

**BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE of the
COLLIER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
609/610 Conference Room, Growth Management Division
2800 N Horseshoe Dr
November 16, 2021 - 9:00 A.M.
Meeting Minutes**

1. **Call to Order**
 Mr. Bonness called the meeting to order at 9:03

2. **Roll Call**
 Ms. Bates called roll and confirmed a quorum

Members Present

Joe Bonness
Alan Musico
Andrea Halman
Patty Huff
Kim Jacob
Claudia Keeler
George Dondanville
Mark Komanecky
Anthony Matonti
Dayna Fendrick

Members Absent

Larry Smith
Dr. Mort Friedman

MPO Staff Present

Anne McLaughlin, Executive Director
Scott Philips, Principal Planner
Danielle Bates, Administrative Assistant

Others Present

Deborah Chesna, FDOT
Michael Tisch, GMD, Transportation Planning
Lorraine Lantz, GMD, Transportation Planning
Michelle Avola-Brown, Naples Pathways Coalition

3. **Approval of the Agenda**

Ms. Musico moved to approve the agenda. Second by Mr. Keeler. Carried unanimously.

4. **Approval of the October 19, 2021 Meeting Minutes**

Mr. Bonness: On item 6, in the 3rd paragraph, it should say Golden Gate Parkway, not Boulevard.

Mr. Dondanville moved to approve the October 19, 2021 minutes as revised. Ms. Huff seconded. Carried unanimously.

5. **Open to the Public for Comment on Items Not on the Agenda**

None.

6. **Agency Updates**

A. FDOT

B. MPO

Ms. McLaughlin: Asked if the three members present with terms expiring in March wanted to the paperwork to be submitted in order to be reappointed. The members - Joe Bonness, Alan Musico and Dayna Fendrick - responded affirmatively.

7. **Committee Action**

7.A. Rate and Rank Project Submittals

Ms. McLaughlin: Reiterated Executive Summary. One small correction, the City of Marco Island was not asking for design money, they do it in-house. Tried to get most up-to-date project costs and detail from the Transportation Alternative (TA) application forms. This is the time to correct errors. Regarding Naples Park projects, the County has asked the Homeowners Association (HOA) representatives to conduct additional surveys during high season. The desire is to keep vetting the Naples Park projects, there's been some push back from a community member opposed to sidewalks. Collier County asked them to keep meeting to work to consensus, HOA has scheduled meeting in January. The proposal on the table is to continue to take all District 2 projects forward for constructability review by FDOT then come back with final proposal with two or three projects that will be endorsed as the highest priority by County and HOA. This is a new request so feel free to discuss. Also made an adjustment to scoring to include Safe Routes to Schools under safety, which affects Everglades City the most. Suggests project sponsors give a final summary of their projects and comment on MPO's scoring.

Mr. Bonness: Marco and Everglades City did a great job.

Marco Island:

Mr. Musico: Marco Island has had a Master Plan since 2009 with the current version finalized in 2013. It relies heavily on public input for where to place routes and the priority. It hasn't changed much. The Bald Eagle bike lanes project is the last unfunded project on Marco

Island, two others left in the Master Plan are funded by Marco Island's Capital Improvement Program (CIP). Bald Eagle is the second most heavily traveled route on Marco second to Collier Boulevard, it has lots of bike traffic. Received 190 comments on comprehensive plan and did a farmers market presentation that got 508 signatures, and received endorsements from community organizations: YMCA, Police, Chamber of Commerce, both sets of schools, totaling about a dozen community organizations. One criterion not included in the MPO's prioritization scoring, but considered by Marco, is the density—within half a mile of the route are 3,000 residential units. Also took snapshots over 3 months on bike traffic: between January and March there were about 967 cyclists a day, Snapshots were done in various weather conditions, on different days of week, and at different times. There were 4 accidents on this road—one serious, person transported to the hospital—numerous near misses that didn't result in police reports. Bike lanes will improve safety. Marco has the Right of Way (ROW) to build. Marco Lakes has a large Hispanic community, and lots of restaurant workers, and Bald Eagle is immediately adjacent and used by the workers, which covers the Environmental Justice criteria (EJ). **Mr. Bonness** asked about swales and parking in bike lanes. **Mr. Musico** responded: The swales are 15 feet, so there's no problem adding 5-foot bike lanes. North and south of this section have bike lanes. Marco Island keeps after parking, they call in a code compliance, offenders tend to be landscaping companies so once they're spoken to it's fixed.

Everglades City:

Ms. Fendrick: We are glad the criteria will address Safe Routes to School. Our project is all about the school: two main roads that connect to school and a walkway along school. These facilities serve local community along with school, post office, convenience stores, and are used by seasonal visitors – routes located by the RV park and eco tour area. These routes connect to the school and Collier Avenue and existing walkways and bike lanes on Copeland. They will improve connectivity. Currently lots of people walk in street because there's nowhere else and this will be a better way to get around. This serves the working people as lots of restaurant and lodging and stone crab crews use these routes as well. **Ms. Huff:** There's lots of commercial traffic with delivery trucks, stone crabs etc. This makes it safer for kids, a great help to schools. **Ms. Fendrick:** Part of the argument is it will serve far greater than local population with the national park in town and an estimated half million visitors.

County submittals:

Mr. Tisch: For each one of 5 commissioner districts, staff selected projects based on EJ areas. District 1, Naples Manor, has done a lot on southeast side, on north there's not a lot. The goal is to provide connectivity to existing sidewalks so people can walk a route.

Mr. Bonness and Ms. Halman asked questions about drainage. Mr Tisch responded: Projects are cognizant of these issues. FDOT makes sure these are not drainage projects, they won't fund if drainage is 50% of the total cost. We work with engineers to minimizing piping and evaluate each side of road to figure out which is best. We able to engage engineers, Collier is fortunate that we can do that, it's part of why we have success in getting funding from FDOT. In Lee County there were projects kicked back from FDOT because they involved too much drainage work. In Naples Park we're working with stormwater and utilities, they're leaving a flat area so when we want to do sidewalks we can come through and don't have do the drainage improvements.

Mr. Bonness, Ms. Halman, and Mr. Tisch discussed the difficulty with parking. Some places will lose parking; it's something that the County looks at. In Immokalee cars are immediately ticketed if blocking sidewalks to discourage that behavior.

Mr. Tisch: The project in Golden Gate City came from a walkability study, the projects in Bayshore and Immokalee came from Bayshore CRA and Immokalee CRA, we work with the staff for projects they want, and needed projects. People walking in the street isn't a great option.

Mr. Bonness: Is the Vanderbilt Beach Road (VBR) sidewalk on the north or south?

Mr. Tisch: North, that was a request made some time ago.

Mr. Bonness: Current sidewalk is not ADA compliant

Mr. Tisch: There's more utilization, with Vanderbilt Drive to US 41, there's so many people walking around hotels and Naples Park. We have project sidewalk for east of Vanderbilt Drive, sidewalks on both sides of that road.

Ms. Keeler asked about Palm River Estates, **Mr. Tisch** explained that it's not considered an EJ area, it's an area not economically depressed which was the focus for these project submittals. **Ms. Keeler** mentioned a Municipal Service Taxing Unity (MSTU) established in Palm River and asked about the potential for widening roads and adding bike lanes and sidewalks and that Palm River is not recognized as an official HOA by the state and they are lower (in authority) than the officially recognized HOA communities. **Mr. Tisch** responded that typically, when you add 5ft wide sidewalks and drainage, the ROW is not wide enough for both sidewalks and bike lanes. Depending on speed some people are comfortable riding on residential streets. The best option is to check with the MSTU for answers regarding all the projects there.

Mr. Dondanville asked about the work done by the DPZ Group process for the neighborhood around US 41, the US41/10th St master plan, because of the safety issues for pedestrians and bicyclists. **Ms. Lantz:** FDOT was working on City of Naples's behalf. **Mr. Dondanville:** they're only doing US 41 and shifting traffic into the neighborhood. **Ms. McLaughlin:** familiar with DPZ project, but it's located in City of Naples; the County would need to hire them, or they would need to market the County in order for them to get involved (in County planning). **Mr. Dondanville:** surprised DPZ didn't meet with the County. **Ms. Lantz:** The County is involved with FDOT study [on US 41] though.

Mr. Matonti: If you had to pick 2 or 3 to group together what would be the priority? **Mr. Tisch:** Each district project is necessary; all have the same weight. We separated Naples Park so they can be done individually or grouped together. Sometimes when submitting FDOT doesn't have the funding for all grouped together, so if they have extra, they can fund one additionally. We welcome input from this committee, you represent different districts, things in Immokalee identified by the CRA who are on the ground talking to citizens. It depends on where it is, for getting the projects: working with walkability studies, or groups, or looking for projects that need connectivity.

Ms. Fendrick: When you look at rankings, Naples Park projects are all ranked higher than Everglades City, does ranking translate to timing and schedule? Would Naples Park get all three before Everglades City?

Ms. McLaughlin: When Victoria Peters [FDOT] responded to this question previously, she affirmed that she looks at the ranking and tries to get higher priority projects programmed first, but other things come into play. It's back and forth between submitters, myself, and FDOT for hitting right dollar amount in any given year, sometimes lower ranked projects with lower costs can be funded earlier when opportunities open up. There's not an iron clad rule, it depends on financial availability and project cost and constructability - are there still lingering issues like drainage - all of it get discussed. We asked the County the same question – what their priority is [in Naples Park] because there's so many projects. We're looking to this committee to give advice, what would you advise the MPO board to do?

Ranking Discussion:

Mr. Musico: One of the things we did with the [Marco Island] comprehensive pathways plan, Section 15 of plan is what are the other things that would affect ranking. Go back and look at Section 15, the three others are hard objective data points (safety, EJ, on the master plan), but Section 15 goes into additional criteria.

Mr. Bonness: Look at district equality, make sure taxpayers' money split evenly. Look at ancillary items to break ties. Golden Gate Estates, it's a huge section that rarely gets things.

Ms. Huff: All of our sections are .6 miles, very small sections, it can fit in because it's so small, even increasing ranking with safe routes to school wouldn't be the same.

Mr. Bonness: Take one street of Naples Park out and then it could get hit with funding later.

Mr. Musico: Proportionality of funding is important. **Mr. Matonti:** What district are Marco Island and Everglades City? **Huff:** Everglades City is 5 but it could change with the redistricting. **Ms. Fendrick:** Look at the EJ scores too, things are changing. **Ms. McLaughlin:** We're looking forward to census data for 2020, demographics are changing, but may take a while to show up statistically. I did another analysis of EJ on Everglades City, but it still does not meet the criteria. The MPO and FDOT have a desire to assist Everglades City because you ask for so little and have no staff – it's an all-volunteer effort. **Ms. Huff:** Dayna Fendrick and Tim Brock did a great job putting this together.

Ms. McLaughlin: Equity is important, as an MPO we get checkmarks on whether we address it or not, and we are evaluated rigorously by FHWA, that's why it scores high in the plan; because equity, safety, and multimodal are three points we must hit.

Mr. Tisch: I worked with Lee MPO, one thing they try is working with the municipalities, it gets a win for each community. You as a committee have a ranking, but your recommendation is your recommendation you have reasons for ranking a rank 5 project over a rank 2.

Ms. McLaughlin: So much of the intention of the scoring was to help the County prioritize projects because it's so vast and diverse, and the needs are endless. The idea was to help the County prioritize rather than elevate them above other entities. County projects hit all the markers: connections to bus stops, regionality, safety, E.J. But in the big picture, the scoring lost sight of small communities.

Mr. Musico: The flip side is the County has enormous road projects where bike/ped facilities can be attached; Marco and Everglades don't have these projects.

Ms. McLaughlin: All of this can be considered when the master plan is redone soon. For now, how would you rank these? What's your advice? All are eligible, and all will be funded if they stay on the list.

Ms. Huff: Where do these funds come from? **Ms. McLaughlin:** This is federal money - SU (Surface Transportation - Urban) funding is the most flexible, and TA (Transportation Alternatives), and some help from the State. **Ms. Huff:** With the infrastructure bill will we get more funding? **Ms. McLaughlin:** We're studying that, discretionary will be coming forward, buzzwords that come up are multimodal, safety, equity. We hope the answer is yes but don't know yet. **Mr. Philips:** The bill was just signed, we're just waiting for the evaluation, when it comes to the region, we have to deal with what the district gets. They'll pick a project to use leftover money rather than letting that money sit. The State is generous, the State uses grants to fill the match requirement gap, it doesn't increase amount received but it covers the gap, so municipalities and county are given some relief.

Mr. Bonness: We could take a look at Everglades City in terms of ranking, so they hit head-to-head when money is allocated

Mr. Halman: I agree

Mr. Matonti: Based on scoring matrix, equity is a defining factor, is anyone here to discuss Naples Manor? It's not an arterial or collector road, just a local one, that district is on with projects, and we have to make concessions, it's also the lowest safety besides feasibility. **Mr. Bonness:** It's ranked high because of a walkability study and schools at the back end. **Ms. McLaughlin:** It's one of the most impoverished communities in the County. **Ms. Halman:** Representatives may not be here because everyone has to work, they can't come here.

Mr. Matonti: It's \$1.8 million for District 3 projects. Vanderbilt Beach Road (VBR) serves Naples Park, it's an arterial. Are we prioritizing arterial or local roads?

Mr. Bonness: There are facilities on VBR, you're improving those, in Naples Park you don't have anything.

Mr. Musico: If you move Everglades City up to a 3 and move Naples Park to a 4, you'll still have enough money to do 2 of those projects

Ms. Jacob: I don't want to change Naples Park ranking, but reality is not all avenues will be completed because of equity in funding between districts. Last month we talked a lot about VBR. There are facilities on both sides and nothing in Naples Park. VBR should be lower priority. In Naples Park out of 20 crashes 75% resulted in injury. Naples Park did a survey, 77% of respondents want sidewalks, a big change from last time sidewalks were proposed. However just to make sure we are going to presentations at our next community meeting, if people don't want them the funding would move.

Mr. Matonti: Last is MPO's feasibility study, then second to last is VBR in District 2, then then 1 to 2 of the Naples Park sidewalks and moving up is Everglades City.

Mr. Musico: I would support that.

Mr. Matonti: Immokalee, Bayshore, Naples Manor, all need to go to the top, move District 2 to bottom above MPO.

Mr. Dondanville: It's a tie between District 3 Golden Gate City and Marco Island, I see number 2 as Everglades, and #1 as Immokalee is recommendation, need to get moving, save lives get kids to school.

Mr. Komanecky: For Everglades City, it's hard to see a safety aspect being so low, I support bumping it up, VBR would be great but there're already facilities so that's nice to have but not a high priority.

Mr. Bonness: We have \$5 million to spend, but \$7 million with all projects.

Mr. Dondanville: This ranking gets the most important done

Mr. Matonti: Keep the same ranks, but flip Everglades City above District 2.

Mr. Musico: District 2 to 4, and Everglades City to 3, and make VBR a 6. Increase Everglades City, decrease 3 Naples Park sidewalks to 4, and VBR from 5 to 6.

Ms. Lantz: Whatever the ranking, all County projects move forward for feasibility?

Ms. McLaughlin: Yes. We talked about the need to have projects on the shelf, because FDOT throws money into SU box when there's little time to spend it, so it's good to have extra projects on-line.

Mr. Dondanville: Moving along on pedestrian overpass for a number of years, coming to a conclusion that an on-grade system to stop traffic might cost less or the same but is easier to get done. Even though some discussion about Gordon River Greenway construction allowed for overpass, it isn't effective if City of Naples can't enforce speeds, and traffic backs up and it's not

safe now. I would like a stop light that can also be activated by pedestrians. **Mr. Bonness:** A good test for an on-grade system is the one at 84 and Rich King Greenway. **Mr. Tisch, Ms. McLaughlin, and Mr. Dondanville** discussed the cost effectiveness of a study and what options to study. **Ms. Lantz** noted a study must be done but perhaps one that costs less than \$750,000. **Ms. McLaughlin** noted that this project is always last, as there is no crash record, because people don't cross, it can always be resubmitted.

Mr. Matonti moved to adjust and approve the rankings. Mr. Musico seconded. Carried unanimously.

8. Reports & Presentations (May Require Committee Action)

8.A. FDOT District 1 Active Transportation Plan

Ms. Chesna: gave the presentation as provided in the agenda packet.

Ms. Halman: At the joint meeting someone asked about trees? Florida is hot and trees are healthy and help environment.

Ms. Chesna: It's in the toolbox created for local people and FDOT. Landscaping helps slow traffic. It is all about funding, if people talk it up, it is good to make it viable.

Ms. Fendrick: We started to put trees in the submittal and spoke to Victoria, SU funds are constrained and can't pay for street trees. But it is not a Complete Street without street trees.

Ms. Chesna: The number of lanes, speed, and other factors affect trees, we are concerned about how fast you'll hit the tree. These corridors will get a workshop for locals to put input, when speeds are lower, we can put more on the corridor.

Ms. Halman: Northern states have trees and southern do not.

Ms. Chesna: In northern states, arterials have less lanes or intersection are smaller.

Ms. Huff and Ms. Chesna discussed the [interactive] FDOT GIS maps, the benefits are that FDOT can get ideas from the public like cleaning debris from the roadway, making sure infrastructure is safe, do we need buffer, etc, but it has to be documented.

Ms. Huff: Why can't you mark bike lanes? US 41 is marked some places but not others. **Ms. Chesna:** Planners look at whole community and engineers look specifically at road. The designers thought Complete Streets meant bike lanes and marked them, but they realized that's not always the safest. We can't mark a shoulder as a [bike] lane if posted speed is over 45 mph, but there could be a buffered bike lane if the speeds are reduced. The more visuals the driver sees the more they know. **Ms. Huff:** If people see it then they know, similar to making US 41 unmarked as a scenic route.

Ms. Chesna: The engineer has to put stamp on it, there are lots of debates. **Ms. Huff:** FDOT helped with share the road signs and will remove raised pavement markers. **Ms. Chesna:** It's a matter of having 3 planners, vs. 300 engineers in District 1 to aid in the understanding of the link between transportation and land use which determines the users of the roadway.

Ms. Keeler: The protected intersection is interesting. Could you give examples on where it could be done? Livingston, Immokalee, Airport, Pine Ridge in Collier. **Ms. Chesna:** Unfortunately, we didn't find any in Collier that has bike lanes on all four ways; we could do with sidewalks or with any intersections if it was agreed to slow traffic.

Ms. Fendrick: I noticed on the work plan at joint meeting, SR 29 from Wagon Wheel to I-75, there's a plan for resurfacing; want to make sure they don't reduce the shoulder. **Ms. Chesna:** They can't go narrower because of rules

Ms. Chesna: also presented FDOT updates. SUN Trail has a couple of updates: not calling for new applications, but all money will go to next phases of existing projects including finishing the Good Neighbor Trail; and there's change in work program instructions that SUN Trail segments less than 12 feet wide must be approved by the chief planner at central office. The Office of Greenways and Trails is putting out a GIS interactive map, if you have changes to SUN Trail or priority trails, work with them. Funding information for trails other than SUN Trail and TA funds or grants is coming out. The non-motorized traffic count program is coming out for a second round, FDOT is giving equipment to lend to locals and would like them to be there on December 1 to install second round of counters. This is good for getting data. There is also a safety campaign for behavior change, asking drivers "why are you driving so aggressive?" Did Collier County submit US Bike Route 15?

Ms. Huff: Yes, it should be in the December Board of County Commissioners meeting on the consent agenda

9. Member Comments

10. **Distribution Items**

10.A Joint Meeting Minutes

Mr. Bonness: One interesting item was the Rail Trail presentation, including steps for that in Estero and Bonita. Old 41 pathway is still same and could tie in.

11. **Next Meeting Date**

January 18, 2022 – 9:00 a.m. In-Person Only Meeting

12. **Adjournment**

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 11:15 a.m.

