was not one of them at the time as the County did not have an adopted Master Plan.

Ravi Kamarajugadda stated the goal of reducing injuries was an important part of the Plan. Helmets or safety items would be helpful as well as educational workshops designed to educate users as well as motorists. Ned Baier stated that education and safety are a big part of the Sheriff's efforts but they need to attend meetings. Don Scott stated Lee County is having similar discussions as they have installed some major facilities but have not noticed a significant reduction in crashes. Lee County has built a lot of infrastructure because it was rated as the most dangerous County in the Country for bicycles and pedestrians.

Linda Sposito asked if data is available on connectivity of the bicycle-pedestrian facilities. Ned Baier stated the technical backup for recommendations in the Plan contains details of connectivity. It would be a good starting place as gaps are identified.

Tony Conte asked if the County requires infrastructure when the community is being planned. Matt Trepal stated they are preparing the next Evaluation and Appraisal Report (EAR) update for the County Comprehensive Plan. The EAR will take the Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan into account for the new update.

Don Scott stated that Lee County is dealing with how to address shared use paths. D'Juan Harris stated FDOT will require a maintenance agreement between the local governments and FDOT before approving shared use paths on FDOT roadways. The shared use paths are typically made of asphalt. FDOT will maintain eight-foot concrete sidewalks on FDOT roadways. Don Scott said that Lee and Collier rejected the maintenance agreement requirements and amended their designs back to eight-foot sidewalks. The SunTrail Foundation may take a different approach, as their vision is largely asphalt trails. Ned Baier recommended that the MPO Board proceed with adoption then go back and address the issue as the Plan does not specify asphalt for shared use paths. Linda Sposito stated that the City took over the maintenance of the shared use path on US 41. D'Juan Harris reiterated that FDOT will not maintain asphalt or concrete paths that are over eight feet.

Don Scott noted that the Babcock Ranch connection is represented by a swath on the map instead of a path. Gary Harrell stated that Babcock-Webb asked that the connection go around the Babcock Webb as going through it on the old Tuckers Grade would require a manned entrance

on SR 31. They do not have the resources for that and there are other issues. Matt Trepal stated the County Comprehensive Plan has a route through the Webb, but it was later objected to by the controlling organization. That is the reason the Master Plan designate the connection to Babcock Ranch as a swath to be determined in the future.

Linda Sposito made a motion to recommend the MPO Board adopt the Charlotte County Regional Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan Final Draft. Tony Conte seconded the motion. The motion was carried unanimously.

9. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

10. Staff Comments

Gary Harrell stated that work on the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Update is about to commence. The LRTP Update is the biggest project that the MPO conducts and is completed every 5 years. It will be due by October 2020. MPO staff would like to start the process earlier than in the past. They wish to meet with TAC Members in early November to do a strategy session to assist with scope development. Given recent technology changes it will be interesting to see whether capacity is increased, maintained or decreased. Lakshmi Gurram will be in contact with TAC Members soon regarding this meeting and providing them with a boilerplate template from the previous LRTP Update. Current General Planning Consultants (GPCs) will be contacted regarding their interest in developing LRTP submissions.

11. Member Comments

As a follow up to the LRTP discussion, Matt Trepal stated that the County will be using Western Michigan University (WMU) population projections in the County Comprehensive Plan Update. The County would like these projections to be used by all County departments. The MPO may also wish to consider using them, particularly in the next LRTP Update. This WMU population data will be updated annually. Matt Trepal indicated that previously, Charlotte County used the University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) projections, which are based upon past trends and don't take new development such as Babcock Ranch into consideration. The WMU figures consider permitting trends and show an increasing rate of growth. Matt Trepal stated that he hoped to bring this information to the next TAC Meeting. Gary Harrell noted that consistency in population projections can be helpful.

Ron Ridenour noted that the Charlotte County Airport passenger counts have been rising annually. The Authority is finishing up the Airport Master Plan, studying capital improvements and applying for grants from FDOT and the FAA. Gary Harrell observed that the Airport's designation as part of the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) would mean investments on the roadways serving the airport.

Joshua Hudson stated that he appreciated attending the TAC Meeting and learning a great deal of information.

D’Juan Harris and Linda Sposito discussed the ongoing issue of needed repairs to the right lane of US 17 (Olympia Avenue) just north of Southbound US 41 (Cross Street). Linda Sposito stated that many municipalities are experiencing problems with very old infrastructure underneath roadways. She noted that the pipe at that location is so brittle and old that it is difficult to determine what next step to take. The City is still awaiting word from FDOT.

12. Adjournment (NEXT MEETING – DECEMBER 7, 2018)

The meeting was adjourned at 11:15 a.m. The next scheduled regular TAC Meeting was announced to be December 7, 2018 at 9:30 a.m. at the East Port Environmental Campus, 25550 Harbor View Road in Port Charlotte.

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