

**CHARLOTTE COUNTY-PUNTA GORDA
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC)
June 16, 2022
Minutes**

Minutes of the meeting held in a hybrid format on June 16, 2022, utilizing Microsoft Teams® for virtual participation and in person at the East Port Environmental Campus, Training Room B, 25550 Harbor View Road, Port Charlotte, Florida 33980.

MEMBERS ATTENDING EITHER IN PERSON OR VIRTUALLY

Court Nederveld, (Vice Chair) South County Representative
Robert Logan, Mid-County Representative
Wendy Zurstadt, South County Representative
James Wernicke, West County Representative (Virtual)
Betty Staugler, Historical/Cultural/Environmental Representative (Virtual)
David Allen, Mid County Representative (Virtual)
Ben Turner, West County Representative (Virtual)

ABSENT

Pauline Klein, (Chair) Bicycle Club- excused
Michael Tomaso, Bicycle Business Representative

ADVISORY AND OTHERS ATTENDING EITHER IN PERSON OR VIRTUALLY

Beaumont Hayner, City of Punta Gorda Urban Design
Tanya Merkle, FDOT District One Liaison
Richard (OJ) Oujevolk, FDOT
Dave Bogner, FDOT
Vitor Siguri, FDOT
Henry Belrose, WGI
Lilli O'Steen WGI
D'Juan Harris, MPO
Betty-Ann Sherer, MPO
Ravi Kamarajugadda, Charlotte County Public Works (Virtual)
Joshua Hudson, Charlotte County Economic Development (Virtual)
Srinivas Kandala, VHB (FDOT Consultant) (Virtual)

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Acting Chair Court Nederveld called the hybrid meeting to order at 2:01 p.m.; a quorum was present.

2. Pledge of Allegiance

All attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

3. Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no public comments received.

4. Chairs Report

Acting Chair Court Nederveld commented on the minutes from the 2/24/22 BPAC meeting. He would like the definitions regarding sidewalk, shared use paths in the minutes for today's meeting.

He also noted he would like to see the County change their sidewalk design to use saw cut joints for future projects. Ravi Kamarajugadda recommended him to send a letter to Joanne Vernon, Charlotte County Engineer.

Chair Nederveld also recommended the County adopt the Idaho Stop sign law attached to these minutes.

5. Consent Agenda

A. [Approval of Minutes: February 24, 2022](#)

A Motion was made by Robert Logan to approve the Consent Agenda. Wendy Zurstadt seconded the Motion; and the Motion was approved unanimously.

6. Sheriffs' Office Report-Public Safety

Sheriff Miller presented the report of Bicycle and Pedestrian Crashes prepared by Donna Buffington, Intelligence Analyst for the period of January 1 through May 31, 2022. He noted in the first five months of 2022, a total of 2,378 crashes were reported in Charlotte County. Almost half of these occurred along the US 41/Tamiami Trail corridor between the Charlotte/Sarasota County line and the southern side of the City of Punta Gorda. Out of 71 Bicycle/Pedestrian crashes, four resulted in fatalities, two involved a bicycle, and two involved a pedestrian. Two of the fatalities occurred along Tamiami Trail in Port Charlotte.

[The complete Bicycle and Pedestrian Crash Report can be viewed here](#)

Chair Nederveld asked from CCSO's perspective, are there any recommendations you would make to help the County achieve Vision Zero?

Sheriff Miller stated at this time the Sheriff's Department is doing everything they can and praised the efforts of the MPO and other stakeholder groups to continue their efforts to continue educating the citizens in the Charlotte County Community.

Beaumont Hayner, City of Punta Gorda, asked if more detailed information could be provided regarding the specific intersections where these crashes have occurred to determine if there are areas where improvements can be made.

Sheriff Miller noted intersection details could be provided with future reports.

Ravi Kamarajugadda added every three months he downloads crash data for the County and evaluates the locations, crash types and identifies possible improvements that can be implemented. He maintains an ongoing list. He stated the County and the Sheriff's office pull their information from the same source.

7. [FDOT Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator Report](#)

Tanya Merkle noted Deborah Chesna the Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinator has left FDOT. She directed any questions or concerns can be addressed to Bessie Reina, the Transportation Planning Manager.

Director Harris asked if there was an update for the SUN Trail call for projects? Ms. Merkle did not have an update. However, she indicated she would investigate and follow up with a status update.

8. [North Jones Loop Feasibility Study Update](#)

Richard (OJ) Oujevolk gave a PowerPoint presentation, North Jones Loop Road (CR 768) Feasibility Study from Burnt Store Road to Piper Road.

FDOT District One began a Feasibility Study in July 2020 to evaluate the potential widening of North Jones Loop Road (CR 768) up to six lanes from Burnt Store Road (CR 765) to Piper Road in Charlotte County, Florida. The project will include mobility, safety, intersection, emergency response, and evacuation improvements.

The project is in an area that is transitioning from a rural to urban environment. Per the City of Punta Gorda and Charlotte County Future Land Use Maps, the corridor is intended to support commercial uses and the economic district of Punta Gorda Interstate Airport Park [formerly Enterprise Charlotte Airport Park], which is located east of I-75 and immediately north of North Jones Loop Road (CR 768) and includes the Punta Gorda Airport. The Punta Gorda Interstate Airport Park is a designated Foreign Trade Zone and encompasses 4,300 acres of land available for aviation, manufacturing, and distribution companies.

The project has been divided into three segments and presented each segment, proposed improvements as well as alternatives.

Richard (OJ) Oujevolk noted he will be working with the MPO to get funding for safety improvements along these segments.

The following goals and objectives have been identified for this study:

- Increase capacity
- Improve area wide connectivity and local/regional mobility
- Support local economic development initiatives and planned area growth
- Enhance emergency evacuation response times
- Enhance access for freight and commuter traffic

Chair Nederveld noted Piper Road and Jones Loop going east is a major bicycle route and a roundabout would be perfect in this location, to assist in traffic flow.

Mr. Oujevolk noted that a roundabout is the preferred option in this area and pointed out proposed shared use paths along all the segments. He added bicycle pedestrian facilities are standard considerations during these studies.

As a side note, another project in review is the reopening of the closed rest area for truck parking. Evaluation of the location to bring the facility up to safety standards (Jacob's Law) are being reviewed.

[Please check the project website for additional study information.](#)

9. [Taylor Road Shared Use Path Presentation](#)

Richard (OJ) Oujevolk gave a PowerPoint presentation, giving a status update of the Taylor Road Feasibility Study from Royal Road to Airport Road.

The purpose of this project is to improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians, which are particularly vulnerable to conflicts with vehicles on shared facilities, by providing a pathway separated from general traffic. Provide connectivity to the City of Punta Gorda's neighborhoods with the region's bicycle and pedestrian amenities, parks and recreational facilities, and conservation lands in the area. The need for the proposed shared use path project is based on the following criteria:

- Area Wide Network / System Linkage: Improve bicycle and pedestrian mobility
- Safety Conditions: Enhance safety along the corridor
- Social and Economic Demand: Improve bicycle and pedestrian accessibility

The Taylor Road Project is the MPO's number one project priority for the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP). The project has been programmed in two segments because of the complexity of the roadway. The first segment, Taylor Road from Jones Loop Road to Airport Road is programmed for Design in FY 2023/2024 for \$656,521. The estimated construction cost is \$5.1 million dollars. The second segment, Taylor Road from US 41 (South) to Jones Loop Road is currently not programmed in FDOT'S Five Year Work Program beyond the PD&E Study.

Shared Use path materials are to be determined and design of this project are finalized. Some Committee members expressed a preference of asphalt to be used for this and future projects.

Director Harris asked if the shared use path will require a maintenance agreement with Charlotte County? Mr. Bogner responded, yes.

Mr. Oujevolk also noted FDOT may need assistance from the MPO regarding communications with Gulf Coast Railroad.

Betty Staugler expressed concern with the detectable warning pads as she noted the pins used to hold them in place seem to lift and pose a hazard.

Mr. Oujevolk made note of this concern.

For more information, please check the project website below:

http://www.swflroads.com/us41/taylorroad/about_project.html

10. Veteran's Boulevard Corridor Planning Study – Draft Recommendations

Vitor Siguri, FDOT provided an informational presentation. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District One, is conducting a Corridor Planning Study for Veterans Boulevard between US 41 and Kings Highway in Charlotte County, Florida. The subject corridor is a 6.9-mile, 4-lane divided roadway. The overall objective of this study is to improve mobility, safety, reliability, and connectivity for people who drive, walk, bike, and use transit within the study corridor.

This study will document the following:

- 1) Existing conditions including corridor characteristics, travel patterns, operational analysis of all modes, and safety assessment
- 2) Future conditions including traffic forecasts, access management review (for 2045), operational analysis of all modes and safety analysis, to develop potential safety, operational, and multimodal improvements for the Veterans Boulevard corridor. The identified improvements will be prioritized for short-term (2025), mid-term (2035), and long-term (2045) conditions through close coordination with the Project Steering Committee. The proposed recommendations are subject to change and will be implemented by Charlotte County Staff contingent upon the availability of funds.

Based on the results of the existing and future conditions analysis recommendations (based on safety, operational, and multi-modal) along Veterans Boulevard within the study limits will be developed. These improvements can include (but are not limited to) signalization, mid-block crosswalks, access management, intersection lighting, basic and enhanced intersection improvements, and improved signage.

As a result of comments made at the last MPO meeting, an operational analysis of the Norman Street / Veterans Boulevard intersection is being evaluated and will be included the next project update.

The Final Draft will be presented at the July 6, 2022, TAC and CAC meetings as well as the July 18, 2022, MPO Board Meeting for final recommendations of the study.

11. Charlotte County Report

Ravi Kamarajugadda – currently there is no county report, is available to answer any questions.

He demonstrated an interactive dashboard he developed showing the intersections and crash locations in Charlotte County. The data for this dashboard was obtained from Signal Four Analytics and can be accessed through the Charlotte County website. He also noted speed detection signs are being used throughout the county. These signs gather data that can be downloaded and coordinated with the Charlotte County Sheriff's office.

12. City of Punta Gorda Report

Beaumont Hayner indicated the improvements to the Harborwalk Phase II project are moving forward. There will be some traffic disruption along Retta Esplanade; anticipated completion is in the Fall of 2022.

Chair Nederveld noted there will be a Wheels and Wings Bicycle event on Sunday July 10th in Charlotte County where a portion of the route will be through Retta Esplanade as well as Piper Road. Court indicated that he recently observed recently quite a bit of debris along these roads and hoped they could be cleared before this event.

Wendy Zurstadt will provide event and route information. She noted that her Bicycling Group, the Peace River Riders will be adding temporary road makings for this route. Beaumont Hayner will follow up to advise if there are any conflicts with road work. Chair Nederveld added there is a pothole opening at Marion Street near Shreve Street.

13. Citizen Input

None

14. Staff Comments

Betty-Ann Sherer welcomed Wendy Zurstadt as the new BPAC south county representative as well as Betty Staugler in her new position as historical/cultural/environmental representative. She also noted the MPO Staff is working with County departments to gather data for improvements to the Bicycle Pedestrian Facilities map. This is a work in progress and will return to the Committee for further review.

MPO Director Harris, reported that one of the first federal discretionary grants to come out of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) is the Safe Street for All (SS4A) program. The MPO is working to apply for funding through this grant program. A prerequisite for getting project implementation dollars, is a requirement that the local jurisdiction have an adopted Comprehensive Safety Action Plan. The MPO is actively soliciting partners to support the MPO's efforts with the Safe Streets for all grants. MPO staff recently met

with Charlotte County's Administration staff, and they have agreed to provide the soft match to for any funding awarded from this grant.

15. Member Comments

None

16. Adjournment

There being no further business, by ***Motion of Robert Logan; seconded by Wendy Zurstadt, the meeting was adjourned at 3:48 p.m.*** The next regularly scheduled BPAC meeting will be held on Thursday October 6, 2022, both virtually and in person at the Eastport Environmental Campus, 25550 Harbor View Road, Port Charlotte in Training Room B beginning at 2:00 p.m.