

**MARTIN METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
POLICY BOARD MEETING - SPECIAL**

MINUTES

Monday, November 29, 2010

Martin County Administrative Building
Commission Chambers
2401 SE Monterey Road
Stuart, FL 34996
(772) 221-1498
www.martinmpo.com

1. CALL TO ORDER – 9:04 AM

2. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

3. ROLL CALL

Members in Attendance:

Mayor Michael Mortell, Chairman
Commissioner Doug Smith, Vice-Chair
Commissioner Tom Bausch
Commissioner Mary Hutchinson
Commissioner Edward Ciampi
Commissioner Sarah Heard
Commissioner Patrick Hayes

Members Excused:

None

Members Absent:

Brian Powers, Indiantown CRA Ex-Officio
Vice Mayor Jack Kelly, St. Lucie TPO Ex-Officio

Staff in Attendance:

Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator
Margaret Brassard, Administrative Specialist II
Michael Malham, Planner II

Others in Attendance:

Michael Busha, TCRPC Executive Director
Dana Little, TCRPC Urban Design Director
Stewart Robertson, Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc

A quorum was present for this meeting.

4. APPROVE AGENDA

Commissioner Doug Smith made the motion to approve the agenda. Seconded by Commissioner Sarah Heard. The motion carried unanimously.

5. AGENDA ITEMS

A. 2035 REGIONAL LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RLRTP)

MEMO: temp11MPOa02.01

Ms. Beth Beltran provided background information for this item. She stated that at the October 21, 2010 Joint MPO/TPO meeting, there was a discussion regarding the need for the Martin MPO members to review and discuss the Martin County portion of the Goals, Objectives, and Policies and the Cost Feasible Plan. This plan, she explained, would be the basis for the list of priority projects, which would be revised annually, and also serve as the basis for the Transportation Improvement Plan. She then introduced the Project Team, which consisted of Mr. Michael Busha and Mr. Dana Little of the Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council, and Mr. Stewart Robertson of Kimley-Horn and Associates.

Mr. Busha began by thanking the staff of the Martin MPO and Engineering Department, as well as the St. Lucie TPO, for assisting in the development of the 2035 RLRTP. He then provided a brief overview of the presentation (copy on file), which consisted of an update on the progress of the RLRTP, a presentation of the Draft Cost Feasible Plan, the Draft Bus and Train Plan, the Draft Bicycle, Pedestrian, Greenways Plan, and the steps needed to complete the Plan. He stated that although there was an emphasis early in the development of the RLRTP on not building new roads and focusing more on transit and other alternative modes of transportation, it became apparent new roads would be needed. However, there was a greater emphasis on transit, bicycle, and pedestrian modes than the previous plan.

Mr. Busha continued with the presentation by providing a schedule update. He stated Tasks 1-6 have been completed and Tasks 7-8 would be presented during the meeting. He also mentioned that there would be a St. Lucie TPO Board meeting on December 1, 2010 and also a Joint MPO/TPO Board meeting on December 9, 2010. However, he stated that because of the individual meetings, there may not be a need for a joint meeting. He also mentioned that there will be a meeting in January to review the completed document.

Commissioner Patrick Hayes stated that the Board should consider participating in the St. Lucie TPO Board meetings and that the obligation would fall on the Chair and the Vice-Chair, if no one else would attend. Commissioner Doug Smith mentioned that a problem was the continuous changing of meeting dates. Chairman Mortell stated that this was something he brought up with Vice Mayor Kelly. He further explained that they had been moving their meetings because of scheduling conflicts. The intention of that joint process arose when the MPO and TPO starting doing the 2030 Plan, with discussion to try and work together on projects. He further discussed the communication channels currently in place to share information and learn about what each MPO is doing.

Mr. Busha continued the presentation and began discussing the 2035 Draft Cost Feasible Plan and accompanying maps, noting the locations of several unfunded projects, including Martin Downs Blvd. from High Meadows to Kanner Highway and Martin Highway between Village Parkway and

I-95. This project resulted from projection analysis of the AgTech site. This analysis showed this section of Martin Highway would have to be improved. He also noted that by 2035, the level-of-service on I-95 would be an issue due to several development projects. Therefore, a closer look at I-95 may be warranted. Another project he briefly discussed was the US 1 Retrofit project. He stated that the project did not include all of US 1, but rather strategic locations along the route.

Mr. Busha continued to discuss the Cost Feasible Plan. He stated that the main point of the plan was to look at financial resources in comparison to the costs of roadway needs. He explained that financial resources were based on future capital investments as well as operating and maintenance expenses. He also explained that an inflation rate of 4% was used for financial projections and impacted the costs of projects, depending on when they would be constructed. He stated that the cost of all of the projects in the Martin County Needs Plan was \$1.5 billion. However, FDOT would be responsible for the \$1 billion cost of improving the SIS facilities. He mentioned the developer funded project of Village Parkway extension in Martin County.

Commissioner Sarah Heard asked where those funds came from. Mr. Busha stated that they were estimated costs. Commissioner Heard then asked who would be funding those projects. Mr. Busha stated that a developer would be paying the costs for the projects. Commissioner Heard asked if a specific developer had committed to paying for the projects. Mr. Busha explained that it was simply a category of funds that a developer would have to provide. Commissioner Heard then stated, "If we have a capital project, and it is developer funded, then we have to have an assurance from the developer that the developer is going to bear complete responsibility and ownership and funding for that project." Mr. Busha then stated that he could put the costs in the unfunded category.

Commissioner Smith then stated that the Village Parkway extension was not currently a capital improvement project. Mr. Busha noted that it was something the MPO Board asked the Project Team to analyze. Commissioner Smith noted that if it is going to be built by the developer and add capacity to the system then it would need to be evaluated. Mr. Busha stated that if the project was listed as developer funded in the plan then it may ensure the project is indeed funded by a developer. Commissioner Smith stated that in the Land Use Amendment, because of the requirement for concurrency and the requirement for capacity, the developer would be required to build the road. So, understanding what the road is and understanding the value of it is important. Commissioner Hayes suggested a developer unfunded category might give a more accurate picture, because it is not funded yet.

Ms. Beltran stated that the plan would be updated every five years, so it would be up to the Board to call it developer funded or developer unfunded. She stated that the Village Parkway Extension was a result of the land use amendment, as mentioned by Commissioner Smith.

Chairman Mortell asked who the developer would be for the intricate roadway network just north of the County Line. Mr. Busha stated that it was Core Communities and three other investors. Chairman Mortell then asked if the roads were bonded or on hold. Mr. Busha stated that to his knowledge, the developer has given the right-of-way over to the City of Port St. Lucie. However, he was not sure if the roads had been bonded. Chairman Mortell stated, "I bring that up because I think it is right along the same lines. If the developer does not build those roads, nothing is going there. It is not like the City of Port St. Lucie will build those roads."

Commissioner Smith asked if the build-out scenario for the Village Parkway to I-95 extension and the roadway network north of the County Line was modeled. Mr. Busha and Mr. Stewart Robertson replied in the affirmative. Commissioner Smith then asked if the Village Parkway to I-95 extension build-out was comparable to the build-out scenario to the north. Mr. Busha again replied in the affirmative, explaining that capacity would be impacted by both the traffic from AgTech and other developments that have been approved as well as normal pass-through traffic between the two jurisdictions. He said that all of these developments would contribute to a need to reevaluate I-95.

Mr. Busha then asked the Board how they would like to handle the naming of the developer funded category for the 2035 RL RTP. After further discussion, there was a consensus to leave the category as "Developer Funded."

Mr. Busha continued with the presentation by stating that there was \$140 million shortfall in the Martin County Needs Plan related to the widening of US 1 from Wright Blvd. to Jensen Beach Blvd. from six to eight lanes; the widening of Martin Downs from High Meadows to Kanner Highway from four to six lanes; and from the extension of Village Parkway on CR 714 (Martin Highway) to I-95.

Commissioner Hutchinson asked for data supporting the widening of US 1 from Wright Blvd. to Jensen Beach Blvd. Mr. Busha stated that the plan does not advocate for the widening of US 1. He explained that the growth and traffic projected to 2035 in both St. Lucie and Martin Counties provides the data that, once inputted into the travel model, shows the need to widen US 1.

Chairman Mortell stated that several years ago, after a study completed for the City of Stuart, the City voted in favor of changing the level-of-service for US 1 to an "F," rather than widening the roadway. Mr. Busha stated that there are other roads in the Needs Plan that may simply need a policy change rather than a major improvement.

Mr. Busha stated Martin County was expected to grow by approximately 35,000 persons by 2035, while St. Lucie County was expected to grow by approximately 500,000 persons by 2035. St. Lucie County's needs equate to about \$4.7 billion with a shortfall of about \$1.3 billion. Commissioner Tom Bausch asked what the impact of St. Lucie's growth would have on Martin County. Mr. Busha stated that this growth provides the data that drives the need to widen specific roads in Martin County.

Chairman Mortell noted that when the City of Port St. Lucie had only 35,000 people, there was very little traffic between the Roosevelt Bridge and Jensen Beach Blvd. However, now it is a different situation with much more traffic during peak times. He also noted a similar situation on Kanner Highway and I-95 and on Martin Downs Blvd. at the Palm City Bridge. He explained that the Treasure Coast Mall was built in its current location in anticipation of the traffic from surrounding areas. Commissioner Smith noted the additional commercial areas along US 1 that drive traffic along the corridor. Mr. Busha stated that all of the growth in the region was evaluated in the 2035 RL RTP.

Commissioner Bausch then asked about the impacts on Sewall's Point Road and then asked if they would be able to change the speed limit. Chairman Mortell stated that the town would be able to set policy and work with the County on it. Right now the policy the County has followed in Sewall's

Point is reflective of the Sewall's Point Council's cooperation and agreement. Commissioner Heard stated that the County has turned over maintenance of Beach Road in Jupiter Island to Jupiter Island in the past and could possibly do the same in Sewall's Point. Mr. Busha stated that the model showed Sewall's Point Road reached capacity, but did not exceed capacity, while US 1 was severely over capacity.

Mr. Busha then described a table showing the year-of-expenditure for each improvement project listed in the plan. He stated that there were six roadways recommended for improvement plus the US 1 Corridor Retrofit project, which is an ongoing project listed in each five year segment.

Mr. Busha described the project segments on Kanner Highway. The total cost of the project was stated as \$71 million. He mentioned a suggestion by the CAC asking the MPO Board to review the project on Kanner and determine if the roadway should be widened to six lanes. He explained the recommendation as follows: "To make widening the roads the very last priority to exhaust and pursue other options first as widening roads is not conducive to small communities. The focus should be on intersection improvements, adequate access, and land use management in the 76 Corridor." This recommendation, he explained, would also apply to Martin Highway and Indian Street, and US 1.

Commissioner Hutchinson stated, "I would have to agree with what the CAC [recommended]. Through my time sitting here with the MPO, widening roads and building new roads has always seemed to have been the answer. We've never gone back and looked at our levels-of-service I agree whole-heartedly with the CAC motion and think that that needs to be looked at a little bit more in this area than has been in the past." Commissioner Smith stated, "The thing I struggle with on this idea, is probably one of the better looking sections of our entranceways into our community is the six lane section in the City between Monterrey and the high school where the landscaping was done I don't know that it is so much the six lane issue, but rather how it is treated."

Commissioner Bausch asked if the expansion was due to an increase in residential versus commercial development. Mr. Busha stated that it was due to a combination of both.

Mr. Busha then discussed several other projects and associated costs in the Needs Plan. These projects included improvements on Martin Highway and Indian Street (\$52 million), Cove Road (\$41 million), High Meadow Avenue (\$49 million), and Willoughby Blvd. (\$12 million).

Mr. Busha stated that, US 1 is probably our best shot at transit. There are a lot of places to go, a lot of destinations, and a lot of neighborhoods that tie back into US 1. He continued by explaining that the improvement on US 1 is more than just transit. He also mentioned workshop discussions that suggested the County begin to get ready for changes along the corridor. He stated that the purpose of the US 1 Corridor Retrofit project was "to suggest a strategic alternative to widening, including strategic land use changes, retrofits, a detailed look at enhancing connectivity in the corridor ... versus the standard eight-lane widening." He then continued describing suggestions for the US 1 Corridor, including making recommendations to a developer to make a vacated site more transit-supportive and a better destination.

Mr. Busha continued by explaining several opportunities to improve transit along US 1. These included improving signal timing, advertising transit on the buses, and improving stops. He stated

that \$2.5 million would be spent along the corridor for each 5-year funding segment. Also, he mentioned the County would also be eligible for approximately \$1.5 million a year in Livable Communities funds for these types of improvements.

Mr. Busha then briefly described the Future Bus and Train Network, much of which came out of the 2030 RL RTP and discussions with the CAC and the TAC. He also described the Bike, Pedestrian, Greenways and Trails network, emphasizing the map was intended to show areas where gaps currently exist.

Commissioner Smith stated, "We need to make a significant note to all of this, that we need to get policy changed with the State and the State Park System relative to right-of-way and building trails. I think Commissioner Hayes dealt with the issue in South County relative to Jonathon Dickinson State Park, which I don't think has been resolved quite yet, and Seabranck."

Commissioner Bausch asked Mr. Dana Little if he had seen any information from the automobile industry advertising how much less gas tax revenue would be available due to an increase in the use of electric vehicles. Mr. Little stated that he had not, but thought those figures may be available in locations where public policy has advocated the use of electric vehicles.

Commissioner Smith noted that any improvement on US 1 between Wright Blvd. and Jensen Beach Blvd. would have to address the physical image similar to what was completed near L.A. Fitness.

Commissioner Heard asked for clarification on the Draft Regional Goals, Objectives, and Policies. She reviewed the first paragraph on page 4 and asked for the specific land use alternative plan that the RL RTP was supporting. Mr. Busha stated that it was the Infill-Alternative plan, which for Martin County was the existing plan and focused redevelopment on US 1.

Commissioner Heard then reviewed the second paragraph and asked about specific comprehensive code changes. Mr. Busha replied that the major changes dealt with density modifications and use. Commissioner Heard then asked if a road plan was being used to shape development. Mr. Busha replied that the plan recommends not building new roads but improving existing ones. Commissioner Heard then asked what the proposed densities were and their justification as referenced under Policy 1.1.5 on page 6. Mr. Busha stated the travel model showed 6 to 9 units per acre, but may be increased up to 15 units depending on current density allowances.

Commissioner Heard asked about the requirement to increase land use densities. Mr. Busha, referencing the overview on page 4, replied, "It is recognized that some ideas suggested in the RL RTP will require local comprehensive code changes. It is also recognized that some RL RTP goals and policies are applicable and can be furthered in varying degrees in certain areas of the Region and some cannot. When applying the Plan, this is a determination that must be continually made by boards like this and city councils and commissioners." Commissioner Heard stated that she doesn't want this document to be used as the defense or the justification for increasing densities.

Commissioner Heard then discussed locations in South Florida that are densely developed with a high level of traffic congestion, stating that increasing density could actually exacerbate the problem. Chairman Mortell discussed the concept of shifting the population and modifying density requirements.

Commissioner Hutchinson mentioned a problem for the US 1 Corridor lies with the State's approach to implementing improvements. She further discussed the need for the State to coordinate with the County for further improvements along the corridor.

Commissioner Smith restated his thoughts on what was needed, which was to develop and implement policies to redevelop and enhance the US 1 Corridor.

Mr. Busha then briefly reviewed the new policies developed since the August 12, 2010 Joint MPO/TPO meeting.

Commissioner Hutchinson moved approval of the 2035 RL RTP Goals, Objectives, and Policies and DRAFT Cost Feasible Plan. Seconded by Commissioner Smith. The motion passed with Commissioner Heard opposed.

When the motion was opened for discussion, a member from the public, Mr. Scott Galton, asked if the Cost Feasible Plan could be found on the internet. He also asked if the Plan would provide part-time employment. Mr. Busha replied that all of the information for the 2035 RL RTP, including the Cost Feasible Plan, could be found online at www.goingongreeninto2035.com. He also stated that no job estimates were created through the development of the Plan. Chairman Mortell stated that the Plan was a long-term planning document and would probably not provide any immediate employment opportunities. Commissioner Smith stated that these long-term planning documents have the potential to create many jobs once they are implemented.

Another member from the public, Mr. Jason Matson, representing AgTech, stated that the commitment for developer funded projects was also in the Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, the developer funded designation would be accurate.

Commissioner Heard stated her dismay with the signs in the community. Discussion related to signs in the community and specific policies ensued. Mr. Busha stated that the TCRPC would look into adding a policy related to sign improvements in the 2035 RL RTP.

B. REGIONAL TRANSIT ORGANIZATION (RTO) DRAFT INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT

Memo: temp11MPOa02.02

Ms. Beltran provided background information for this item. She stated that the RTO Draft Interlocal Agreement was discussed at the October 21, 2010 Joint MPO/TPO Board meeting at which the Board directed Staff to make specific changes (noted in the agenda package). She explained that the agreement was to be either approved or disapproved prior to presenting the document to the Joint Board in January.

Ms. Beltran further discussed the need for Joint Meetings between the Martin MPO and St. Lucie TPO during the last two years resulted from the development of the Regional Transit Development Plan, and the 2035 RL RTP. She explained that once the 2035 Plan is approved, the need for additional joint meetings would be filled by the RTO.

Commissioner Smith moved approval of the Regional Transit Organization Draft Interlocal Agreement. Seconded by Commissioner Heard. The motion passed unanimously.

6. COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS

Commissioner Hutchinson noted the 50th Anniversary of the Christmas Parade would be held on Friday December 3, 2010 on East Ocean Blvd.

Commissioner Bausch stated the desire to discuss the ownership of Sewall's Point Road with the County Commissioners. Chairman Mortell replied with a date and time of November 30, 2010 at 9:00 am. Commissioner Smith stated that the County would be glad to discuss this item with Sewall's Point.

7. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None

8. ADJOURN

The meeting was adjourned at 10:40 am.

Recorded and Prepared by:



Michael Malham, Planner II



Date

Approved by:



Mayor Michael Mortell, Chairman



Date