

CHARLOTTE COUNTY - PUNTA GORDA

**METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**MINUTES OF THE MARCH 3, 2021**

**TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC) MEETING**

**MEMBERS ATTENDING (Virtual and In-person)**

Linda Sposito, City of Punta Gorda Public Works

Ron Ridenour, Charlotte County Airport Authority

Ravi Kamarajugadda, Charlotte County Public Works

Ron Gogoi, Lee MPO

Andrea McDonough, Rick Kolar Alternate, Charlotte County Transit Division

Noah Fossick, City of North Port Planning and Zoning

Joshua Hudson, Charlotte County Economic Development

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Shaun Cullinan, Charlotte County Community Development

Sgt. Tom Scott, Charlotte County Sheriff’s Office

Tony Conte, Charlotte County Public Schools

Vacant, Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council (SWFRPC)

Patrick Fuller, Charlotte County Emergency Management

Mitchell Austin, City of Punta Gorda

Kathy Heitman, DeSoto County

**OTHERS ATTENDING (Virtual and In-person)**

Jesten Abraham, FDOT

Gary Harrell, MPO Director

Lakshmi N. Gurram, MPO Staff

Sai “Sammy” Edara, MPO Staff

Bekie Leslie, MPO Staff

Wendy Scott, MPO Staff

Fabiana Solano, City of Punta Gorda

Steve Luowinski, Corradino Group

Matt Dokins, FDOT (RK&K)

Adam Rose, FDOT (RK&K)

Richard Oujevolk, FDOT

Christopher Speese, FDOT

Christopher Simpron, FDOT

Bryan Clemons, City of Punta Gorda Engineer

Heidi Maddox, CC Fiscal

**1. Call to Order & Roll Call**

Ravi Kamarajugadda, TAC Vice-Chair, called the meeting to order at 9:30 A.M. in the absence of TAC Chair Mitchell Austin. The roll call was taken. A quorum was present.

**2. Public Comments on Agenda Items**

None

**3. Chair’s Report**

Gary Harrell mentioned Mitchell Austin apologized for not attending the meeting as he got double scheduled with the City of Punta Gorda Council Meeting. He said Fabiana Solano will be attending the meeting representing the City as a nonvoting member.

**4.** **Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Report**

**A. FY 2021/2022 – FY 2025/2026 FDOT Tentative Work Program**

Jesten Abraham and Gary Harrell reviewed the FDOT 5 Year Transportation Work Program, FY 2022 through FY 2026 Summary of Additions, Reschedulings and Deletions. Gary Harrell noted that there were additions/deferrals/but no deletions, while characterizing the overall situation as a tough pandemic year. He noted how fortunate it was that no major projects had been deleted and traditional annually funded items had remained intact. Some minor landscaping projects were deferred for financial relief. He also described how the Harbor View Road project was so expensive that it was split into two segments: (1) Melbourne Street to Date Street portion which was fully funded through construction, and (2) Date Street to I-75 portion which was unfunded. Mr. Harrell stated that Charlotte County will work with FDOT to determine the costs for the latter segment.

Gary Harrell noted that some sidewalk projects were also deferred. Also, an important addition was included in the area of SR 31 & CR 74 (Bermont Road). FDOT had identified funding to make the intersection improvement with a roundabout construction as the planned long-term treatment. He asked if the Airport Authority and Charlotte County Transit are happy with the FDOT Work Program. Ron Ridenour said he works with Wendy Sands on this and they are happy with FDOT Work Program.

Gary Harrell introduced Richard Oujevolk, FDOT Project Development Manager, who initiated the presentation on the US 41 PD&E Project from Williams Street to the Northbound US 41 Peace River Bridge. Mr. Oujevolk was joined by other key FDOT staff and consultants during the presentation. He described the accelerated approach to this project taken by FDOT and City staff to address the project’s place within the City Comprehensive Plan’s emphases and to merge it with existing and proposed trails. The plan involved removing and repurposing the auxiliary lane. Safety issues at Carmalita Street and speeds in the downtown would also be addressed. The timeframe would be compressed from 15-20 years to 6-8 years. Mitchell Austin, Principal Planner at the City’s Urban Design Office, was identified as the City’s project contact. The City would be taking formal steps to request FDOT project assistance.

**5. Consent Agenda**

**A. Approval of Minutes: November 17, 2020 Meeting**

**B. FY 2020/2021 – FY 2024/2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

**Amendment**

Gary Harrell reported that the MPO staff received a request from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to amend the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO’s FY 2020/2021 – FY 2024/2025 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) adding two transit grants (FTA Section 5310 and FTA Section 5307). He noted that although FDOT uses the standard header of “Fixed Route” for these transit grants, Charlotte County strictly operates a paratransit (door-to-door) type service.

Ravi K. inquired about who tracks the FTA funds. Heidi Maddox responded that she tracks the funds monthly and keeps a record.

***Linda Sposito*** *made a motion to approve the consent agenda.* ***Ravi K.*** *seconded the motion. The motion passed by a unanimous vote.*

**6. FY 2020/2021 –FY 2021/2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – FTA 5305(d) Amendment**

MPO staff has recommended an amendment to the MPO FY 2020/2021 – FY 2021/2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to reflect a change in the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) FY 2020 FTA Section 5305(d) apportionment. This change had been requested by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and was related to Agenda Item #8 that followed. It modified the FTA Section 5305(d) grant funding model by fulfilling the 5305(d) grant 20% non-federal share with transportation development credits (TDC) in lieu of state and local cash matches for the upcoming Public Transportation Grant Agreement (PGTA) and within the FY 21-23 UPWP Cycle. Besides providing some funding for a portion of an MPO planner’s salary, this grant helps to fund part of the MPO’s Long Range Transportation Plan.

***Ravi K.*** *made a motion to recommend to the MPO Board approval of the draft FTA Section 5305(d) Amendment to the FY 2021-FY 2022 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).* ***Linda Sposito*** *seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.*

**7.** **FY 2020/2021 FTA Section 5305(d) Public Transportation Grant Agreement (PTGA)**

Annually, Federal Transit Administration (FTA) Section 5305 (d) Funds are allocated to the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and administered through the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for the purpose of metropolitan transit planning. At the July 20, 2020 MPO Board meeting, the Board approved the FY 2020/2021 FTA Section 5305(d) Planning and Technical Studies Grant Application. The application was reviewed and approved. Of note, this is a new funding approach utilizing an annual Public Transportation Grant Agreement (PTGA). The PTGA was added to the December 7, 2020 MPO Board agenda, but then, pulled from the agenda during the meeting at the request of FDOT. Due to pandemic impacts to state revenues, agency participation is now as follows:

FTA grant $ 74,747

Local Funds $ 9,344

$ 84,091

These funds are used to conduct MPO transit planning activities and provide support for the MPO’s Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) efforts.

***Ravi K.*** *made a Motion to recommend MPO Board approval of the FY 2020/2021 FTA*

*Section 5305(d) Public Transportation Grant Agreement including MPO Board Resolution*

*#2021-01, authorizing the MPO Board Chair to sign all required documents, and authorizing*

*staff to make minor changes and adjustments as needed (including minor funding*

*adjustments).* ***Linda Sposito*** *seconded the Motion, and it was passed unanimously.*

**8. Draft FY 2021/2022- FY 2025/2026 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Gary Harrell discussed the TIP process. Federal and State legislation require MPOs to adopt a 5-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP outlines federal and state capital improvements for transportation and is a staged, multiyear, intermodal program of transportation projects that is consistent with the MPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). The Technical and Citizens’ Advisory Committees formally review the development of the TIP. The Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO is scheduled to review and adopt the TIP at the May 17, 2021 MPO Board Meeting. TAC Members were provided with a copy of the Draft Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO TIP for FY 2021/2022 – FY 2025/2026.

The Sarasota/Manatee MPO and the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO entered into an interlocal agreement formalizing and specifying regional planning projects and timeframes to produce those projects. The Agreement calls for each MPO to identify regional priorities and include those projects in the respective MPO’s TIP. Those priorities that were adopted last year are included, in accordance with the interlocal agreement in the TIP.

Gary Harrell referenced Section 4 which contains the actual local area projects. He discussed the Harbor Walk Phase II project that the City requested to change the limits to avoid lengthy federal requirements and instead, utilize funding allocated for the US 41 Southbound Bridge at Harbor Walk for ADA improvements. This action would require a change to funding costs that the City has agreed to provide once an estimate is obtained, yet it would be an opportunity to accelerate the ADA sidewalk improvements.

**9. 2021 Draft Project Priorities – Discussion**

Gary Harrell noted that the MPO was required to annually develop a List of Project Priorities (LOPP) as part of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) process and to submit the list to FDOT. Laks Gurram presented information on the 2021 Draft Project Priorities. He corrected a typographical error labelled 2020 that should have been 2021. FDOT had requested that the initial priorities be submitted by February 12, 2021 to begin their review process. A preliminary list of Project priorities would be submitted by March 15, 2021. The final LOPP must be approved and submitted to FDOT by July 1, 2021. The MPO received project candidates from the City of Punta Gorda and Charlotte County which included Highway projects, Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) projects, and Congestion Mitigation/Transportation System Management (CM/TSM) Box, and Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) projects. The list of Project Priorities approved by the MPO Board at the May 2020 meeting was provided to TAC Members.

See below for the DRAFT LOPP received from member entities. The Draft is presented for comments at both the March 3, 2021 TAC/CAC meetings and will be reviewed at the March 22, 2021 MPO Board Meeting:

* Harbor View Rd from Melbourne St to Date St (now segmented)
* Harbor View Rd from Date St to I-75 (now segmented) – unfunded currently
* Edgewater Drive from Midway Blvd. to Collingswood Blvd
* SR 31 at CR 74 Intersection Improvements
* SR 776 at Gulf Stream Blvd Intersection Improvements
* SR 776 at Biscayne Drive – Design and Construction Turn lanes and Signal
* SR 776 at Cornelius Blvd - Design and Construction Turn Lanes
* SR 776 at Jacobs Street - Design and Construction Turn Lanes
* Cooper St – Complete St improvements
* Shreve Street Complete Street Improvements
* US 17 Complete Street Improvements
* US 41 Bridge Approach Decorative Finish Street Lights
* US 41 MURT Bridge at S. Alligator Creek
* Harborwalk Phase – II ADA ramp

Comments were placed on the right-hand side of the document to provide status updates.

Gary Harrell discussed the significance of the SR 776 Corridor Study and the favorable assistance that had been provided by FDOT District One Secretary LK Nandam and his staff in this process. The study had commenced and the MPO Board and its committees would be briefed on this effort in the future. Stakeholders such as the Harley Davidson dealership were being involved in the study. The final report target was slated for July 2021. This study would be similar to the US 41 Corridor Study that was conducted earlier in Charlotte County. Mr. Harrell reported that West County residents have expressed the desire to delay the six laning of SR 776 by utilizing intersection improvements at this time.

**10. Public Comments**

None.

**11. Staff Comments**

None.

**12. Member Comments**

Ravi K. thanked everyone for participating and welcomed Bryan Clemons (New City Staff)

**13.Adjournment (NEXT TAC MEETING – April 28, 2021)**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:25 a.m. The next regularly scheduled TAC meeting will be held on Wednesday, April 28, 2021 at the Eastport

Environmental Campus, 25550 Harbor View Road, Port Charlotte in Training Room B beginning at 9:30 a.m.