



TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION

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

March 24, 2015

MINUTES

Members Present:

Commissioner Earl Arnett, Chairman
Commissioner Gary Ernst (*for Commissioner Michael Goldman*)
Mayor Kent Guinn
Councilman Brent Malever
Councilman John McLeod
Commissioner David Moore
Commissioner Carl Zalak

Members Not Present:

Commissioner Kathy Bryant
Councilwoman Penny Fleeger
Councilman James Hilty, Sr.
Commissioner Stan McClain
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
Mounir Bouyounes, Marion County Engineer
Greg Stubbs, Marion County Planning
Bruce Phillips, Belleview Public Works
Sean Lanier, City of Ocala Public Works
Darren Park, City of Ocala Traffic
Oscar Tovar, City of Ocala Traffic

Others Present (cont):

Kevin Smith, Marion County Growth Services
Gennie Garcia, SunTran
Bob Wallace, Tindale-Oliver
Wally Blain, Tindale-Oliver
Approximately (6) members of the public

Item 1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Chairman Arnett called the meeting to order at 4:08 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 TPO, Marion County, Ocala, Belleview, and Dunnellon websites and on the TPO Facebook page.

Item 3a. Review and Approval of Priority Projects

Mr. Odom reported that there were few changes to the priority projects list from the previous year. The first priority was operation improvements at the intersection of SR 40 and US 441. The second priority was operation improvements on US 441 at SR 464. Priority three was SR 35 at Foss Road/CR 25. The fourth priority was SR 40 from US 441 to NE 8th Avenue. Priority five was multimodal improvements on SR 40 East from NE 49th Terrace to NE 60th Court. Priority six was the US 441 corridor study in Belleview. The seventh priority was sidewalk improvements on SR 40 from I-75 to the railroad overpass near US 441. Other priorities included widening on US 41 and SR 200, interchange operational improvements on SR 40 and CR 484, widening of NE 36th Avenue and SR 40 East, and new interchanges at NW 49th Street and SW 95th Street. Mr. Odom noted that the inclusion of the multimodal project on SR 40, the seventh priority on the list, was a recommendation from the Technical Advisory Committee and the Citizens Advisory Committee.

Mr. Guinn stated that downtown business owners were concerned about access with the design on SR 40 at US 441. Mr. Slay said that there were operations issues with that section of SR 40 approaching US 441 from the east. When the court house had been expanded, a study had shown that the light at SW 2nd Avenue was not warranted. A public meeting was scheduled for April 9, to get business and citizen input on the design, which included adding a right turn lane at SW 1st Avenue to improve access. Mr. Slay advised that the primary reason for the project was to address traffic backups, and Mr. Guinn stated that he was not aware of any issues at that intersection. Mr. Guinn added that the plan would adversely affect businesses and development.

Mr. Zalak asked about the multimodal path on SR 40, and Mr. Odom advised that the cost of construction had not been estimated yet. The asphalt bike path currently adjacent to the

sidewalk was not good in places, and Mr. Odom mentioned that it and the sidewalk would continue to degrade over time. This project differed from the downtown multimodal project in that downtown included different design features like crosswalks and lighting.

Mr. Zalak commented that he thought the TPO's number one priority was the interchange at NW 49th Street. Mr. Slay reported that the project was going through the interchange justification report process and was not eligible for another round of funding until FY 2020/2021. Some of the timing depended on the environmental study. Mr. Moore concurred with Mr. Zalak that the NW 49th Street interchange needed to be the top priority on the list. Mr. McLeod asked if moving the interchange to number one would change how the other projects on the list got done, and Mr. Slay said it probably would not. The interchange justification report process would take about twelve months, then an environmental study would need to be done, all of which would take about two to four years. In the meantime, Mr. Slay said that there were some other big construction projects on the list, like US 41 and SR 40 East, but those were being done out of different funding sources. Mr. Zalak stated that SR 40 East was also a high priority.

Mr. Zalak moved for approval of the priority project list with the NW 49th Street interchanged moved from number fourteen to number one, shifting all other projects down accordingly. Mr. Moore seconded and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 3b. Review and Approval of Transportation Improvement Program Amendments

Mr. Odom presented the amendments to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Four amendments related to the trail system gaps. Environmental mitigation was proposed to be added to the Land Bridge Gap and Santos Gap projects. There was also environmental mitigation proposed for the SR 200 widening from CR 484 to the Citrus County line. There was also an amendment for right and left turn lanes at the exit ramps on I-75 at SR 200.

Mr. Zalak asked about repair work on the SR 200 pavement, and Mr. Slay said that one location at SW 42nd Street had been fixed. Mr. Slay said that the local FDOT office was doing assessments of other intersections.

Mr. McLeod asked about the environmental mitigation, and Mr. Slay said that the funds would be used only if they were needed, which was uncertain.

Mr. Zalak made a motion to approve the TIP amendments and Mr. McLeod seconded. The motion was unanimously approved.

Item 4a. Year 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan Kick-off

Mr. Slay introduced Mr. Bob Wallace of Tindale-Oliver to provide an overview of the Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and to give an interactive presentation to get feedback regarding the process. Mr. Wallace said that objectives of the plan would be

discussed and set by the board along with how the success of improvements would be measured.

Mr. Wallace stated that the LRTP was the most important planning effort that the TPO undertook. The LRTP provided a blueprint for the five-year Transportation Improvement Program and was required by federal guidelines to be financially feasible. The revenues included in the plan had to be reasonably assured. Mr. Wallace said that part of the process was to look at how to develop improvements for the plan, determining the feasibility of those improvements, and looking at how to make the improvements happen.

Stakeholder interviews and targeted outreach meetings would be held to get feedback regarding needed projects. The list of improvements would then be narrowed down and taken to the public for consensus-building before coming back to the board. Recommendations were scheduled to be presented in September, opening the public comment period. Additional workshops would be conducted as needed, and Mr. Wallace said that the plan was scheduled for adoption at a public hearing in November.

Mr. Wallace and Mr. Wally Blain of Tindale-Oliver led the board and audience through interactive exercises that had been developed to stimulate thoughts and garner feedback regarding the direction of the LRTP. Mr. Wallace mentioned that the LRTP was beginning to be looked at as an economic engine. There was discussion regarding the challenges of funding projects in the LRTP.

Mr. Wallace suggested that the board think about what type of information it would like to receive for its decision-making processes. Mr. Zalak favored looking at infrastructure assets and strategic options. Mr. Zalak said that it would be good to understand the importance to the different economic sectors such as manufacturing, distributing and agriculture. Mr. Wallace said that the approach to the LRTP would involve targeting where the development was wanted and weighing improvements in order to channel funding.

Mr. Malever asked about the source of funding, and Mr. Wallace said that the federal and state gas tax would probably make up sixty-five to seventy percent of the revenues in the plan. There were also local funds, and Mr. Wallace said that the plan development would include discussions regarding sources and funding alternatives such as tax increments.

Mr. Wallace advised that an interactive website was under development. The website would be used throughout the LRTP process as an interactive tool for reaching the public, publishing results and information, and evaluating outreach methods.

Item 5. Consent Agenda

Mr. McLeod made a motion to approve the consent agenda as presented. Mr. Malever seconded and the motion was approved by unanimous vote.

Item 6. Comments by FDOT

Ms. Smith reported that work on drainage and the lime rock base was in progress on SR 40 West. Paving was expected to commence soon, and Ms. Smith said that there would be lane closures. US 27 resurfacing was getting started, beginning with the urban area. A public meeting on the SR 40 downtown corridor was scheduled for April 9.

Mr. Slay mentioned that FDOT was doing the design for adding a southbound left turn lane to SR 200 at SW 60th Avenue. Ms. Smith added that they were trying to get the project under construction next year.

Item 7. Comments by TPO Staff

Mr. Slay mentioned the upcoming MPOAC Weekend Institute for Elected Officials.

Item 8. Comments by TPO Members

Mr. Arnett reiterated that NW 49th Street was the most critical development for the Board of County Commissioners' objective of economic development and jobs.

Item 9. Public Comment

Ms. Michelle Shearer of 2301 SE 85th Street, Ocala, thanked Mr. Wallace and Mr. Blain for the LRTP presentation. Ms. Shearer mentioned that the board had cited trails, parks, and the springs as some of the county's best features. All of these, she said, would be affected by the SW 95th Street interchange. Ms. Shearer suggested abandoning the interchange in order to save money and protect the features that attracted people to Ocala.

Item 10. Adjournment

Chairman Arnett adjourned the meeting at 5:44 PM.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Kayleen Hamilton, TPO Administrative Assistant