



TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

Marion County Commission Auditorium
601 SE 25th Avenue, Ocala, FL 34471

August 25, 2015

MINUTES

Members Present:

Commissioner Earl Arnett, Chairman
Commissioner Kathy Bryant
Councilman Brent Malever
Commissioner Stan McClain
Councilman John McLeod
Commissioner David Moore
Commissioner Carl Zalak

Members Not Present:

Councilwoman Penny Fleeger
Commissioner Michael Goldman
Mayor Kent Guinn
Councilman James Hilty, Sr.
Councilwoman Mary Sue Rich

Others Present:

Greg Slay, TPO Director
John Voges, TPO Staff
Ken Odom, TPO Staff
Ann McGaffic, TPO Staff
Kayleen Hamilton, TPO Staff
Kellie Smith, FDOT
Mike McCammon, FDOT
Jazlynn Heywood, FDOT
Gennie Garcia, SunTran
Mounir Bouyounes, Marion County Engineering
Sean Lanier, City of Ocala Public Works
Kevin Smith, Marion County Growth Services

Others Present (continued):

Oscar Tovar, City of Ocala Traffic Engineering
Don Atwell, Marion County Engineering
Tony Chau, City of Ocala Traffic Engineering
Eddie Esch, City of Dunnellon City Manager
Darren Park, City of Ocala Public Works
Wally Blain, Tindale-Oliver & Associates
Carlos Rodriguez, Metric Engineering
Nick Mora, Kimley-Horn & Associates
Michelle Shearer, Shady Greenway Conservation Alliance
Kimberly Scudder, Quality of Life Community Services

Item 1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairman Arnett called the meeting to order at 4:17 PM. Secretary Kayleen Hamilton called the roll of members. A quorum was present.

Item 2. Proof of Publication

Secretary Kayleen Hamilton stated the meeting was posted on the Marion County, Ocala, Belleview, and Dunnellon websites and on the TPO website and Facebook page.

Item 3a. Central Florida MPO Alliance Regional Priorities

Mr. Slay presented the Central Florida MPO Alliance regional priorities. Marion County had several items on the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) and trail priorities lists. The Marion County SIS projects on the list were interchange improvements on I-75 at SR 40 and two widening projects on SR 40 East. The trail projects were Pruitt Gap and the Silver Springs to Mount Dora Trail.

Ms. Bryant made a motion to approve the Central Florida MPO Alliance regional priorities as presented. Mr. McClain seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Item 3b. Updated Off-system Priorities

Mr. Slay reported that staff had received a request from Marion County to add resurfacing of CR 42 to the off-system priorities list. Staff was recommending adding the project as the eighth priority.

Mr. Zalak moved approval of the updated off-system priorities as presented and Ms. Bryant seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Item 4. Consent Agenda

Ms. Bryant moved approval of the consent agenda. Mr. McClain seconded and the motion was unanimously approved.

Item 5a. NE 25th Avenue and NE 36th Avenue PD&E Presentation

Mr. Slay introduced Ms. Jazlynn Heywood, project manager for FDOT, to give an update on the NE 25th Avenue and NE 36th Avenue PD&E studies. Ms. Heywood reported that FDOT's consultant on the project, Metric Engineering, was wrapping up the studies. The next step was a public hearing which was scheduled for September 8.

Mr. Carlos Rodriguez from Metric Engineering reviewed the project limits for both NE 25th Avenue and NE 36th Avenue. The objectives of the studies were to address future capacity, address safety and mobility, create complete streets, and line up with the local vision. Both roads were currently two-lane facilities with open drainage. They lacked bicycle and pedestrian features, and a high crash location had been identified on NE 25th Avenue at NE 14th Street. Metric Engineering had evaluated the traffic on both corridors and forecasted out to the year 2040 to determine whether the need for widening was indicated.

NE 25th Avenue had been segmented based on characteristics and for development of design alternatives. The southernmost segment was recommended to be four-laned. The second and third segments were recommended to remain two lanes but be expanded to include bicycle and pedestrian features and a median. A key issue along the corridor was creating a grade separation at the railroad crossing while maintaining access to the businesses. A frontage road with "Texas u-turn" under the crossing was being recommended, and Mr. Rodriguez stated that an additional entrance to Manning Building Supply behind the fire station was being designed.

On the northernmost segment of NE 25th Avenue, Mr. Rodriguez reported that feedback had been received regarding crashes occurring along a curve in the road. The recommended design for this segment corrected the curve and provided a parallel, two-way frontage road for the residences.

There were a number of different drainage pond location options, and Mr. Rodriguez said that additional studies needed to be done to make certain the locations were suitable. When looking at the environment of the project, the study found that noise abatement measures were warranted at the Wagon Wheel Mobile Home Park.

A public hearing was scheduled for September 8, and Mr. Rodriguez said that the PD&E should be complete by the end of the year. Design was anticipated in 2017, but NE 25th Avenue was not currently funded for right-of-way acquisition or construction.

Mr. Rodriguez reported that NE 36th Avenue was a more arterial facility than NE 25th Avenue. As with NE 25th Avenue, there were recommendations for bicycle and pedestrian facilities and a median along the corridor. A key issue was creating a grade separation at

the railroad crossing. Stakeholder meetings had been held to discuss options, and a “Texas u-turn” was the recommended alternative to provide as much access as possible. NE 24th Street would need to be realigned to retain access. Additional borings were needed to determine appropriate pond locations. Two businesses and three residences would need to be relocated, and noise abatement measures were warranted at the Villages at Spanish Oaks.

A public hearing was scheduled for September 8, and Mr. Rodriguez said that the PD&E should be complete by the end of the year. There was currently funding for the grade separation at the railroad crossing.

Mr. Zalak asked about the realignment of NE 24th Street, and Mr. Rodriguez said they were looking at taking part of the parcel there and thinking about it for a pond location. There was discussion regarding access to the storage facility on NE 36th Avenue and NE 21st Street. Mr. Rodriguez explained that the storage facility had access on NE 21st Street and that the recommended design was more beneficial to the business than the other options. Mr. Rodriguez said that attempts had been made to be as accommodating of the businesses as possible.

Mr. Zalak asked about the cost of the residential frontage road on NE 25th Avenue, and Mr. Rodriguez said that when the design came out, there would be cost estimates. The frontage roads were a safety feature and could be done almost entirely within the existing right-of-way. Ms. Heywood added that the PD&E had evaluated having frontage roads and dividing NE 25th Avenue. Mr. Zalak asked whether the design could include the two alternatives, and Ms. Heywood said it could.

Item 5b. Long Range Transportation Plan Presentation

Mr. Slay reported that the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) was winding down. Traffic counts were lower than they had been in previous years, leading to lower traffic projections for the 2040 LRTP than there had been in the 2035 LRTP. Mr. Slay advised that projects had dropped out of the plan from 2035 to 2040. Cost estimates were currently preliminary and included figures based on the County’s impact fee ordinance. Mr. Slay introduced Mr. Wally Blain from Tindale-Oliver and Associates to provide an update on the LRTP preliminary needs assessment and the plan’s costs and revenues.

Mr. Blain advised that adoption of the LRTP was scheduled for November. A draft of the cost feasible plan would be presented at the next meeting. The preliminary needs assessment had begun with a look at the projects in the 2035 LRTP. Traffic model counts were used as a guide to categorize projects into priority groups. Mr. Blain highlighted several projects from the needs list. The needs cost for highways, interchanges, overpasses, and ITS/corridor management totaled around \$1,210,000,000. Transit needs included increased frequency, flexible circulator service, and express routes, for a total of approximately \$8,200,000 annually plus \$8,600,000 in initial capital. Mr. Blain mentioned that there were potential rail projects for future opportunities that had not been cost out.

Trail needs included Cross Florida Greenway trail projects that were funded in the next five years as well as maintaining the existing trail priorities. The Department of Environmental Protection also had future opportunity trail projects. The trail needs plus opportunities totaled around \$121,000,000.

Revenues included highway-specific funds, funds for transit, trail funding from the federal transportation alternative program, and flexible use funds. Mr. Blain mentioned that there was an alternative revenue option from a local discretionary sales surtax. These funds would not be used in the cost feasible plan but were shown to demonstrate what they could do for the LRTP.

Next steps included developing the recommended cost feasible plan and opening a public comment period. The plan was scheduled for adoption at a public hearing on November 24.

Item 6. Comments by FDOT

Ms. Smith reported that resurfacing on I-75 had begun. Design on SR 35 widening, which was a design-build project, had also started. Ms. Smith added that there was information regarding upcoming public meetings included in the meeting packet.

Mr. Zalak asked where the SR 35 widening would begin. Mr. Zalak said he was curious about traffic around the railroad crossing and the landfill. Mr. McCammon reported that lane closures would be at night, so there should be no impact. Mr. McCammon added that it depended on utilities and the contractor as to the sequence of work locations.

Item 7. Comments by TPO Staff

Mr. Slay advised the board that SunTran had the availability to display advertising in the overhead space on its buses. Staff did not receive many requests for interior advertising, and the requests they did receive were mostly public service in nature. Mr. Slay said that the advertiser was required to provide the material for the ads. Staff was recommending reserving SunTran's interior advertising space for public service information. Ms. Bryant commented that with bus wraps for revenue, it was a good idea to provide an opportunity to public service organizations to advertise. A consensus of the board supported continuing to reserve interior advertising space on the buses for public service information.

Item 8. Comments by TPO Members

There were no further comments by TPO members.

Item 9. Public Comment

Ms. Michelle Shearer of 2301 SE 85th Street, Ocala, said that she would like to see the SW 95th Street interchange and CR 475A taken out of the Long Range Transportation Plan. Ms. Shearer stated that she wanted to keep CR 475A a scenic road and to buffer the Cross Florida Greenway.

Ms. Shearer also mentioned that the Greenway Equestrians were having a fundraiser to bring a television program, Best of America by Horseback, to Marion County. Ms. Shearer commented that the Greenway equestrians saw the value of the paved multi-use trails but were asking that they would cross the equestrian trails only where other trails already intersected.

Item 10. Adjournment

Chairman Arnett adjourned the meeting at 5:07 PM.

Respectfully Submitted By:



Kayleen Hamilton, TPO Administrative Assistant