

**MARTIN METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING
Administration Building, Fourth Floor Workshop Conference Room
2401 S. E. Monterey Road
Stuart, FL 34996
www.martinmpo.com
(772) 221-1498**

**Monday, June 5, 2017 @ 1:30 pm
Minutes**

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Sam Amerson, Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:47 pm.

2. ROLL CALL

Members in Attendance:

Sam Amerson, Chair

Clyde Dulin, Alt. Samantha Lovelady

Joe Capra, Alt.

Stuart Trent (Arrived 1:51 PM)

Mark Cocco

George Dzama, Alt. Lisa Wichser

Mira Skoroden, Alt. Lisa Dykstra

Gissela Saucedo, Alt. Claudette Mahan

Erik Treudt

Ken DeAngeles

Members Excused:

Steve Meyer

Kim DeLaney

Members Absent

None

Staff in Attendance:

Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator

Alice Bojanowski, Senior Planner

Margaret Brassard, Administrative Assistant III

Bolivar Gomez, Planner

Ricardo Vazquez, Senior Associate Planner

Others Present:

Dan Hiden, FDOT, Florida Department of Transportation

Jeff Weidner, Marlin Engineering

Andrew Atterbury, Stuart News

A quorum was present for this meeting.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

A motion was made by Mr. Joe Capra to approve the Agenda which was seconded by Mr. Erik Treudt. There was no opposition. The motion passed unanimously.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

Mr. Joe Capra made a motion to approve the May 1, 2017 minutes. Mr. Mark Cocco provided a second. There were no additions or objections. The minutes were unanimously approved.

5. AGENDA ITEMS

A. FINAL DRAFT FY2017/18-FY2021/22 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP)

Ms. Alice Bojanowski advised that this is the Final Draft of the FY2017/18-FY2021/22 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). She told the committee that the changes from the last time this committee saw it were tweaking to make it more readable with the addition of one missing project. Ms. Bojanowski highlighted that the TIP is a five year work program, consisting of items identified in the 20 year Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). She said that the TIP is given to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to consider these projects for their fifth year of the funding cycle. She provided a timetable of events leading up to this presentation, as well as all events through to the anticipated adoption by the Policy Board at the June 19, 2017 Public Hearing adding that she would take questions at this time. Ms. Beltran requested that Ms. Bojanowski return to the slide showing the item being added to the TIP. Ms. Beltran provided some history about the widening project west of I-95 along SR76 to the Pratt Whitney intersection where a roundabout is being proposed. She reminded the committee of the issues that were discussed two years prior [during the PD&E phase]; heavy truck traffic from the west, close proximity to two schools and a church. Ms. Beltran stated that it was presented to the MPO Board who directed that a Public Hearing with the community be conducted and return to the Board the following month with the results. Ms. Beltran followed up with FDOT's Project Manager to learn that the project had been postponed, but then it resurfaced in the Tentative Work Program that fall. She said that FDOT advised her that they would update the MPO on the project. Ms. Beltran advised that a presentation to the MPO Board would need to be made on this project as it is not in the LRTP so FDOT would need to bring the project back through the MPO Process. Ms. Beltran assured Mr. Capra that the Major Projects in this TIP are only the ones listed in the document, which were approved last September by the committees and by the MPO Board as well as being the list that was sent to FDOT.

Mr. Capra stated that he was going to abstain from this vote.

Mr. Clyde Dulin confirmed that the project would not be capable of moving forward until it was in the LRTP. Ms. Beltran affirmed adding that it would also have to receive public input and concurrence of the MPO Board.

Mr. Mark Cocco made a motion to accept staff recommendation. The motion was seconded by Mr. George Dzama. There were no additional comments, the motion passed with Mr. Joe Capra abstaining.

B. FEC RAILROAD GRADE SEPARATION STUDY

Mr. Jeff Weidner with Marlin Engineering introduced himself and said he was asked to review the 28 original railroad crossings in Martin County, narrow it down to ten, then perform two roadway and two pedestrian bicycle crossover concepts. He provided a presentation outline, showed how they began in September 2016, where the project is today, and anticipated completion and recommendations date. He advised that the four candidates are as follows: Golden Gate at Railroad Avenue-Pedestrian/bike crossing, Indian Street-Roadway Crossing, Monterey Road-Roadway Crossing, and Downtown Stuart-Pedestrian Plaza. Mr. Weidner provided a slide of Indian Street which highlighted the local area properties that would lose roadway access due to the entire intersection being raised, pointing out the opportunities and challenges. He mentioned that the greatest challenges will be the loss of access to roadways for businesses and homes, noting that the cost would be around \$83.6 Million with a cost benefit of 2.1. He showed a couple of proposals 2A and 2B on Monterey Road from a 2002 update made by FDOT showing two different versions of impacts on Monterey Road. Then Mr. Weidner showed the recent update which was performed by Marlin showing a road depression with the train going over the roadway in a semi-opened "tunnel". He provided an example of this type of roadway that currently exists in Miami-Dade County. Mr. Weidner offered a picture of Monterey Road from the 2002 study showing the anticipated route used to get to the hospital which was using a side street [SE Christie Way to get to Palm Beach Road.] He provided an aerial showing the 2017 proposal noting that at the end of the airport runway there exists a U-turn which could be used by emergency vehicles to access Palm Beach Road. He said the recommendation is to expand that area to allow for firetrucks to be capable of making a U-turn to access Palm Beach Road, or have an "emergency access road only" along an area of property which has been recently acquired by the airport. Mr. Weidner said these are different alternatives providing different perspectives adding that all alternatives would need to be reviewed again through a Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) study, this study only provides viable concepts. He recapped that this would reduce intersection crashes, provides fixed east/west access as well as in all directions for emergency services and evacuation routes plus it will not impact the airport. Mr. Weidner mentioned the challenges as several properties will have limited access and there will be some right of way (ROW) impacts as well as operational costs. He explained that the operational costs would be the necessity of a pump for the roadway depression to circumvent potential flooding. The estimated cost would be \$68.5 million with a cost benefit of 3.7. Mr. Weidner began addressing the pedestrian crossing in the Golden Gate vicinity showing photos of the existing ped/bike crossings on Railroad Avenue. He said that cameras were installed for two days to capture activity there adding that 58 pedestrians/75 bikes used Railroad Avenue; 42 pedestrians/51 bikes crossed Indian Street using the railroad crossing and in one day there were eight pedestrians/29 bikes on Commerce Avenue Trail. An aerial was viewed to show the anticipated layout of the pedestrian crossing

noting that there is a canal on one side making this the first available as well as being an excellent location for the crossing. Mr. Weidner said the proposal consists of a pedestrian crossing bridge with a stairwell, a ramp and an ADA accessible elevator on each side of the bridge. He mentioned on the west side of the bridge are two private companies owned by a single property owner. Mr. Weidner stated that there is a significant "cow path" where people have frequently crossed/trespassed the railroad tracks. He said that this bridge will be a complement to the planned complete streets neighborhood for this area, however, to accommodate the ramp, a lane reduction of Railroad Avenue will have to be made, which may be mitigated by removing the on-street parking for use as a travel lane. Mr. Weidner said that the cost would be \$3.7 million with a cost benefit of 42.9.

Downtown Stuart, Mr. Weidner said at the St. Lucie Avenue railroad crossing there were 1,556 pedestrians and 312 bikes one day and 2,124 pedestrians and 128 bikes the next. He provided a conceptual drawing of the proposed 50' x 100' "public space" which would be constructed near the St. Lucie roundabout. Mr. Weidner advised that this would eliminate four spaces from the Park n Ride Lot, and due to the proximity to the roundabout, a ramp would not be feasible but there would be an elevator and stairwell on each side. He showed pictures of some "public spaces" in a couple of different states, highlighting various events that were held on them adding that it needs to be more than just a pedestrian overpass in order to get people to use it. The costs for this public space Mr. Weidner said, would be approximately 44.7 million with a cost benefit of 34.0 seeing that it would eliminate cyclists and pedestrians from the roundabout area. He mentioned that Martin has no history of injuries or deaths related to the railroad tracks but he used figures from a neighboring County to obtain "hypothetical" figures. Mr. Weidner said that there currently are 12 trains daily but that will increase drastically in the upcoming years. He said that they conservatively anticipate at least one fatality in the next 100 years which would bring the cost benefit to 34.0 with the construction cost being \$4.7 million.

Mr. Weidner said that he will take any questions at this time. Mr. Joe Capra asked if any additional alternatives were going to be studied. Ms. Beltran said that the Board wanted to check out the grade separations to determine the feasibility. They were asking questions that could not be answered in a planning study such as this, they were specifically interested in the Monterey Road crossing and they want a PD&E study performed. Ms. Beltran advised that at the last Board meeting they directed staff to move ahead with a PD&E study to learn of the impacts to the businesses and obtain necessary answers adding that this project has gotten a lot of input from the public as well as exposure. Mr. Capra concurred that a PD&E is the right thing to do to get answers but it will be a seven to 15 year program. He still wants to review the Grumman Boulevard but he saw that the Board said not to study it. He said he is not sure how the Florida East Coast (FEC) Railroad looks at grade separations. Mr. Capra stated that Monterey Road is already at capacity and this project will take a lot of time, money and will frustrate people throughout the County who use this road. He said a grade separation may be obtained but it will be a grave disservice to the entire community and a lot of businesses. Mr. Capra said that Grumman Boulevard

[directly to the airport] would be a lot quicker and easier. He said that a lot of money will be spent on this project, more even than was spent on the Veteran's Memorial Bridge and Martin County was fortunate to receive funds from an Obama Bill to provide the funds. He said the two businesses mentioned had at one time talked about combining, they may still allow the bridge but it's something to consider. Mr. Capra said that he believes that the Indian Street separation is too costly; the one at Monterey would be a nightmare and though he agrees with the tunnel [depression] he is of the opinion that there will be significant impacts to the neighborhoods in the area which will be detrimental to the schools, churches and other businesses in this area. Mr. Capra added that he represents the Town of Sewall's Point and they may not like seeing more traffic near the airport and that's what I'm here to advise against, but I'd like to see how this will be addressed as it may create more problems for the additional aviation use at the airport. Mr. Capra said that he is of the opinion that it's going to be a huge cost and impact to the community. Ms. Beltran said that Indian Street was a surprise. The Stakeholders chose Monterey and the Rio crossings, and the presentation at the Joint Advisory Committees resulted in the recommendation for Monterey and Indian Street. Mr. Weidner said that this study isn't saying that the other roadways are not worth looking into, it's just that the ten alternatives they narrowed it down to could be justified for funding. He advised the committee that a PD&E study requires that the parallel roads be reviewed. He mentioned if Grumman Boulevard was chosen, it would reduce traffic on Monterey Road and Indian Street and have better access to the airport. Ms. Beltran mentioned at the April MPO meeting Ms. Lois Bush from FOOT presented the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Unfunded Needs Plan and the Monterey Grade Separation was on that plan. She said that the List of Project Priorities (LOPP) is later in the agenda and that PD&E Study is there but using SIS funding which would allow our funds to go on other projects on the list. It was noted that Grumman is a private Road. Discussion ensued on the air space conflict if Monterey was raised. Mr. Weidner explained that the runway was lengthened a while ago and new rules apply. The Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) prohibits certain land uses in the vicinity of their ROW and a lot of guidelines to follow. It was noted that the depressed roadway would help with the drainage. Mr. Amerson inquired how to determine the life benefits and roadway value. Mr. Weidner explained the five year process used and that they used conservative figures. Mr. Capra noted that it's difficult to get vehicles in that commercial area behind Walmart. Mr. Weidner noted the problems with vehicle stacking from US 1 or Dixie Highway around the railroad tracks. Mr. Clyde Dulin acknowledged the focus of this study but suggested focusing on other, less expensive roadways to reduce the traffic on Indian Street or Monterey Road such as Pomeroy or Grumman. It was learned that seeking access to the hospital and public safety were paramount in the roadway decisions. Ms. Beltran stated that she is recommending to the Board to have an LRTP amendment and it could be recommended to have other crossing separations reviewed as Monterey Road is not specified. Mr. Capra inquired as to the percentage increases in the cost analysis amounts stated for the Indian Street and Monterey Road Grade Separations for their continued use during construction. He said that he doesn't need the answer right now but the Board may want that number so it would be good to have adding

that with a new crossing, it's one less cost to bear. Mr. Capra asked what would be the anticipated construction time for these projects. Mr. Weidner said provided there aren't any unforeseen issues, the PD&E will take about two years, the Design three years, and Construction five to seven years. Mr. Capra requested the amount to build it. Total construction cost for Monterey Road, Mr. Weidner said would be \$68.5 million plus there's a 20% contingency. Ms. Beltran advised that because of the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act (FAST ACT) a lot of funds are already authorized and it's the State of Florida's SIS funding so it won't be like the Indian Street Bridge. Mr. Weidner agreed that this will be complex as it's a real science project, but there will be night time construction, lane reductions, and other measures taken to achieve the desired goals. Mr. George Dzama referred to the 2002 Proposal Concepts 2A and 2B. He inquired if the path [Monterey Road] under the actual crossing could be straightened some, stating that the County does have property in that area. Mr. Weidner said that is a possibility but it would have to curve to meet up with the existing road. Mr. Dzama stated that needing that amount of clearance, the tunnel will take a lot of maintenance. Discussion ensued about tunnels in Florida. Ms. Beltran said that staff is looking for a motion to move this forward with comments.

Mr. Joe Capra said that he will make a motion recommending approval based on staff's recommendations/comments including the comments by the committees regarding each of the grade separations pedestrian/vehicle. Mr. Clyde Dulin offered the second. There was no additional discussion, the question was called and the motion passed unanimously.

**C. 2040 LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (LRTP) AMENDMENT –
FEC RAILROAD/MONTEREY ROAD GRADE SEPARATION**

Ms. Beltran said that staff has included some text highlights to get this into the LRTP and there are no specifications as to the location for the separations it only says FEC Rail Crossings. Additionally, she said the SIS Facilities in Martin County were included.

Mr. Mark Cocco made a motion to approve the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Amendment. Mr. Erik Treudt provided the second.

D. FY2018/19 – FY2022/23 LIST OF PROJECT PRIORITIES (LOPP)

Ms. Beth Beltran advised the committee that a table was handed out showing the FY2018/19-FY2022/23 Federal Attributable Unfunded Project Priorities. She highlighted the importance of the first priority on this table denoted by an asterisk (*) which states "To be funded with SIS funds." She said that the Board desired to show the community that this particular project would be funded using SIS funds, noting that it would not come out of the normal allocations for the MPO's priorities. Ms. Beltran advised that she will cover the priorities which staff will recommend moving forward due to conversations with the Martin County Engineering Department, City of Stuart Staff and FDOT staff per their analysis of the LRTP. She advised that the Monterey Road Grade Separation is the number one item which has

been reviewed and she detailed each of the following; widening of County Road (CR)713/High Meadow Avenue between I-95 to CR714; widening of Cove Road from State Road (SR)76 to US 1; sidewalk connections on Monterey Road and East Ocean Boulevard; Buffered bike lanes on Jensen Beach Causeway from NE Indian River Drive to SR A1A; New two lane road on Willoughby Boulevard from Monterey Road to US 1; Congestion Management projects on Cove Road from US 1 to Dixie Highway; and finally Realignment of CR714 where it connects to SR710.

Mr. Mark Cocco made a motion to accept the FY2018/19-FY2022/23 List of Project Priorities (LOPP) which was seconded by Mr. Erik Treudd. Mr. Joe Capra Abstained. The vote was called and the motion carried with one abstention.

E. MARTIN COUNTY PUBLIC TRANSIT (MCPT) OPERATIONS CENTER FEASIBILITY STUDY – DRAFT SCOPE OF SERVICES

Mr. Ricardo Vazquez stated that in the current Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) there is a Transit Operations Center Feasibility Study for Martin County Public Transit (MCPT) a/k/a Marty. He said that in order to expand, the facility needs to have its own gas pumps, fleet parking, a call center and all other needed services and facilities in one area. He advised that Marlin Consulting are the consultants on this project and he gave the floor to Mr. Weidner. Mr. Weidner stated that currently MCPT contracts out their transit services. He advised that MCPT recently presented to the Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) their “Business Plan” which suggested that Marty could operate more efficiently if they had their own facility which could house all of their functions inclusive of night parking for equipment, customer service, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) Service Area and the Call Center to mention a few. Mr. Weidner stated that the focus of the scope consists of five tasks: coordination of stakeholders; Best Practices Review; Development of Spatial Parameters; Site Analysis; and Documentation. He said that the Draft should be ready in approximately eight months, with the project completion on a ten month schedule. Ms. Beltran advised that Marlin is cognizant of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) requirements that are much stricter than the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) as far as the purchase of property which is the importance of this study. She added that the focus of this study is to look at areas that meet the FTA requirements ensuring their eligibility for funds. Mr. Capra noted that a certain criteria had to be followed. Mr. Weidner said that the FTA is rigorous as to what funds may be spent, where they may be spent and he’s been in contact with Ms. Claudette Mahan as to the service needs. He added that FTA funds may not be used on school buses. Mr. Amerson noted that “cohabitation on site” could be a cost saving and inquired if FTA requires ownership of property. Mr. Weidner said that great caution needs to be used as specific amounts have to come out of different funding sources so attention to detail is very important. He reiterated the importance of being able to justify why a location was chosen out of the four or five locations selected. Mr. Capra mentioned that the corridor between Indian Street and Monterey is a good centralized location in the County and was considered in a prior study which could potentially house a railroad station as well. Mr. Weidner said he was not familiar with the prior study. Ms. Beltran clarified

that was more of a "Transit Depo" whereas what we are discussing now is more of an operations facility for MCPT. Mr. Capra said that the County owns a good amount of property in that area. Mr. Weidner reminded the committee that a site can't just be "picked". Deadhead time is also very important so it must be in an area that is easily accessible for the back and forth in the morning and at night, it has to be in a suitable location, not too close to low income housing and there is a host of other criteria that must be followed.

Mr. Joe Capra made a motion to recommend the MCPT Operations Center Feasibility Study Draft Scope of Services. The motion was seconded by Mr. George Dzama. There was no opposition and the motion carried unanimously.

6. COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

None.

7. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

None.

8. COMMENTS FROM FDOT

None.

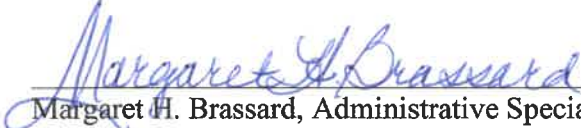
9. NEXT MEETINGS

TAC Meeting Sept. 6, 2017 at 1:30 PM.

10. ADJOURN

A motion was made by Mr. Joe Capra which was seconded by Mr. Erik Treudt to adjourn the meeting. The motion passed unanimously. The meeting adjourned at 3:22 PM.

Recorded and Prepared by:


Margaret H. Brassard, Administrative Specialist III

Date: Sept. 6, 2017

Approved by:


Sam Amerson, Chair

Date: 9/06/17