

**CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE of the  
COLLIER METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
MEETING MINUTES  
January 22, 2024, 2:00 p.m.**

**1. Call to Order**

**Ms. Middelstaedt** called the meeting to order at 2:03 p.m.

**2. Roll Call**

**Ms. Miceli** called the roll and confirmed a quorum was present.

**CAC Members Present**

Elaine Middelstaedt, *Chair*

Neal Gelfand, *Vice-Chair*

Dennis DiDonna (*arrived during item 6.A.*)

Dennis Stalzer

Josh Rincon

Karen Homiak

Michelle Arnold (*arrived during item 3*)

**CAC Members Absent**

Fred Sasser

Josephine Medina

**MPO Staff**

Anne McLaughlin, Executive Director

Sean Kingston, Principal Planner

Dusty Hansen, Senior Planner

Suzanne Miceli, Administrative Support Specialist II

**Others Present**

Victoria Peters, FDOT Community Liaison (*left after item 7.C.*)

Erica McCaughey, FDOT

Carmen Monroy, Stantec Consulting

3. **Approval of the Agenda**

**Ms. McLaughlin** explained that staff was seeking approval of an amended agenda which included the addition of item 7.E. on the agenda for the endorsement of Amendment to FY24-28 TIP that read for Golf Course Dr Bike-Ped Project, but should say, South Golf Drive project.

*Mr. Rincon moved to approve the amended agenda. Mr. Gelfand seconded. Carried unanimously.*

4. **Approval of the November 27, 2023 Meeting Minutes**

*Ms. Homiak moved to approve the November 27, 2023 meeting minutes. Mr. Rincon seconded. Carried unanimously.*

5. **Public Comments for Items not on the Agenda**

**Ms. Monroy** mentioned that Stantec recently kicked off the major update of the Transit Development Plan (TDP) for Collier Area Transit. She continued by saying that there would be regular updates and she would be coordinating with Ms. Hansen.

6. **Agency Updates**

**A. FDOT**

**Ms. Peters** announced that she would be attending the Florida Metropolitan Planning Partnership (FMPP) meeting on January 24, 2024, followed by the Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC) meeting on January 25, 2024, since both would be held in Orlando. She said FDOT would be working on a new Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) in April and May of 2024, which might include an update to the UPWP check list. She anticipated that the new Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) download files would be available during the March/April time frame, and that much would be moving forward in the next few months, including Collier MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

**Ms. Middelstaedt** asked if there was an update for the timing of the completion of the sidewalk project in Everglades City.

**Ms. Peters** said the project was scheduled to be completed before the upcoming Everglades City Seafood festival starting on February 2, 2024.

**Ms. Middelstaedt** mentioned that the work so far looked very good.

**Ms. Peters** said FDOT had been working with the contractor, Everglades City/MPO Board, Council Member Pernas, and Dottie Smallwood from Everglades City Operations.

**Mr. DiDonna** asked about the Old 41 & Bonita Beach Road project.

**Ms. Peters** informed that it was in the Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) phase.

## **B. MPO Executive Director**

**Ms. McLaughlin** said that the Collier MPO Executive Director role had not been filled, as the candidate elected by the MPO Board had declined the offer. She said the situation would be discussed at the upcoming MPO Board meeting in February.

She also mentioned that several important bills were going to state legislature, including [Senate Bill 1032](#), [House Bill 1301](#), and [House Bill 7049](#). The bills include updated requirements for the designation of MPOs, new evaluation criteria for MPO's (like keeping residents and citizens content regarding congestion), stricter regulations for transit, and prohibits FDOT and MPOs from considering nonpecuniary factors (like environmental issues) when developing transportation plans. She mentioned that FDOT matches the MPO for federal funding of projects, so such laws could challenge how the MPO would stay eligible for federal funding when nonpecuniary values in the prioritization of project funding needs to be considered (like environmental justice). There was also a request for Collier and Lee MPOs to do a feasibility study regarding the idea of merging. She believed that because of the proposed bills and the request for the merge feasibility study, it might be a challenging time to post the Executive Director position again, and that extending her contract another year might be considered.

## **7. Committee Action**

### **A. Elect Chair and Vice-Chair**

*Ms. Homiak moved to reelect Chair Middelstaedt and Vice-Chair Gelfand, and Mr. Rincon seconded. Carried unanimously.*

### **B. Endorse Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Vision Zero Safety Performance Targets for Calendar Year 2024**

**Ms. McLaughlin** reviewed FDOT's statewide safety statistics and safety conditions for Collier County for the State of Florida (which can be viewed in the [January 22, 2024 CAC Agenda](#)). She mentioned that Collier County's fatalities and serious injuries were trending down and that she continues to recommend that the MPO align with FDOT's Vision Zero Safety Performance Targets, which would provide the opportunity to work with and support FDOT's safety efforts. She also mentioned that there were many safety initiatives in place within Collier MPO's various plans.

A group discussion followed regarding the statistical findings in relation to the new safety features in cars and the impossibility of hitting a zero target. **Ms. Monroy** commented that FDOT could not come up with a number other than zero that sounded acceptable.

**Mr. Gelfand** said that while he understood the sentiment, in the business world, targets are meant to provide guidance and be a true measurement of results. Measuring the targets in a different way, like say, a 10% drop each year, could be a measurable and more achievable target.

**Mr. Rincon** noted that because there are so many unknowns in the causes of fatal accidents, having 100% accuracy in the statistics might be impossible in any measurement.

A group discussion followed, and it was surmised that the term “target” refers to what is measurable and quantifiable, and that the use of a zero might be more accurately applied to a “vision” rather than a “target”.

*Ms. Homiak moved to endorse the FDOT Safety Targets for 2024 and Ms. Middelstaedt seconded. Carried unanimously.*

#### **C. Endorse Amendment to the FY 24-28 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) - Transit Projects**

**Mr. Kingston** explained that the item was for the Committee to endorse an Amendment to the FY 2024-2028 Collier MPO Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and authorizing resolution. He went on to say that the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) requested Collier MPO to amend its FY 2024-2028 TIP to add five transit projects: three for service busses, one for operating funds for urban corridor improvements to support bus routes on state roadways, and one for a support vehicle. Staff recommended that the Committee endorse the Amendment and authorizing resolution and noted that there was a typographical error in the Exhibit 1 table which showed the responsible agency for project 439255-1 as “not available,” but that it should show the responsible agency as Collier County, and that the error would be corrected in a revised version that would be brought to the MPO Board in February.

*Mr. Rincon moved to endorse the Amendment to the FY 24-28 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) - Transit Projects and Mr. Stalzer seconded. Carried 6:1 with Mr. DiDonna dissenting.*

#### **D. Endorse the Collier to Polk Regional Trail PD&E as a Priority for SUN Trail Funding**

**Ms. McLaughlin** explained that the addition of the Collier to Polk Regional Trail to the SUN Trail priority trail network was endorsed by the committees and approved by the MPO Board and Florida Greenways and Trails Council. FDOT applied for SUN Trail funding to conduct a Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) study for the project to meet the December 20, 2023 deadline, and it must be formally approved as an MPO priority to receive the SUN Trail funding. Staff was recommending support for the Collier to Polk Regional Trail PD&E to be a high priority for SUN Trail funding. FDOT estimated the cost of the PD&E to be \$6.3 million. There were no competing projects at the time and the PD&E would start soon.

*Ms. Homiak moved to endorse the Collier to Polk Regional Trail PD&E as a priority for SUN Trail funding and Ms. Arnold seconded. Carried unanimously.*

**E. Endorse Amendment to the FY 2024-2028 Transportation Improvement Program and Authorizing Resolution for South Golf Dr. Bike-Ped Project**

**Mr. Kingston** explained that FDOT requested Collier MPO to amend its Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) FY 2024-2028 TIP for the South Golf Drive bike-ped project to add a new project number for the construction phase and make a correction to the Transportation System and Roadway ID and beginning/ending mileposts. The original TIP project sheet for FPN 440437-1 was revised and a new TIP project sheet for segment (-2) was added. The construction phase funding was moved from segment -1 to -2, authorized with a different Federal Aid Number. **Mr. Kingston** further noted that there was an error on the agenda in that Golf Course Drive was referenced instead of South Golf Drive.

*Mr. Rincon moved to endorse the Amendment to FY24-28 TIP for South Golf Dr Bike-Ped Project, and Mr. Stalzer seconded. Carried unanimously.*

**8. Reports and Presentation (May Require Committee Action)**

**A. FDOT Community Planning Presentation**

**Ms. McCaughey** explained that she was part of the Community Planning unit of FDOT's Planning Studio in Fort Myers, and that FDOT was visiting MPOs and counties in District One. The goals of the visits have been to engage with local staff, discuss growth management and community planning regarding land use and transportation issues, learn about the community's vision for growth, be a proactive partner in that growth, assist in enhancing the transportation system and quality of life, and generally keep the channel of communication open. Some discussion topics of such visits might include the impact of redevelopment and development on transportation, concurrency and impact fees, and identifying funds to move priorities forward.

A group discussion followed mentioning that different areas within the Collier region have different needs, and that with the vast growth occurring in the area, road improvements are greatly needed. It was recognized that road improvements take time to complete.

**9. Member Comments**

**Mr. Stalzer** asked when construction would start on S.R. 951 between Green Blvd and City Gate.

**Ms. McLaughlin** responded by saying that she was asked to provide a briefing for MPO Board Chair Greg Folley on S.R. 951. The I-75 S.R. 951 interchange improvement got a great deal of funding and was under construction. S.R. 951 between Manatee and Tower was being widened from four to six lanes with buffered bike lanes and shared use path in FDOT's Draft Tentative Work Program for FY 29, the C.R. 951 extension to northern Lee County was being considered to fulfill another north-south route, some major intersection improvements in the LRTP waiting for approval were at Immokalee Road and Golden Gate Parkway, and at US 41 in Collier. Lee MPO was proposing to amend its UPWP to fund the 951-extension study with Collier MPO, and the study limits were for Alico Road in Lee County to Immokalee Road in Collier County. The intention of the study was to see if there was a more direct path between Lee and Collier. The issue was that the proposed path crosses through conservation lands.

**Mr. Gelfand** asked about the relocation status of The Naples Airport.

A group discussion followed, and staff shared that earlier that day TAC Committee member and Naples Airport representative, Ute Vandersluis, had announced that a feasibility study was underway to investigate alternate locations for the airport.

**Mr. DiDonna** mentioned his concern about climate change and that during a recent trip to Japan, he noted Japan's clean and efficient transit and transportation system, saying the U.S. could learn from Japan's systems.

A group discussion followed regarding the recently proposed regional rail network study and the usefulness of a regional rail system.

**10. Distribution Items**

None.

**11. Next Meeting Date**

*February 26, 2024, 2:00 p.m. –Transportation Management Services Bldg. Main Conference Room, 2885 S. Horseshoe Dr., Naples, FL, 34104 – in person.*

**12. Adjournment**

**Ms. Middelstaedt** adjourned the meeting at 3:23 p.m.