

METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Indian River County (IRC) Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) was held at 10:00 AM on Friday, December 1, 2023, conducted and hosted in County Administration Building "B", Room B1-501, 1800 27th Street, Vero Beach, Florida.

TAC Members in Attendance:

Chairman, Jason Jeffries, City of Vero Beach
Robert Loring, City of Fellsmere (alternate)
Andy Sobczak, IRC Planning & Development Services
Kirstin Leiendecker, IRC Public Works/Traffic Engineering (alternate)
Tina Woods, Town of Orchid (alternate)
Sgt. Doug MacKenzie, IRC Sheriff's Office (alternate)
Chris Stephenson, Senior Resource Association (alternate)
Karen Miller, City of Sebastian Engineering
Alix Bernard, City of Sebastian Planning
Jeff Sabo, City of Sebastian Airport
Sean Lieske, Acting IRC Public Works Director
Danessa Chambers, City of Vero Beach (alternate)

TAC Members Absent:

Kristin Daniels, IRC Budget Department (excused)
Jennifer Idlette, IRC School Board (excused)
William Howard, City of Vero Beach Airport
Deputy Mark Shaw, Indian River Shores

Staff in Attendance:

Brian Freeman, MPO Staff Director
Jim Mann, MPO Senior Planner
Mark Vietze, MPO GIS Planner
Patti Johnson, MPO Staff Assistant III & Recording Secretary

Others in Attendance:

FDOT: Raj Shanmugam & Tony Norat
CalTran/FDOT: Jeannelia Liu & Tina McKinnie

Call to Order

Chairman Jason Jeffries called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. It was noted that an in-person quorum was present.

Approval of Minutes of the October 20, 2023 Meeting.
Action Required

Chairman Jeffries asked if there were any additions or corrections to the TAC Meeting minutes of October 20, 2023.

ON MOTION by Mr. Stephenson and SECONDED by Ms. Woods, the members voted (12-0) to approve the October 20, 2023 Metropolitan Planning Organization Technical Advisory Committee meeting minutes, as presented.

Consideration of the Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan Existing Conditions Report.

No Action Required

Mr. Freeman provided a brief summary and then introduced Ms. Kelly Farabee from Patel, Greene & Associates, LLC, who conducted the presentation via Zoom. Ms. Farabee discussed existing conditions, public engagement, policy review and what the next steps would involve. There were four public workshops held at various locations and at different times of the day/evening to accommodate residents.

Mr. Freeman added the next phase of the plan will be looking at needed facilities all around the community and then compiling a priority list of which ones we want to pursue first. Some of these projects might be built in conjunction with a roadway widening or resurfacing, and some might be stand-alone projects. This will include both sidewalks and bike facilities, and finding where the gaps are within the community. When new developments go in, sidewalks are usually included in the plans.

Chair Jeffries commented as the process proceeds, he would like to have coordination meetings with the cities and Mr. Freeman replied that could be done. Chair Jeffries stated the importance of everyone being on the same page, especially concerning upcoming projects.

Mr. Freeman remarked this plan will come back before the Committee early next year for more refinement. Mr. Freeman stated he would coordinate a meeting with the interested parties, but if anyone has any comments, feel free to make them now or email them to staff.

This is an information item only and no motion is required.

Consideration of an Amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Action Required

Mr. Freeman explained the Transit Development Plan (TDP) was adopted by the MPO at the September meeting. The TDP is a ten-year plan looking at the continued growth and improvements we would like to do on GoLine. The top two recommendations were expanding the weekday evening hours to 9pm from 7pm, and expanding the Saturday hours from 8am-5pm to 7am-7pm. Staff has been able to coordinate with FDOT and secure funding through a grant that would be able to cover half of the cost for the first three years of those programs. Before the grant agreement

can be approved, this TIP amendment needs to be approved.

Chair Jeffries opened the floor for any questions.

There being no further comments, the item was open for motion.

ON MOTION by Mr. Loring and SECONDED by Mr. Sabo, the members voted (12-0) to recommend approval of the Amendment to the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), as presented.

Consideration of the FDOT Smoothed Urban Boundary Map.

Action Required

Mr. Freeman stated this is an exercise/activity that is done every ten years following the census. Earlier this year we saw the urban area boundaries that were released by the US Census Bureau. The primary purpose of the Urban Boundary Map is to determine whether roadways should be classified as urban or rural in nature. That determination, in turn, is used to develop highway allocation funding formulas, determine appropriate roadway levels-of-service, and determine the eligibility of a roadway to receive certain categories of federal assistance. Mr. Freeman remarked this is similar to the 2010 map.

Mr. Freeman introduced Mr. Raj Shanmugam, from FDOT, who conducted the presentation. Mr. Shanmugam further expounded on what is entailed in this process. Mr. Shanmugam also introduced the other members of his team from CalTran, Ms. Jeannelia Liu and Ms. Tina McKinnie.

Chair Jeffries asked if this is related to transportation planning, how will the Oslo Road Interchange affect this? Mr. Freeman replied this area will continue to be classified as rural.

There being no comments, the item was open for motion.

ON MOTION by Mr. Lieske and SECONDED by Mr. Sabo, the members voted (12-0) to recommend approval of the FDOT Smoothed Urban Boundary Map, as presented.

Consideration of the 2020 Community Characteristics Report.

Action Required

Mr. Freeman conducted this presentation, a copy of this power point presentation is on file in the MPO office. Mr. Freeman stated the Community Characteristics Report uses census data and breaks the county down into logical communities by socio-economic variables. It is a detailed demographic breakdown given the statistical limitations on census data.

Mr. Freeman commented the population has increased more than 21,000 from 2010-2020, the median age of residents has increased from 49.1 to 55.1 years and there is a small increase in the average household size. Also noted were the breakdowns of educational attainment, the amount of time spent traveling to work, and the increased amount of residential construction.

Chair Jeffries opened the floor for comments/questions.

Chair Jeffries inquired if these boundaries were based on the census tracts and Mr. Freeman replied yes. Mr. Sabo asked if this assists in applying for grants and Mr. Freeman stated it does. When there is a project in a particular area, sometimes there are grants available specific to that location. There is very useful information to justify the need.

There being none, the item was open for motion.

**ON MOTION by Ms. Woods and SECONDED by Mr. Loring,
the members voted (12-0) to recommend approval of the
2020 Community Characteristics Report, as presented.**

Review of the Public Participation Plan Annual Evaluation.

No Action Required

Mr. Freeman remarked this is not so much of an evaluation, but an overview of the public involvement activities the MPO has participated in over the past year. This is a part of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), and it covers from July 1st through June 30th period.

A couple of things to highlight: The bike rodeo program resumed during this time period and we were able to reach over 1,400 children, providing them helmets and bike safety instruction. The Transit Development Plan (TDP) had a major update this year and there were extensive outreach efforts in which more than 1,500 responses were received, many of the participants were GoLine riders.

This is an information item only and no motion is required.

Status Report of MPO Advisory Committees.

No Action Required

Mr. Freeman reviewed his memorandum dated November 20, 2023, included in the agenda packet and on file in the MPO office. Mr. Freeman expounded that the MPO authorized Staff to issue a work order to one of our General Planning Consultants (GPC) to look at the FEC Railroad to evaluate all of the crossings for any grade separation potential and conduct a feasibility study. Once the study has been completed, the results will be shared with the members at one of the upcoming meetings. Chair Jeffries

asked if that will be redoing the 1990 study? Mr. Freeman answered yes, the study will be re-evaluating the crossings and feasibility. Chair Jeffries asked if they will be looking at the issues we are having with Aviation Blvd, with the re-routing of the additional lanes and a crossing removed? Mr. Freeman stated that is the policy FEC applies, this goes back to when railroads were first created and the government gave FEC the power to do this. This particular study would look at the possibility of some type of overpass. Mr. Freeman remarked that every time a crossing is widened, FEC is wanting to extract the closing of a crossing, it's going to become a challenge. Ms. Chambers stated they are requiring all municipalities to look at a long term plan for these options, they are not accepting applications ala carte.

Mr. Freeman wanted to highlight one more item regarding the trail. About three years ago the MPO started working with Space Coast TPO to put together a regional trail concept and there has been some development. This will be part of the Statewide Greenway and Trail System corridor. This was able to be placed on the statewide network as a priority corridor. The significance is that it is now eligible for funding through some additional programs that it wouldn't have been eligible for previously. The Rail Trail is a big portion of that but going along CR 512, US 1 over the Wabasso Causeway, tying into A1A, and then out to the St. John's Marsh.

Mr. Freeman welcomed the newest member to the TAC, Ms. Alix Bernard from the City of Sebastian.

Other Business

There was none.

Comments from the Public

There was none.

Adjournment

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 11:19 AM.