



**CHARLOTTE COUNTY - PUNTA GORDA  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

**MINUTES OF THE APRIL 18, 2018  
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) MEETING**

**MEMBERS ATTENDING**

John Burrage, CAC Chair, South County Representative  
Joanna Drinkwater, Mid County Representative  
Pauline Klein, At Large Representative  
Robert Logan, Mid County Representative  
Grover Mudd, At Large Representative  
Dianne Quilty, Mid County Representative  
Steve Schoff, West County Representative  
Ed Zapke, South County Representative  
Ed Zubal, West County Representative

**MEMBERS ABSENT**

Jim Brown, South County Representative  
Vacant, West County Representative

**OTHERS ATTENDING**

D'Juan Harris, FDOT  
Mitchell Austin, City of Punta Gorda, Urban Design  
April Santos, Charlotte County Public Works  
Ravi Kamarajugadda, Charlotte County Engineering Department  
Steven Andrews, FDOT  
Erik Fleming, AIM Engineering  
Ned Baier, Jacobs Engineering  
Gary Harrell, MPO Director  
Wendy Scott, Planner  
Laks Gurram, Senior Planner

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

John Burrage, CAC Chair, called the meeting to order at 1:30 P.M. The roll call was taken using a sign-in sheet.

## **2. Pledge of Allegiance**

All attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **3. Public Comments on Agenda Items**

There were no public comments on agenda items.

## **4. Reports**

### **A. Chairs' Report**

Chair Burrage stated that he attended the March 8, 2018 MPO Board Meeting. At the meeting, he had emphasized CAC Member concerns regarding Burnt Store Road. He noted that the 2018 Project Priorities changes were made by MPO Board Members.

*The Charlotte County report was given before the City of Punta Gorda report.*

### **C. Charlotte County Report**

Ravi Kamarajugadda reviewed several ongoing County projects including the Sunseeker Resort project. He responded to a question that Ed Zubal raised regarding the Murdock Village properties purchased for development. Ravi Kamarajugadda stated that meetings on SR 776 involving internal work are scheduled with FDOT. Ed Zubal remarked that a timeframe for completion was given to developers, but they are not currently in compliance. Mr. Kamarajugadda agreed to investigate the matter further.

### **B. City of Punta Gorda Report**

Mitchell Austin gave an update on the two phases of the Harborwalk project in Gilchrist Park. He also stated that the design was now complete on the bicycle/pedestrian bridge at the north fork of Alligator Creek at US 41. City staff is awaiting FDOT approval before issuing the notice to proceed with funding available for July.

John Burrage asked if parking on the grass would be allowed at Gilchrist Park. Mr. Austin stated that no parking on the grass would be allowed, but restriping would occur and two more ADA parking spaces would be located on Harvey Street. Grover Mudd inquired about the bathrooms to be located adjacent to the playground at Gilchrist Park. Mr. Austin stated that the project would be out to bid the beginning of May (with a 30-day waiting period). He also addressed the following issues: (1) Additional portable restroom facilities were in place at the park and were fully ADA compliant, and (2) The new playground was now complete, and a grand opening would be held in May.

## **5. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Report**

D’Juan Harris had no report other than to introduce the Harbor View Road presentation.

### **A. Harbor View Road PD&E Study – Update**

Stephen Andrews, FDOT Project Manager, and Erik Fleming of AIM Engineering gave a presentation on the Harbor View Road PD&E Study. The corridor improvements would:

- Accommodate increased traffic demand, including truck traffic, generated by projected growth in Charlotte County
- Improve connectivity between US 41 and I-75
- Enhance safety along the project corridor
- Improve emergency evacuation

It was noted that there was an error in the presentation regarding 10 feet rather than 12 feet (as shown) lane width. A timeline was included, with PD&E Study completion scheduled for Spring 2019.

Following the presentation, a lengthy discussion ensued regarding the impact of the Sunseeker project on the I-75/Harbor View Road/US 41 Corridor. FDOT staff had become aware of the proposed resort at the recent workshop. Gary Harrell pointed out that improvements to Harbor View Road had been considered for the last seven years, but given the proposed new development, acceleration of the project would be welcome. Laks Gurram noted that the Sunseeker developer will participate in an impact study and will have fees assessed to them. Members expressed concerns that the project timing is too long, Punta Gorda traffic flow will be adversely impacted, and US 41 commercial property adjacent to the Sunseeker Resort will provide additional impact. Regarding density along Harbor View Road, Erik Fleming noted that not only residential density, but also utilization by area traffic of this major roadway necessitated going forward with the project. He also stated that peak traffic flow is considered, and pavement utilization is adequate. He explained how large medians allow for the making of a U-turn (especially for property owners along the roadway). Mr. Gurram mentioned the County's concern with addressing needed safety standards along the very narrow Harbor View Road corridor, and the need for widening the roadway to address evacuations and accidents on I- 75 or US 41.

Ravi Kamarajugadda observed that the Sunseeker development was still in the baby stage regarding the size of the development, since it was undetermined what shopping and mixed-use projects might be built. He stated that with the size of the development, they will need to analyze a 5-mile radius. He described how part of Charlotte County's traffic impact process is to consider if a need exists to address intersections, etc. If the traffic study requires road improvements, then the developers must pay their proportional share. Once the traffic study is reviewed, County staff will assess the impact. They will tell the developer how their traffic will impact the existing Harbor View Road process based upon modeling. Imagined impacts are hypothetical until the study is completed.

CAC Members also discussed proposed bicycle lanes as part of the Harbor View Road improvement project. Steve Schoff expressed his concern about the County's collection of impact fees, noting previous waivers during economic downturns. Dianne Quilty suggested that County Community Development staff could respond to Mr. Schoff's impact fee questions. John Burrage stated that he will mention the matter to the MPO Board under his CAC Comments.

Grover Mudd raised the question of the reasoning for two roundabouts on the Harbor View Road project. Ravi Kamarajugadda stated that they reduce speed (and gave the examples of Gasparilla Road and Edgewater Drive). He stated that it is a matter of educating drivers regarding roundabouts to prevent confusion while driving. Several members asked about the number of accidents at roundabouts. Ravi Kamarajugadda stated that he will research the issue. Mitchell Austin commented on how signalized intersections have 32 conflict points where traffic can have collisions plus there are additional bicycle and pedestrian concerns. Roundabouts reduce conflict points and slow down traffic. He noted that drivers often race through signalized intersections, while roundabouts by design reduce vehicular speed. He stated that while there may be more “fender bender” minor accidents in roundabouts, seldom would fatalities result. Gary Harrell noted that FDOT has roundabout information on the internet. D’Juan Harris stated that he will forward weblinks for the CAC Members on the topic.

## **6. Consent Agenda**

### **A. Approval of Minutes: February 14, 2018 Meeting**

### **B. FY 2018/2019 Federal Transit Administration (FTA Section 5305 (d)) Transit Planning Grant Application**

*Bob Logan made a Motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Dianne Quilty seconded the Motion. The Motion was carried unanimously.*

## **7. FY 2018/2019 – FY 2019/2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)/Metropolitan Planning Organization Agreement**

Gary Harrell briefed the members regarding the draft UPWP document. The FY 2018/2019 – FY 2019/2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)/Metropolitan Planning Organization Agreement describes the transportation planning activities and establishes the MPO budget. The State Fiscal Year begins on July 1, 2018. The UPWP includes a narrative of the work to be accomplished and the cost estimates for each task activity. Federal and state regulations govern the types of activities that are eligible for federal and state funding.

Mr. Harrell noted that FDOT and other reviewing agencies had provided the MPO staff with comments on the draft document and minor changes had been made. He noted that in Appendix F, there is a second line in red on the Multi-Year Business Plan regarding an MPO early payback of an advance to complete the last Long Range Transportation Plan. Given the retirement of the former MPO Director and a staff vacancy, funding has been freed up to pay off the advance two years early. Mr. Harrell stated that getting out from under debt will allow more flexibility in the future for hiring staff and conducting studies.

The remaining timeline for the adoption of the FY 2018/2019 – FY 2019/2020 UPWP is listed below:

- May 15, 2018 – The MPO Board reviews the comments and adopts the Final FY 2018/2019 – FY 2019/2020 UPWP for distribution to the District and reviewing agencies.

- Within 10 working days of receipt – FDOT District One reviews the MPO adopted Final FY 2018/2019 – FY 2019/2020 UPWP. The MPO and District One staffs resolve any outstanding issues. The District transmits the comments and responses to the FDOT Public Transportation Office and FHWA.

*Ed Zapke made a Motion to recommend that the MPO Board approve the FY 2018/2019 – FY 2019/2020 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)/Metropolitan Planning Organization Agreement to the appropriate reviewing agencies, allowing staff to make appropriate revisions as needed. Dianne Quilty seconded the Motion. The Motion was carried unanimously.*

## **8. FY 2018/2019 – FY 2022/2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Gary Harrell reviewed projects in the 5-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). He described how the MPO's TIP must match the state's document (STIP). Once the TIP is adopted, it is formally submitted to the state and federal transportation authorities.

*Bob Logan made a Motion to recommend that the MPO Board adopt the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO's TIP for FY 2018/2019 – FY 2022/2023. The Motion should allow for staff to make minor changes and adjustments based on comments and input received. Ed Zapke seconded the Motion. The Motion was carried unanimously.*

## **9. 2018 Project Priorities - Discussion**

Gary Harrell reviewed the 2018 Project Priorities List which included these types of project candidates from the City of Punta Gorda and Charlotte County:

- Highway Projects including Congestion Mitigation/Transportation System Management Projects (CM/TSM)
- Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Projects,
- Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) Projects

Mr. Harrell noted that TRIP funds may be increased because of growth in license plate registrations. He also stated that following an FDOT field review, the US 41 at Carmalita Street Extension project was determined to no longer require a PD&E study, so a request is being made to move Design Phase funding to FY 2018/2019 instead. Mr. Harrell noted that the TAC proposed a change to the list. The change was to replace the currently programmed US 41 @ Port Charlotte Blvd intersection project, funded for Construction in FY 2020/2021, with the SR 776 @ Charlotte Sport Park intersection improvement. He also proposed moving the US 41 @ Port Charlotte Blvd intersection project back into the CM/TSM projects list in the priority after the SR 31 at CR 74 (Bermont Road) intersection improvements. The remaining priorities remain unchanged.

*Ed Zapke made a Motion to recommend that the MPO Board adopt the 2018 Project Priorities for the upcoming FDOT Draft Tentative Work Program Cycle. Steve Schoff seconded the Motion. The Motion was carried unanimously.*

## **10. Charlotte County Regional Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan – Status Report**

Ned Baier gave a presentation to update CAC Members on the progress of the Charlotte County Regional Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan. He provided two handouts: (1) a hard copy of the PowerPoint presentation and (2) a Public Workshops Summary. He noted that this is the first time that Charlotte County has developed a Regional Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan.

He noted that Wikimaps software was being used for the public to identify gaps in the bicycle-pedestrian system. To date, 413 comments had been received, and comments were still being received. Four public workshops had been held on March 21-22, 2018. Jacobs Engineering staff was now finalizing the evaluation of the projects, policy evaluation, and initial program recommendations. A final draft of the Charlotte County Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan will be presented to the CAC members at their July 18, 2018 meeting with the goal to have the MPO Board adopt the Plan by the end of July.

## **11. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

## **12. Staff Comments**

Gary Harrell discussed recent staff activities that included a great deal of outreach in support of the Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan efforts. He characterized the Wikimaps software as an excellent tool. The study will provide guidance for various boards.

Mr. Harrell observed that the Harbor View PD&E workshop had a large turnout. He noted that CAC members are asking the right questions regarding upcoming projects.

## **13. Member Comments**

Bob Logan raised the issue of shoulders made of shell on Peachland Blvd, noting that they are wearing down on both sides of the roadway. Ravi Kamarajugadda offered to research the matter with the Public Works Maintenance and Operations staff.

Ed Zapke inquired about funding for forthcoming infrastructure improvements at the federal level, asking if there are lists developed for “shovel ready” projects. Gary Harrell noted that when American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) funding became available previously, many shovel ready projects were already programmed and funded. He stated that the MPO has not received anything on new infrastructure improvement funding yet. However, there are performance measures being developed at the federal level that will be required planning items for future TIPs and LRTPs.

Steve Schoff stated that the use of Wikimaps in the Regional Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan was terrific and felt it would be valuable for road studies as well. Laks Gurrum noted that the MPO will own the software and can utilize it for other purposes. Ravi Kamarajugadda is

developing a Vision Zero app for Charlotte County similar to the Wikimaps platform. Citizens can report from the field on needed improvements. Gary Harrell noted that finally the technology is user-friendly.

Steve Schoff also commented on the signal at the intersection of Winchester Blvd. and Avenue of the Americas. County Engineer Venkat Vattikuti was attending a meeting same day on that very topic.

#### **14. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:44 P.M. The next regularly scheduled CAC meeting will be held on Wednesday, July 18, 2018 at the Eastport Environmental Campus, 25550 Harbor View Road, Port Charlotte in Training Room A beginning at 1:30 pm.

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