

# CHAPTER 4

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## Public Involvement

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## CHAPTER 4: Public Involvement

Public involvement is a crucial part in the building of a credible and trusting relationship between transportation agencies and the community they serve. Effective involvement is accomplished through partnering, outreach, active listening, and real two-way communication. Groups directly affected by transportation decisions may be the most difficult segments of the population to reach. Many citizens, such as members of minority groups, people with low incomes, and transit-dependent individuals, are unaware, unable, or for other reasons, do not take advantage of opportunities to provide comments or suggestions to the planning process on a regular basis. The MPO attempts to reach these citizens and stimulate participatory interest at the grassroots level.

To ensure all interested citizens had access to planning process, the MPO provided public notice and allowed for public comment at key decision points. This included outreach efforts for obtaining active public involvement early in the planning and document preparation process.

At the onset of the LRTP update, a Public Involvement Plan (PIP) was developed to ensure that federal requirements for public participation were met during the development of the 2040 LRTP, consistent with the MPO's adopted Public Participation Plan (PPP), and to provide a resource for the public as the update occurred. The PIP is provided in **Appendix B**.

### Federal Regulations

The CC-PG MPO, in accordance with MAP-21, is committed to a complete and ongoing public involvement program as part of all plans and programs developed by the MPO. MAP-21 requires that public outreach include all interested parties with reasonable opportunity to comment, including citizens, affected agencies, representatives of public

transit employees, freight shippers, providers of freight transit, private transportation providers, representatives of public transportation users, and representatives of pedestrian, bicycle, and disabled facility users. Methods of participation include public meetings, visualization techniques, and web resources.

Federal law requires that the public involvement process be proactive and provide complete information, timely public notice, full public access to key decisions, and opportunities for early and continuing involvement. The MPO followed 23 CFR 450.316 principles for public involvement in the LRTP development process, including:

- Provide at least a 30-day public comment period and advertise at least once in a local newspaper detailing Public Hearings, meetings, or participation opportunities including opportunities to comment and express opinions on the LRTP; the MPO's website will post all opportunities for public comment
- For LRTP amendments, the MPO will strive to meet the 30-day public comment period; however, the MPO can envision exceptions to this comment period for these amendments as meeting schedules, funding timetables, agency guidance, and contractor scheduling may be such that project delays could result in meeting notice guidelines



Round One Community Workshop

- Hold Public Hearings on proposed adoption of the LRTP
- Conduct a roll call vote of the MPO Board on the proposed adoption of the LRTP, including any amendments to the LRTP
- Provide timely notice and reasonable access to information pertaining to development of the LRTP
- To the extent possible, employ visualization techniques to describe the LRTP
- Make public participation, related technical information and meeting notices available through electronically accessible means and formats including the World Wide Web and electronic mail
- Hold public meetings at convenient and accessible locations and times
- Seek out and consider the needs of those traditionally underserved by the existing transportation system, such as low income and minority households
- Include public participation activities that ensure equality among all citizens; the MPO is committed to this concept of Environmental Justice and will ensure that the full and fair participation by all potentially affected communities in the transportation decision-making process, including public participation consistent with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990
- Demonstrate explicit consideration and response to public input received during development of the LRTP
- Include a summary of significant comments received on the draft LRTP as part of the final document
- Coordinate with the local and statewide transportation planning public participation and consultation process

## Communication Tools

The following tools and strategies were used to reach out to the public and provide a forum for open discussion and opportunities to comment.

### Stakeholder Interviews

In November 2014, prior to initiating the technical work of the 2040 LRTP update, the study team met with key stakeholders to get more in-depth background regarding what is happening around the county and what changes are expected over the next 25 years. Ten stakeholders were identified, including the MPO Board members, Charlotte County and City of Punta Gorda staff, and the Director of Tourism for the Charlotte Harbor Visitors and Convention Bureau. During one interview, an additional stakeholder was identified. **Table 4-1** lists the stakeholders.

Prior to the meetings and to help guide the discussion, the stakeholders were provided a list of 14 questions and the Needs Plan and Cost Feasible Plan chapters from the 2035 LRTP update. Meetings were conversational and informal. Several road, transit, and bicycle/pedestrian projects were identified by the stakeholders and included for consideration during development of the Needs Plan and Cost Feasible Plan. Stakeholders also provided input regarding sea level rise, prioritizing projects, funding, and challenges and opportunities. The summary of the meetings is provided in **Appendix B**.

The CC-PG MPO complies with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which states “No person in the United States shall, on grounds of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving federal financial assistance.” It is also the policy of the CC-PG MPO to comply with all requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act.

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**Table 4-1: Stakeholder Interview List**

<b>Stakeholder Name</b>	<b>Agency or Organization and Position</b>	<b>Location of Meeting</b>	<b>Date of Meeting and Notes</b>
<b>Gordon Berger</b>	Charlotte County Director of Budget & <i>Administrative Services</i>	Charlotte County Government Building	November 21, 2014 <i>Added to list by Charlotte County Administrator</i>
<b>Christopher G. Constance</b>	County Commissioner <i>MPO Board Chair</i>	Charlotte County Government Building	November 3, 2014
<b>Stephen R. Deutsch</b>	County Commissioner	Charlotte County Government Building	November 3 & 19, 2014 <i>Follow-up meeting due to time constraints during initial meeting</i>
<b>Ken Doherty</b>	County Commissioner	Charlotte County Government Building	November 3, 2014
<b>Carolyn Freeland</b>	City of Punta Gorda <i>Mayor</i>	City of Punta Gorda Office	November 3, 2014
<b>James Herston</b>	Charlotte County Airport <i>District 5 Representative</i>	Herston Engineering Services	November 21, 2014
<b>Howard Kunik</b>	City of Punta Gorda <i>City Manager</i>	City of Punta Gorda Office	November 14, 2014
<b>Tom Patton</b>	Charlotte County Economic Development <i>Director</i>	Charlotte County Economic Development Office	November 14, 2014
<b>Gary P. Quill</b>	Charlotte County Airport <i>Executive Director</i>	Charlotte County Airport Office	November 7, 2014 <i>James Parish (Assistant Executive Director) also participated</i>
<b>Ray Sandrock</b>	Charlotte County <i>County Administrator</i>	Charlotte County Government Building	November 7, 2014
<b>Lorah Steiner</b>	Charlotte Harbor Visitors and Convention Bureau <i>Director of Tourism</i>	Charlotte County Government Building	November 3, 2014

**Informational Handout**

At the start of the update, an informational handout was created to be available at all MPO and related meetings and at the MPO office. It included information about the LRTP update, such definition and purpose of a LRTP, update schedule, opportunities for providing comments, and highlights about Charlotte County. The informational handout is provided in Appendix B.



Informational Handout

**Mailing List**

The MPO maintained and updated the master mailing list database as a key component to the MPO’s public involvement process. Information documented in the mailing list includes mailing addresses, email addresses, phone numbers, and fax numbers. Attendees at all MPO-sponsored meetings may be added (at their discretion) to the database to help target and identify various interest groups and individuals. Fact sheets, newsletters, surveys, and other information about the project were e-distributed through the mailing list. The mailing list includes:

- Interagency professionals
- Elected and appointed officials

- MPO Board and Committee members
- Civic organizations, homeowners associations, and business groups
- Groups representing underserved populations
- Transportation and/or other relevant agencies
- Members of the community who want to receive project updates

**Surveys**

A survey was developed and utilized to obtain the public’s opinion about current and future transportation needs and the best way to prioritize public funds for future transportation improvements. Surveys also captured demographic information about respondents. The survey was used during the Consensus Building Workshops and Community Workshops, and was available online through a link on the MPO’s website to the interactive survey tool.

During the formal public comment period of the Draft 2040 LRTP, a survey form was created and provided along with the hard copy of the document at the display locations. The form asked to “Please provide your comments on the CC-PG MPO’s DRAFT 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan” with space to provide a comment or comments. The same question was provided on the website through the interactive survey tool.

**Press Releases and Advertisements**

Press releases were sent to all media outlets in the county with meeting and workshop announcements. All MPO-generated meeting notices and announcements related to development of the LRTP described the meeting purpose, sponsor, time, place, and answer the questions of “who, what, when, where, and how”. Notices were displayed in public places including the Murdock Administration Center, all County Public Libraries, and the Cultural Center of Charlotte County. The MPO website was also used to promote meeting notices and announcements.

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The MPO prepared flyers and press releases announcing community workshops and other public engagement events. The flyers were placed at community billboard sites, government offices, libraries, non-profit and citizen assistance establishments and other high foot traffic locations throughout the county. Press releases were prepared and sent to the Charlotte Sun and the North Port, Englewood, and Charlotte editions of the Herald Tribune announcing public events and opportunities for the media to report on Plan progress, events, and goals.

Advertisements and flyers used during the 2040 LRTP update are provided in **Appendix B**.

## Website

The project webpage included study deliverables, schedule, workshop and event announcements, survey and comment form, and the Draft LRTP Executive Summary for public comment. The MPO utilized its “MPO Latest News” website scroll with LRTP updates as well as schedule and dates for community workshops and other public involvement opportunities. Visitors to the MPO website could comment and provide ideas and suggestions throughout development of the LRTP.

## Public Outreach Meetings

The 2040 LRTP update included a public involvement effort with the primary purpose to have a meaningful dialogue with the public regarding the needs and desires of the community. The public and stakeholders were involved throughout the process at a total of 24 meetings. The public was involved during the Needs Plan development to discuss population and employment forecasts and needed transportation improvements for all modes. During the Cost Feasible Plan development, the public was asked to weigh in on the projects identified in the Needs Plan to assist in prioritizing the projects.

The public was welcome at all public meetings and workshops conducted during the update. **Table 4-2** lists all CC-PG MPO public meetings during the update.

**Table 4-2: 2040 LRTP Meetings**

<b>Consensus Building Workshops</b>	
February 25, 2015	
May 12, 2015	
<b>Community Workshops</b>	
March 4, 2015	
March 5, 2015	
March 17, 2015	
May 19, 2015 (combined with Environmental Justice Workshop)	
May 20, 2015 (combined with Environmental Justice Workshop)	
May 21, 2015 (combined with Environmental Justice Workshop)	
<b>MPO Board</b>	
December 15, 2014	
February 12, 2015	
May 4, 2015	
August 24, 2015	
October 5, 2015 (Public Hearing and Plan Adoption)	
<b>Technical Advisory Committee</b>	
December 10, 2014	July 30, 2015
January 14, 2015	September 16, 2015
April 8, 2015	
<b>Citizens Advisory Committee</b>	
December 10, 2014	July 30, 2015
January 14, 2015	September 16, 2015
April 8, 2015	
<b>Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee</b>	
March 19, 2014	
June 18, 2015	
<b>Peace River Engineering Society</b>	
June 9, 2015	

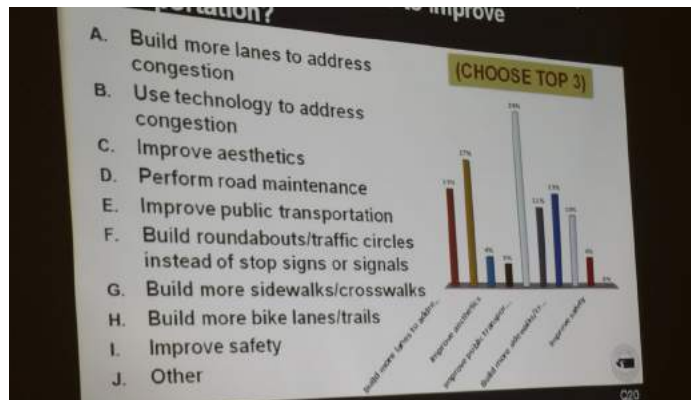
## Consensus Building Workshops

The MPO conducted one Consensus Building Workshop during development of the Needs Plan and one during development of the Cost Feasible Plan. Approximately 30 stakeholders were identified and invited by MPO staff to participate in the Consensus Building Workshops and the public was welcome to attend as well. Invitees represent many different perspectives and disciplines. Agendas, surveys, and exercises were prepared and distributed for these meetings. **Appendix B** includes the full summaries of the Consensus Building Workshops with the stakeholders.

### Round One Consensus Building Workshop

The first Consensus Building Workshop was held in the early afternoon on February 25, 2015. Participants were invited by MPO staff to attend. A total of 28 people attended the meeting, representing public, private, and non-profit organizations. The project team facilitated the workshop and encouraged attendees to speak up as needed to make the conversation and activity interactive. The meeting consisted of a presentation by the consultant team and MPO staff, and a voting exercise for the attendees. The following outlines the voting activity. The full summary is available in **Appendix B**.

General questions asked where people live and work, how many years they've lived in Charlotte County, who they represent, and what they want more for Charlotte County's future. Participants were then asked how they distribute funding to the different transportation modes in the plan if it were up to them. Questions were also asked regarding how to prioritize projects and timing. Finally, a series of questions covered transportation needs, specifically, which modes to invest more in and what strategies to focus funding on (such as implementing transit, incorporating technology into the system, adding bike lanes and trails, etc.).



Round One Consensus Building Workshop

During the final questions, participants were asked which roads in each area of the county needed improvements, and what types of improvements are needed. The information gathered during this meeting partially influenced the Needs Plan project list.

Key points made during the meeting include:

- Desires for Charlotte County's future
  - Plenty of options to get around
  - Thriving workplace and economy
- Best solutions to improve mobility
  - Improve public transportation
  - Use technology to address congestion
  - Build more lanes to address congestion
  - Build more sidewalks and crosswalks
- How to invest in roads
  - Use technology to make traffic flow better
  - Add lanes where highest needs for capacity
  - Make regional connections to south and north equally

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- Top roads to invest in West County:
  - Gasparilla Road
  - Placida Road
  - SR 776/S McCall Road
- Top roads to invest in Mid County:
  - Harbor View Road
  - Peachland Boulevard
  - US 41
- Top roads to invest in South County:
  - Taylor Road
  - Burnt Store Road
  - Airport Road
  - Jones Loop Road
- How to invest in bicycle/pedestrian facilities
  - Fill in the gaps where infrastructure exists
  - Make safer where high number of crashes
  - Focus on neighborhood streets
- How to invest in transit
  - Implement Fixed Route transit on US 41 with community circulators (full implementation of the Transit Development Plan [TDP])
  - Connect to Punta Gorda airport

## Round Two Consensus Building Workshop

The meeting was held in the early afternoon on May 12, 2015. Participants were invited by MPO staff to attend. A total of 24 people attended the meeting, representing public, private, and non-profit organizations. The project team encouraged attendees to speak up as needed, and make the conversation and activities interactive. The meeting consisted of a presentation by the project team and MPO staff and activities for the participants.

The project team structured the meeting around the presentation, breaking at specific spots to conduct the activities. The presentation began with a background on the LRTP update process, including why the update is needed, update schedule, goals and objectives, population



Round Two Consensus Building Workshop

and employment projections for 2040, the Cost Feasible Plan, the steps to get there, how it is determined, and why it is needed. The following outlines the activities. The full summary is available in **Appendix B**.

Participants were asked to help identify activity centers using maps placed around the room. The larger group was split into four smaller groups to discuss and identify activity centers on the maps. **Table 4-3** on the following page lists the activity centers and the tier identified during the meeting.

The second activity asked “How should projects be funded in the 2040 Plan?” Participants were given \$100 fake money and asked to allocate their money into four different pots. The results are provided in **Table 4-4**.

The third activity included prioritizing projects by mode. **Table 4-5** on the following page outlines the highest priorities for each mode.

**Table 4-4: Activity Results - How to Fund Projects**

Mode	Percentage Allocated
Transit	31.3%
Auto and Freight	38.8%
Bicycle and Pedestrian	13.9%
Congestion Management	16.0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>100%</b>



**Table 4-3: Activity Results - Activity Centers**

Name of Activity Center	Tier
Downtown Punta Gorda	1
Murdock Village	1
Port Charlotte Town Center/County Administration	1
Punta Gorda Airport	1
Cattle Dock 771/776 Area	2
Charlotte Harbor (Bayshore Live Oak)	2
Charlotte Sports Park	2
Cultural Center of Charlotte County	2
Englewood Beach	2
Fisherman's Village	2
Florida Tracks and Trails	2
McCall/Rotonda	2
Merchants Crossing	2
Park Side Festival Grounds	2
Peachland Promenade (Sandhill Area, Kings@I-75, future neighborhood growth)	2
Placida	2
Port Charlotte Beach Park	2
Boca Grande and Placida	3
Botanical Garden	3
Burnt Store Road	3
Colonial Promenades Shopping Center	3
Florida South Western State College	3
Muscle Car City	3
North Charlotte (Fuccilloville)	3
Oyster Creek Park	3
Ponce de Leon Park	3
WalMart Distribution	3

**Table 4-5: Activity Results - Prioritizing Projects**

Road Projects
<b>High Priority</b>
Burnt Store Road (Zemel Road to Scham Road)
Harbor View Road (Melbourne Street to east of I-75)
Taylor Road (Airport Road to US 41)
Airport Road (US 41 to Piper Road)
Henry Street (Golf Course Boulevard to Grove Blvd)
Toledo Blade Boulevard (SR 776 to Hillsborough Boulevard)
<b>Medium Priority</b>
Peachland Boulevard (Harbor Boulevard to Cochran Boulevard)
SR 776/S McCall Road (Crestview Drive to Wilmington Boulevard)—NO COMMUNITY SUPPORT
<b>Low Priority</b>
Placida Road (SR 776 to San Casa Drive)
<b>Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects</b>
US 41
Cochran Boulevard
Harbor Boulevard
Taylor Road
Olympia Avenue/Marion Avenue
Harbor View Road
<b>Transit Projects</b>
<b>Fixed Route:</b> Punta Gorda to North Port
<b>Flex Route:</b> Punta Gorda
<b>Fixed Route:</b> Port Charlotte to Englewood (Beach Hopper)
<b>Flex Route:</b> Englewood
<b>Fixed Route:</b> Lake Suzy, Punta Gorda, Punta Gorda Airport
<b>Flex Route:</b> Port Charlotte West
<b>Flex Route:</b> Port Charlotte East

## Community Workshops

Community Workshops were held in sets of three around the county to allow residents and visitors to attend the most convenient meeting(s). During both the Needs Assessment Phase and Cost Feasible Phase, one meeting was held (during each phase) in each of the three areas of the county: West County, Mid County, and South County. The content at each set of three meetings was the same.

The Community Workshops were open to the public as well as all stakeholders identified and/or involved in the development of the LRTP. The MPO and Consultant made a significant effort to engage the traditionally underserved and underrepresented residents in the county to ensure the plan reflects the needs and desires of all demographics of the community. Agendas, surveys, and exercise(s) for these workshops were developed and distributed at the meetings and made available on the website.

At all workshops the MPO utilized its internal Evaluation/Comment Form to measure public involvement effectiveness and collect community demographic information. **Appendix B** includes the full summaries of the public workshops, including all displays provided.

## Round One Community Workshop

The first round of Community Workshops was held in the later afternoon through early evenings on the three dates in March 2015 to kick-off the update with the public and discuss the Needs Assessment phase of the study. **Table 4-6** presents the logistics of the meetings.

The room was set up to flow from the registration table to the information boards, activity boards and map, and presentation seating. Each meeting was set up slightly different due to the size and shape of the rooms. The presentation was given 15 minutes into each workshop. Before and after the presentation, attendees were invited to view the informational boards, participate in the activity, speak with staff, and respond to the survey.

The following outlines the responses received from the participants regarding the workshop activities. The full summary is available in **Appendix B**.

### What solutions do you want?

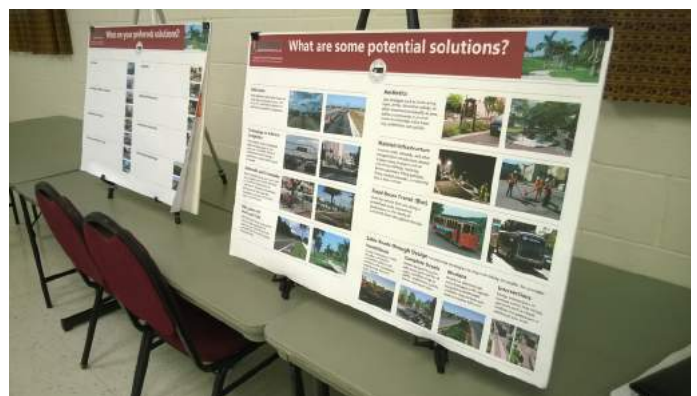
Attendees were each given 5 dots and asked to place them on a board to show their preferred solutions to improve mobility in Charlotte County. Responses are provided in **Table 4-7** on the following page.

**Table 4-6: Community Workshops, Round One**

	West County	Mid County	South County
<b>Date and Time</b>	Wednesday, March 4, 2015 3:00-6:00 pm	Thursday, March 5, 2015 4:00-7:00 pm	Tuesday, March 17, 2015 3:00-6:00 pm
<b>Location</b>	Englewood Charlotte Public Library 3450 North Access Road Englewood	Cultural Center of Charlotte Co. 2280 Aaron Street Port Charlotte	Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center 75 Taylor Street, Punta Gorda
<b>Attendees</b>	16	6	13

**Table 4-7: Activity Results - Solutions**

Solution	West	Mid	South	Total
Fixed Route Transit (Bus)	4	7	21	32
Bike Lanes and Multi-use Trails	5	4	9	18
Maintain Infrastructure	8	3	4	15
Safer Roads through Design	8	0	7	15
Sidewalks and Crosswalks	4	5	5	14
Aesthetics	5	2	4	11
Technology to Address Congestion	6	1	1	8
Add Lanes	4	1	1	6



**Where do you want to see improvements?**

Attendees were then asked to draw on a map showing where they want to see improvements. Table 4-8 on the following page provides the summary of responses received.

Other solutions provided by participants included:

- Synchronize traffic lights on SR 776/S McCall Road
- Improve aesthetics on Forrest Nelson Boulevard and Orlando Boulevard
- Ridesharing system based on internet contact
- Preserve railroad right of way for future rail service (Lee County to Sarasota County) or rails to trails

Round One Community Workshops

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**Table 4-8: Activity Results - Prioritizing Projects**

<b>Road Projects</b>			
Burnt Store Rd	Midway Blvd	Taylor Rd	
CR 74/Bermont Rd	San Casa Dr	US 41	
Hillsborough Blvd	SR 31		
Loveland Blvd	SR 776/S McCall Rd		
<b>Intersections and Interchanges</b>		<b>Crosswalks</b>	
Winchester Blvd @ SR 776/S McCall Rd (add turn lanes)		Edgewater Dr @ Pellam Blvd	Rotonda West (various intersections)
SR 776 @ Charlotte Sports Park (add turn lanes)		Forrest Nelson Blvd (various intersections)	Sunset Road @ Spinnaker Boulevard (realign)
I-75 @ Kings Highway (improve interchange)			
I-75 @ Raintree Blvd (new Sarasota County interchange)		Kings Hwy @ Veterans	US 41 @ Burnt Store Rd, Carmalita St, Wyvern Hotel
<b>Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects</b>			
Airport Rd	Harbor Blvd	Peachland Blvd	US 17
Aqui Esta Dr	Harbor View Rd	Pellam Blvd	US 41
Burnt Store Rd	Hillsborough Blvd	Piper Rd	Washington Loop Rd
Cape Haze Dr	Jones Loop Rd	Placida Rd	Winchester Blvd
Cochran Blvd	Loveland Blvd	Rotonda West	South of Taylor Rd/Punta Gorda
Forrest Nelson Blvd	Midway Blvd	San Casa Dr	Access to Ponce de Leon Park
Gasparilla Rd	Olympia Ave/Marion Ave	SR 776/S McCall Rd	Access to Babcock Webb WMA
Gulfstream Blvd	Orlando Blvd	Taylor Rd	
<b>Transit Projects</b>			
Circulator service in Parkside, Punta Gorda, Murdock Circle			
Fixed Route bus along US 41 connecting Sarasota to Punta Gorda			
Fixed Route bus along SR 776/S McCall Road connecting Port Charlotte to Englewood/Englewood Community Hospital/north into Sarasota County			
Fixed Route bus Connecting to Punta Gorda Airport			
Express Bus/BRT with stations in North Port, Murdock Circle, Parkside, and Punta Gorda			

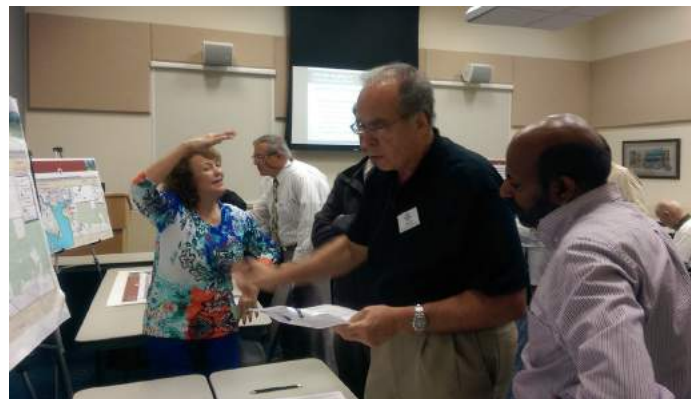
## Round Two Community Workshop

The second round of Community Workshops was held in early evenings on three dates in May 2015. The room was set up to flow from the registration table to the information boards, activity boards, and presentation seating. Each meeting was set up slightly different due to the size and shape of the rooms. Table 4-9 presents the logistics of the meetings.

The presentation was given 15 minutes into each workshop. Before and after the presentation, attendees were invited to view the informational boards, participate in the activity, speak with staff, and fill out the questionnaire. Participants were asked to provide their comments regarding the following activities. Activity results and responses are described below. The full summary and questionnaire responses are available in Appendix B.

**Table 4-9: Community Workshops, Round Two**

	West County	South County	Mid County
<b>Date and Time</b>	Tuesday, May 19, 2015 4:00-6:00 pm	Wednesday, May 20, 2015 4:00-6:00 pm	Thursday, May 21, 2015 4:00-6:00 pm
<b>Location</b>	Englewood Charlotte Public Library 3450 North Access Road Englewood	Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center 75 Taylor Street, Punta Gorda	Cultural Center of Charlotte Co. 2280 Aaron Street Port Charlotte
<b>Attendees</b>	4	20	11



Round Two Community Workshops

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## What are your priorities?

Attendees were asked to look at the maps and using the handout provided, to select their top priority projects for the

following modes: roads (capacity), bicycle & pedestrian, and transit. All responses are included in **Appendix B**. **Table 4-10** shows the top project responses.

**Table 4-10: Activity Results - Priorities**

Road Projects			Votes
Burnt Store Road from Zemel Road to Scham Road (2 lanes to 4 lanes)			9
Taylor Road from Jones Loop to Airport Road (2 lanes to 4 lanes)			9
Taylor Road from Airport Road to US 41 (2 lanes to 4 lanes)			9
Airport Road from US 41 to Piper Road (2 lanes to 4 lanes)			7
Edgewater Drive from Jowett Street to Midway Boulevard (2 lanes to 4 lanes)			7
Burnt Store Road Extension from Taylor Road to US 17 (new 4-lane road)			6
Flamingo Boulevard from Edgewater Drive to SR 776 (2 lanes to 4 lanes)			6
Taylor Road from US 41 to Jones Loop Road (2 lanes to 4 lanes)			6
Burnt Store Road from Jones Loop Road to Taylor Road (2 lanes to 4 lanes)			5
Loveland Boulevard from Kings Highway to Veterans Boulevard (2 lanes to 4 lanes)			5
Peachland Boulevard from Cochran Boulevard to Harbor Boulevard (2 lanes to 4 lanes)			5
Bicycle and Pedestrian Projects			Votes
Edgewater Drive	11	US 41 (Segment 2)	6
Midway Boulevard	10	Gasparilla Road (CR 771)	5
Harbor View Road	9	Olean Boulevard	5
Kings Highway	8	Peachland Boulevard	5
Airport Road	7	Taylor Road	5
Harbor Boulevard Extension	7	US 17	5
US 41 (Segment 1)	6		
Rank	Transit Projects		
1	Route connecting downtown Punta Gorda to North Port		
2	Route connecting Lake Suzy, downtown Punta Gorda, and Punta Gorda Airport		
3	Beach hopper connecting Port Charlotte and Englewood		

Attendees were also asked if they would add any projects. The only additional project suggested was a route between downtown Punta Gorda and North Ft. Myers connecting at Pine Island Road.

### How much would you invest?

Attendees were asked how much they would invest in each mode: roads (capacity), bicycle & pedestrian, transit, and Congestion Management. Each attendee was given \$100 and asked to split the money up into the four modes.

Table 4-11 provides the responses to this activity.

**Table 4-11: Activity Results - How to Fund Projects**

Mode	West County	South County	Mid County	Average (order)
Transit	42%	29%	38%	36% (1)
Auto and Freight	31%	22%	30%	28% (2)
Bicycle and Pedestrian	12%	36%	17%	22% (3)
Congestion Management	15%	13%	15%	14% (4)
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%

### Environmental Justice

At the second round of Community Workshops, participants were asked to provide comments regarding Environmental Justice. Materials were displayed regarding what Environmental Justice is, and why it is important.

Attendees were asked to review the identified Environmental Justice areas and answer the following:

- Do you live in one of the areas identified as a potential impact area?
- Do you own or have access to a car?
- Do the proposed projects serve the traditionally underserved areas?
- If not, what additional projects should be considered?

- Do any of the proposed projects adversely impact the traditionally underserved areas?
- If so, which project(s)?

In total, 13 attendees answered the Environmental Justice questions. Of them, four marked that they live in an identified Environmental Justice area, and 12 of the respondents own or have access to a car. When asked if any additional projects should be considered, the following were identified:

- Additional projects in the Gulf Cove and South Gulf Cove area
- Transit alternatives for those who cannot afford cars

When asked if any of the projects adversely impact the traditionally underserved, no projects were identified.

### Board and Committee Presentations

The MPO CAC and TAC were briefed at regular meetings throughout the development of the LRTP and asked to provide review and comment. Committee members were asked to help distribute the survey, collect constituent needs and opinions on LRTP goals, and attend scheduled public participation events when possible. A meeting schedule was created to outline when presentations would be made at Board and Committee meetings to easily identify major milestones regarding the LRTP update. Presentations were made to the MPO Committees and Board during major milestones of the 2040 LRTP.

### Public Hearing

The public comment period was opened at the August 24, 2015, Board meeting and closed at the public hearing held during the regularly scheduled October 5, 2015, MPO Board meeting. The public comment period was a total of 43 days. This allowed ample time for the public to provide comments on the Plan. The MPO Board adopted the 2040 LRTP at the October 5, 2015 Board meeting.

# 2040 Transportation Plan

Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO

Draft documents were available at the following locations around the county for review by the public:

- County Center
- CC-PG MPO Office
- City of Punta Gorda Office
- Libraries
  - Englewood Charlotte Public Library
  - Mid-County Regional Library
  - Port Charlotte Public Library
- Cultural Center of Charlotte County

## Comments Received

### **One public comment was received during the public comment period (recorded verbatim):**

“On behalf of AARP Chapter 80 and TEAM Parkside’s Our Community for Lifetime Committee, we support the LRTP that includes dial-a-ride AND a fixed route system throughout the county. We especially appreciate that two critical issues are covered: the ability to start a fixed route at minimal additional cost and a FLEX system that gets riders to the stops.

We further commend you for bringing together transit stakeholders in a thorough and very well done Consensus Building Workshop. We strongly support the decision of 76% of the stakeholders that a fixed route be started “Yesterday, ASAP.”

Our thanks to this MPO for initiating the plan and to the planners whose research covered the broadest spectrum of Charlotte County’s transportation needs. Acceptance now opens the door for transit interaction with our neighboring counties, can alleviate our increasing traffic, can help provide jobs and job training for our robust economy and with the migration here of aging boomers can give older persons a reason and ability to limit their driving and take the bus.”

### **TAC comments received (with responses provided) during the public comment period include:**

- On Developer Funded Road Projects map, show the potential new interchanges as a “swath” and not dots.
  - This change was made as requested.
- Coordinate with the Sarasota/Manatee MPO regarding how many lanes Toledo Blade Boulevard will be in the 2040 Plan (Needs Plan and Cost Feasible Plan).
- This coordination was made. The Sarasota/Manatee MPO’s 2040 LRTP does not include a project to widen Toledo Blade Boulevard at this time, but may be included in the next update. The Charlotte County project is slated for planning and construction in 2026-2030; further planning for Toledo Blade should occur in coordination with the Sarasota/Manatee MPO.

### **CAC comments received (with responses provided) during the public comment period include:**

- Ensure bicycle and pedestrian projects (especially US 41) are included in the Plan. The Plan should reflect desire for improved bicycle and pedestrian facilities.
  - A multi-use trail is planned for US 41, along with filling of sidewalk gaps. This plan focused heavily on bicycle and pedestrian improvements, ensuring that bicycle and pedestrian facilities were incorporated into all appropriate roadway widening projects.
- Members expressed concern regarding the need for more capacity on US 41 over the Peace River, which is not included in the Cost Feasible Plan.
  - Widening US 41 over the Peace River is not Cost Feasible; however, further study should be considered regarding alternative routes over the River.