

**WEST CENTRAL FLORIDA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
CHAIR'S COORDINATING COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF THE DECEMBER 8, 2006 MEETING**

A meeting of the West Central Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Chairs' Coordinating Committee was held December 8, 2006 at the Weedon Island Preserve, located at 1800 Weedon Drive NE, St. Petersburg, FL 33702.

**The following members were present:**

Commissioner Karen Seel	Chairman, Pinellas County MPO
Commissioner Jack Mariano	Chairman, Pasco County MPO
Councilman Jeff Affronti	Vice Chairman, Hillsborough County MPO
Mayor Larry Bustle	Chairman, Sarasota/Manatee MPO
Commissioner Gow Fields	Chairman, Polk TPO

**Others present:**

Dr. Bruce Rinker	Weedon Island Preserve
Brian Smith	Pinellas County MPO
Sarah Ward	Pinellas County MPO
Karen Cunningham	Pinellas County MPO
Marc Hanger	Pinellas County MPO
Hugh Pascoe	Hernando County MPO
Doug Uden	Pasco County MPO
Michael Howe	Sarasota/Manatee MPO
Tom Deardorff	Polk TPO
Ryan Kordek	Polk TPO
Brigitte D'Orval	Polk TPO
Lucie Ayer	Hillsborough County MPO
Gena Torres	Hillsborough County MPO
Jennifer Willman	Hillsborough County MPO
Ned Baier	Hillsborough County
Bob Kersteen	TBRPC (Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council)
Avera Wynne	TBRPC (Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council)
Don Skelton	FDOT District 7
Bob Clifford	FDOT District 7
Lee Royal	FDOT District 7
Jim Baxter	FDOT District 1
Ben Walker	FDOT District 1
Manon Lavoie	FDOT District 1
Alison Stettner	Florida Turnpike
Wilfred Sergeant	Transit Consultant
Heather Urwiller	Citrus County
Cynthia L. Jones	Citrus County
Jeff Kramer	CUTR (Center for Urban Transportation Research)
Ed Mierzejewski	CUTR (Center for Urban Transportation Research)
Jim Byers	PSTA (Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority)
Joe Smith	Tampa Bay Partnership
Karen Raihill	Tampa Bay Partnership
Representative Rich Glorioso	State Representative
Marianne Arneberg Gurnee	Central Florida Commuter Rail Project
Carolyn Kuntz	Recorder

### **CALL TO ORDER AND INTRODUCTIONS**

Pinellas County MPO Chairman, Commissioner Karen Seel called the meeting to order at 11:40 a.m. and introduced Dr. Bruce Rinker, who is in charge of environmental lands and oversees Brooker Creek Preserve and Weedon Island Preserve.

### **OPENING REMARKS – Dr. Bruce Rinker**

Dr. Rinker, Division Director for Environmental Lands Program, welcomed everyone and gave a brief overview of Weedon Island Preserve and his responsibilities. Commissioner Seel added there were posters and brochures available for Weedon Island for those interested to take with them.

### **APPROVAL OF SEPTEMBER CCC MEETING MINUTES**

*Commissioner Fields moved, Commissioner Mariano seconded, and motion carried to approve the September 8, 2006 meeting minutes as presented.*

### **CENTRAL FLORIDA COMMUTER RAIL PROJECT**

Marianne Arneberg Gurnee, Public Liaison for the Central Florida Commuter Rail Project, showed a three-minute video for the Central Commuter Rail Transit Project. She then reviewed the Agreement in Principle, as announced by the Governor on August 2, 2006, to purchase the CSXT tracks in Central Florida and then the project overview. The Governor's announcement was for a \$491 million Agreement in Principle with CSXT, which will allow the following:

- commuter rail;
- the State to take over operations, maintenance, and dispatch for Tri-Rail in South Florida;
- provide grade separated crossings in North Central Florida in the Ocala area;
- improved freight delivery capacity through Florida;
- calls for the purchase of 61.5 miles of CSX track through Central Florida in Volusia, Seminole, Orange, and Osceola Counties for \$150 million;
- establishes the hours of operation from 5:30 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m., with mixed use in between and exclusive freight use in the evenings;
- State control of maintenance and dispatch of the Central Florida System, which would include freight and passenger services;
- calls for the relocation of six daily freight trains from the A Line in the urban area of Central Florida to the S Line;
- calls for the relocation of three additional daily trains to the S Line, which carries coal freight;
- operations for the 9 freight trains will be removed from the Taft Yard to the new Integrated Logistics Center (ILC) in Winter Haven, which will cost \$23 million; and
- requires the money paid to CSX to be used within Florida.

To fund this, the State will issue \$173 million in low interest bonds, which will pay the cost of repaying the bonds for the first 7 years the system is in operation. In order to finalize contract documents, crews are performing environmental contamination searches of the existing CSX line. They will be assisting CSX in acquiring the necessary permits for construction and operations. They are working with the four counties to obtain a local financial commitment by March 1, 2007 and are hoping to complete the environmental assessment for the federal government this week. They will hold public hearings in January, move into Preliminary Engineering, and eventually reach a full funding grant agreement. The next steps are to negotiate with CSX execution of a final contract document, move forward with final design, with construction anticipated in 2008, and a target opening date of December 2009.

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Ms. Gurnee then presented an overview of the commuter rail project, including the proposed phases. The operating plan calls for 30 minute peak service in each direction from 5:30 a.m. to 8:30 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.; 2 hour off peak service in each direction; and up to 3 train cars. The trains will run at an average speed of 45 mph through the urban areas, restroom facilities will be located on all trains, along with power outlets to all seats, internet connectivity, luggage and bicycle racks, and single and double deck trains. The idea is for this to be a spine with extensions to other areas in the future. Commuter rail service will help with maintenance of traffic while I-4 is under construction, with the cost savings to be used to fund the operations and maintenance of the commuter rail for the first seven years. Commuter rail service will have a stop in front of the Florida Hospital and at the Orlando Regional Medical Center and will tap into a pedestrian overpass at both locations. The capital costs for the commuter rail system is the standard formula, with 50% coming from the federal government, 25% coming from the State government, and 25% coming from the local governments. Currently, the capital costs are being refined to make sure they are accurate. The local partners are meeting with the State to discuss cost allocation formulas, contingencies, reserves, etc. Preliminary Engineering is scheduled to begin in January of 2007, final design is scheduled for the summer of 2007, the full funding grant agreement with the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) is scheduled for the winter of 2008, the Interlocal Agreements are scheduled for March 1, 2007, construction is scheduled to begin in 2008, service is scheduled for 2009, and the system is scheduled to be fully operational by 2013.

Upon query by Mr. Pascoe regarding ridership estimates, Ms. Gurnee responded they have had issues with FTA because there is a lot of reverse commuting in Central Florida and the FTA formula for commuter rail doesn't allow reverse commuting to be calculated for ridership. They have been working through the various issues with FTA, with the initial ridership projections between 6,000 to 7,000, which is conservative.

Upon query by Mr. Howe regarding provisions for a commuter rail passenger when they arrive at their destination, Ms. Gurnee responded there will be park-and-ride lots in the suburban areas, kiss-and-ride lots in the urban areas, there is existing service in several areas, and there are discussions regarding feeder bus service and additional bus service.

Upon query by Councilman Affronti regarding the local governments included as part of the local share, Ms. Gurnee responded the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is negotiating with the four counties that will be served: Volusia, Seminole, Orange, and Osceola Counties. The counties of Volusia, Seminole, and Osceola will pay for their full share of capital and operations and maintenance costs. Orange County is entering into Interlocal Agreements with Winter Park and Maitland (if they decide to have stations) and Orlando to defray station and track costs within their community. The track costs will be based on the amount of track miles in the individual counties and the Operations and Maintenance costs are in the process of being negotiated.

Upon query by Ms. Ayer regarding local funding options, Ms. Gurnee responded the State is making available Infrastructure Bank loans. Upon further query by Ms. Ayer regarding sales tax, Ms. Gurnee responded Orange County has discussed a dedicated funding source for transit and the other three counties already have in place a Penny sales tax dedicated for transit.

Mr. Sergeant, citizen, stated that adequate parking has to be available to make sure the system is a success and that municipalities are usually responsible for the feeder systems.

Ms. Gurnee concluded her presentation by noting her contact information is on the back of the brochure that was handed out and the website is [cfrail.com](http://cfrail.com).

\*\*At this time, Chairman Seel had those in attendance introduce themselves\*\*

### **FDOT DISTRICTS I AND VII AND FLORIDA TURNPIKE TENTATIVE WORK PROGRAMS**

Ben Walker, FDOT District I, reviewed the Tentative Work Program for District I. A DVD was played to review the program. The DVD indicated, last year, there were cost increases of \$500 million and there are similar increases this year. Construction costs have increased drastically over the last two years, which directly relates to the rising petroleum costs and the rising market for construction in Florida, which impacts the availability of materials and further restrains the tight labor market. Compounding the costs increases, FDOT is experiencing reduced competition for bid lettings. As a result, project schedules have been adjusted to balance costs with available revenues. The Growth Management Legislation passed in 2005 provides additional funding with Strategic Intermodal System (SIS), Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP), and the County Incentive Grant Program (CIGP). FDOT is in the process of updating the highway component of the SIS Ten-Year Plan through 2016, which includes funding for improvements to the highest priority projects in District I. District I will receive approximately \$56 million of new TRIP funding for 2008 to 2010, which provides an incentive for regional planning, leverage investments in regionally-significant roadways and public transportation, and links investments to growth management objectives. District I will receive approximately \$21 million of CIGP funding for 2007 through 2010, which provides funding for capital transit projects and improvements on the State Highway System for facilities that relieve congestion. The projects within the District I Tentative Work Program were reviewed.

Alison Stettner, Florida Turnpike, announced the Grand Opening for the Daniel C. Webster Western Beltway was held earlier that day, which is the final link of the section of the Western Beltway in Orlando and part of the Orlando Beltway System. The Beltway is to help move goods and services throughout Orlando. She noted that it is the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Turnpike and the first segment of the Turnpike from Coral Gables to Orlando opened on January 25, 1957. Ms. Stettner then reviewed the Turnpike Tentative Work Program, which had been handed out. Suncoast II is funded this year for design and right-of-way, with the commitment of going back to Citrus County with 50% design plans to see if there is still local support. Right-of-way has been advanced for the Veterans Expressway; Preliminary Design and Engineering (PD&E) has been completed for the Veterans Expressway to widen it to eight lanes; the Veterans Expressway, Suncoast Parkway and Suncoast II will become all electronic facilities once developed to take cash off the system and move it to outside locations, Polk County has two deferrals due to agreements with the Williams DRI to the next fiscal year (2008), and general upgrades for toll improvement technologies for the entire system including the use of a smaller transponder.

Upon query by Mayor Bustle regarding the move to an electronic system, Ms. Stettner responded, currently, toll booths are located along the system where people paying with cash stop to pay their tolls. The idea is to move toward an electronic system that takes the cash toll collection off the actual roadway and moves it to an offsite location. The majority of the people using the Turnpike use Sun Pass transponders, which is a cheaper system than building expensive toll plazas and is more efficient. They are working with the rental car agencies to have Sun Pass installed in the rental vehicles so visitors could also use the Sun Pass system.

Upon further query by Commissioner Fields as to those people who still wish to pay with cash, Ms. Stettner responded they would purchase something similar to a gift card from an offsite vendor.

Upon query by Mr. Pascoe regarding the Suncoast Parkway Phase II, Ms. Stettner responded they will build it as a single phase, with the project broken into four different sections; however, they will be advanced at the same time and funding for construction is outside the five years.

Lee Royal, FDOT District VII, presented an overview of the District VII Work Program. She noted the significant cost increases for right-of-way purchases and materials for construction, which includes asphalt, earthwork, concrete, steel, and fuel. Out of 58 contracts for 2005/06, 29 contracts had only 1 or 2 bidders and 8 contracts were rejected. FDOT is looking at various ways to reduce costs, such as whether a project can be performed during the day versus night-time, repackaging projects to shorten the length of project limits and time requirements, and looking at the essential components for each project. Ms. Royal highlighted the Work Program changes including additions, deletions, deferrals, and advances.

Bob Clifford, FDOT District VII, reviewed the Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP). Approximately \$125 million of TRIP funding was available for five years of the Program. FDOT has some concern about some of the projects. They reviewed all projects received and evaluated the applications as to how they fit into the regional plan, the project criteria related to support regional movement, are the projects included in the local Capital Improvement Programs (CIP) and Capital Improvement Elements (CIE), are the match funds available, are the projects part of an overall plan (such as a long term concurrency management system), and the various priorities. The applications were also reviewed against the original intent of TRIP, such as improving level of service, improving delays, the types of corridor management strategies, additional capacity, improving service and the analysis provided to meet that requirement, were they substantive regional projects, and then FDOT met with the regional partners. The following projects were included as part of the TRIP funding:

- Hernando/Pasco County line road (C.R. 578) for 2008;
- Barclay Road in Hernando County;
- I-75 at C.R. 54 interchange;
- S.R. 54 in Pasco County;
- Ridge Road in Pasco County;
- U.S. 301 in Hillsborough County;
- George Bean Parkway at the Tampa International Airport; and
- Bryan Dairy Road in Pinellas County.

Mr. Clifford stated several of the projects were missing background information from the local governments; i.e., no in-kind matches, projects not included in the local CIPs, no level of service or concurrency information, and incomplete forms. FDOT allocated \$75 million and boxed \$50 million for another round of projects. FDOT would like to meet in February with the MPOs, staff, and various other entities and partners to develop a process and application so they can receive good projects that meet the principles and provide information so FDOT can make decisions on funding these projects.

Mr. Clifford noted the Work Program process includes presentations to each MPO, any comments from the MPOs need to be received by January 22, 2007, two public hearings are held, the Work Program is forwarded to the Florida Transportation Commission, a statewide public hearing is held on March 6, 2007, and then the Program is forwarded to the Legislature for adoption on July 1, 2007.

Upon query by Mayor Bustle regarding an analysis of why FDOT received 1 or 2 bids on a large number of projects, Mr. Clifford responded there were many issues, including the large overall general infrastructure development going on throughout the State resulting in competing for limited contractors and resources, cost of materials, the timing of projects, and resources in general to be able to perform the work. FDOT has looked at leveling the overall letting plan. Mr. Skelton added that contractors are becoming more selective in the jobs they choose to bid on. There was a comment that bureaucracy might also be part of the problem.

Upon query by Representative Glorioso whether FDOT is purchasing more right-of-way instead of construction, Mr. Skelton responded that is one of the strategies FDOT is using. FDOT is watching the market to make sure the projects are ones FDOT wants to go to bid. FDOT is looking at advance right-of-way acquisition where possible as one of the strategies. Mr. Clifford added FDOT has made a conscientious decision to keep projects moving forward in terms of design and right-of-way and, when the market is more favorable, move forward with construction.

Upon query by Mr. Howe regarding the significant cost increases over last year, Mr. Skelton responded that District VII had approximately \$500 million in cost increases, which includes an analysis of estimate updates last year of bids that were six months old or longer. In December, in reviewing the cost estimate updates, Mr. Skelton was advised there would be significant cost increases, which is why there is a larger cost increase this year versus last year. FDOT is beginning to allow only a certain amount of increase in the estimates and that FDOT should be driving the market. FDOT includes a maximum bid specification in their packages so the contractors know what the maximum bid is and whether they will bid or not.

Upon query by Mr. Smith regarding the reason the cost for construction projects was 43% higher than the rest of the Country, Mr. Skelton responded the higher costs are due to the hurricane season Florida has experienced for the last two years, a robust economy, and the building environment. Resources coming into the Tampa Bay area are mostly by barge from Nova Scotia, which means contractors cannot always count on in-time delivery of materials. Sometimes the materials are diverted to other areas that might pay more for them. FDOT is looking at developing agreements with the materials/aggregate suppliers so they can guarantee the contractors delivery. FDOT is also considering stockpiling materials so the materials would be available when needed.

Commissioner Mariano noted a settlement by the federal government this past March that included a provision where Arizona received an extra supply of cement the rest of the Country could not get and, possibly, the 43% statistic that Florida pays more for materials could be used as leverage to get the provisions repealed. Mr. Skelton added they are looking at the possibility of getting cement and lime rock from Mexican suppliers. Mr. Uden clarified that they are entering into an agreement and that the agreement has not yet been signed.

Upon query by Mayor Bustle that deferred bids would cost more in the future, Mr. Skelton responded that is a possibility; however, FDOT will reject any bid it thinks is too high. Commissioner Mariano felt this is a good strategy.

Representative Glorioso offered to help with changing State regulations that might be causing the higher costs if FDOT identified such regulations. Mr. Skelton indicated he was not aware of any State regulations since a lot of the problem has to do with FDOT specifications.

Upon query by Mr. Smith regarding a project for computerized signal system in Winter Haven, Mr. Walker responded that it's to integrate the various systems for better coordination of traffic signals. Upon further query by Chairman Seel whether the system was for State roads, Mr. Walker added the system would be installed along State roads. Mr. Deardorff added the project includes some local roads as well.

Upon query by Mr. Uden, Mr. Skelton responded the projects are for the installation of the Intelligent Transportation System on the Interstate. The project for I-275 includes installation of the Dynamic Message Signs. The Freeway Management Center is complete, with occupancy anticipated in January.

#### **REGIONAL TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY LEGISLATION – FOLLOW-UP**

Ms. Ward presented a brief update, noting that Representative Galvano attended the September CCC meeting to discuss legislation to be drafted for the upcoming session. The bill is still in drafting and not available.

Representative Glorioso noted he is waiting for the legislation. His biggest concern is the governance issue. He requested Howard Glassman work with the CCC to increase the ability of the CCC to better represent the area. In order to move forward with the regional transportation authority, the CCC needs to be strengthened to provide better planning and oversight for the authority. The CCC needs to have a permanent staff and organization so citizens know who to contact for information. The Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) has developed a proposal. At this time, he has not filed legislation because he wants to see what the Regional Transportation Bill includes to see how everything would work together. Before he moves forward with a bill, he will make sure the CCC staff receives information. He has filed the MPO bill, which is similar to the MPO bill filed last year. The proposed bill would make the MPOs independent agencies, identifies membership and staffs; however, it does not address the 1¢ transportation tax. The bill allows federal, urban money to be used as a match for TRIP projects. The legislators do not know which committees they are on but have been informed they should know by next Tuesday. The Governor elect is in the process of making cabinet appointments. There will be nine different Council Chairs and the Transportation Committee has been renamed to the Committee on Infrastructure and will be under the Economic Development and Infrastructure Council. This year, the Chair of the Infrastructure Committee will be making decisions on funding for infrastructure. The Infrastructure Committee Chairman and Vice Chairman will sit on the Council, which will prioritize the funding for economic development and infrastructure. The legislators spent the first three days of the week in Tallahassee reviewing the insurance issue. The legislators return to Tallahassee on January 8, 2007, which is committee week and the Insurance Committee will begin drafting a House bill.

Upon query by Chairman Seel regarding the one cent transit surtax, Representative Glorioso responded the intent was to allow all counties to implement the surtax and not just the charter counties. Last year, they had worked out an agreement with the counties and cities on distribution of the money from the surtax. He indicated the bill could be amended to include the transit surtax once the concerns are resolved.

Chairman Seel stated, as the area moves forward toward a regional transportation authority, she felt the one cent surtax should be kept in tact for counties to implement larger projects. If the funding is to be split with the cities, the Board of County Commissioners would probably not approve a referendum for the surtax.

Commissioner Fields handed out a letter with the Polk TPO Policy Statement. The primary issue is that Polk TPO is in two different regional planning bodies, the Central Florida MPO Alliance and the West Central Florida Chairs Coordinating Committee. Polk TPO looks at issues from a super regional perspective and feels there is a need to connect Orlando and the Tampa Bay region and wants to make sure the guiding principles are included in any regional transportation planning initiatives.

Mr. Deardorff added, over the years, he has attended the Tampa Bay Commuter Rail Authority and the Tampa Major Investment Study meetings. Polk County is excited about how close the Central Florida Commuter Rail System is to Polk County. Polk County is interested in the travel markets that go east-west and a regional transportation authority should be addressing the traffic issues within the I-4 corridor. Polk County would like to emphasize there needs to be a focus on public transportation as regional transportation solutions are being considered.

Commissioner Fields added that citizens don't care where the county lines are located. They want to be able to get from one location to another in the most efficient, effective means.

Joe Smith, Tampa Bay Partnership, indicated they also have not seen a final draft of the bill. The Partnership has been advocating for a broad governance structure that recognizes the counties that need to be included in the bill, especially as part of the master planning process. In discussions with experts, they have been told they need to start with the largest possible, logical region rather than just two or three counties; which in this case, would be eight counties. The Partnership will soon be releasing their guiding principles. The Partnership is also very supportive of any east-west connection. The model they have proposed for the Board is to have representation from the 8 counties, with 75% elected officials and 25% gubernatorial appointees from the nonelected sector. Their recommendation includes the Mayors of the three municipalities with transit organizations; i.e., St. Petersburg, Tampa, and Lakeland. If Manatee and Sarasota were to merge, the recommendation would include an official from that organization, as well as an elected official from the CCC.

#### **REGIONAL STUDY UPDATES (FDOT)**

Mr. Clifford presented an update on the two studies. The Strategic Regional Transit Needs Assessments is still progressing forward, including attempts to resolve some modeling issues. This study looks at the connections from a regional transit perspective, both existing and 2050. The second study is the Future Corridors effort that Districts I and VII have been undertaking for approximately a year. This study has been incorporated into the efforts of the Florida Transportation Commission (FTC) as it relates to Florida's future corridors on a statewide basis. The corridor connections FDOT was examining were from Port Charlotte to Hernando County; Hernando County to Orlando; Heartland (S.R. 70 corridor across the State); Coast-to-Coast corridor; and Tampa to Jacksonville, which are all under consideration. They are discussing what the process will be to move forward. There are three key points: 1) concept phase; 2) feasibility stage; and 3) the Preliminary Design and Engineering (PD&E) phase. FTC would like to move forward with a pilot project to go through the various stages. Once the FTC study has been completed, FDOT will determine how to proceed with their study.

Mr. Howe noted the Sarasota/Manatee MPO, at their meeting on Monday, approved a resolution urging the Legislature to fund a visioning corridor study. Mr. Howe queried the status of the other studies, such as the Outer Beltway Study? Mr. Clifford responded there were nine corridors and the intent is to develop a process for any corridor to move toward implementation looking long term.

Mr. Pascoe suggested a presentation at a future meeting regarding the larger issues. Chairman Seel concurred that was a good idea and Mr. Clifford agreed.

**\*\*At this time, 1:50 p.m., Chairman Seel turned the chair over to Commissioner Mariano since she had to leave. Before she left, she noted this was her last meeting since the Pinellas County MPO will be electing a new Chairman and that she has enjoyed being part of the CCC the last two years, that it has been educational, and that the region is moving forward due to the coordination and communication.\*\***

#### **REGIONAL PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT**

Ms. Ward indicated the Regional Public Involvement was included in the packet. The evaluation of the previous Plan was reviewed at the last CCC meeting and now the updated Plan is before the CCC for approval. The update lays out the strategies to engage the public at a regional level.

*Mayor Bustle moved, Councilman Affronti seconded, and the motion carried to approve the Regional Public Involvement.*

**\*\*Mayor Bustle left at 1:53 p.m.\*\***

#### **SUNCOAST PARKWAY SCENIC HIGHWAY DESIGNATION – DEDICATION CEREMONY**

Mr. Pascoe indicated the scenic designation ceremony for the Suncoast Parkway was well attended. The ceremony was held near the boundary of Pasco and Hernando Counties. Joanne Hurley had spoke before the CCC regarding all the enhancements as part of the Suncoast Parkway. The CCC was instrumental in the construction of the Suncoast Trail. The next phase of the Suncoast Parkway (Phase II) would go through Citrus County, which has created controversy. The next phase of the Parkway also includes the continuation of the Suncoast Trail.

Ms. Stettner noted it was everyone's efforts that made the trail and scenic designation a reality and those efforts will continue.

Mr. Howe noted they are having the third anniversary of the Tamiami Scenic Highway Trail on U.S. 41, which runs from Hillsborough to Charlotte Counties. He queried how luncheons and dedications were paid for? Mr. Smith responded Pinellas County uses local funds to pay for meeting luncheons. Mr. Uden responded the Suncoast Scenic Trail dedication had sponsors help pay for the costs.

Ms. Ward stated the CCC put together a statewide Enhancement Application for the Courtney Campbell Causeway Trail Project. Staff had received word earlier this week that the Enhancement Application has been approved for the PD&E phase and FDOT will be taking the lead for the PD&E work.

#### **OTHER BUSINESS**

- **Pinellas County MPO Pedestrian Law Proposal**

Mr. Smith indicated there are a lot of issues relating to pedestrian safety, with Florida being Number 2 in the nation in terms of pedestrian fatalities, behind California. The MPO's Pedestrian Transportation Advisory Committee (PTAC), in reviewing how pedestrians cross roadways, noted the vehicle is to

yield to the pedestrian and it's not clear as to what "yield" means. The PTAC recommended that it be clearer

so the motorist is required to stop for the pedestrian in the crosswalk area. The MPO approved the recommendation and forwarded it to the Pinellas County Legislative Delegation. The recommendation is to change the State law to require the motorist to stop if a pedestrian is in the crosswalk where there is a walk sign and traffic signal or a signed crosswalk. Representative Richard Kriseman has agreed to sponsor the bill on the House side and Senator Mike Fasano has agreed to sponsor the bill on the Senate side. The proposal is moving forward and the Pinellas County MPO is seeking support and wanted to make the CCC aware that it is a statewide initiative.

Ms. Ward noted this recommendation was discussed at the MPOAC Policy Subcommittee and Howard Glassman asked that staff forward the proposal so he can track it.

Ms. Ayer noted that Hillsborough County is in the process of looking at transit and will be coordinating at the regional and statewide levels. Once she has more information, a presentation would be made to the CCC.

Representative Glorioso added that transit needs close regional coordination and cooperation and needs to be a seamless system from one county to another and that everyone needs to work together to develop such a seamless system for transit in the region. He noted the language for the Transportation Authority will replace the Transit Authority.

- **Next Meeting – March 9, 2007, Hernando MPO**

Chairman Mariano indicated the next meeting will be March 9, 2007, hosted by the Hernando MPO.

Mr. Pascoe stated that the Hernando MPO Chairman, Diane Rowden, conveys her apologies that she had a conflict and could not attend the CCC meeting but welcomes everyone to Hernando County.

Mr. Pascoe noted that the legislative session will be underway by the next CCC meeting and there might be a need to call a Special Meeting. Representative Glorioso added that all bills have to be filed before the session begins, which is the first Tuesday in March. Mr. Pascoe indicated Hernando MPO has agreed to host a Special Meeting if it's needed.

Mr. Howe confirmed that the CCC quarterly meetings are held the second Friday of the third month. Ms. Ward stated the 2007 CCC meeting schedule will be posted on the website.

## **ADJOURNMENT**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 2:02 p.m.