

**JOINT CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE
MINUTES - MEETING OF MARCH 1, 2005**

The Joint Citizens Advisory Committee met on Tuesday, March 1, 2005 at 4:00 P.M. in the Board Room of Clearwater Christian College, 3400 Gulf-to-Bay Boulevard, Clearwater, Florida.

MEMBERS PRESENT

Hillsborough County – Alan Steenson, Pat LeDuc

Pinellas County – Ned Allen, Karl Guenther

OTHERS PRESENT

Beth Alden – Hillsborough County MPO
Suzi Dieringer – Hillsborough County MPO Staff
Frank Kalpakis – U.R.S. Corporation
Lee Royal – Florida Department of Transportation, District 7
Ramon Solis – Pinellas County MPO

I. CALL TO ORDER

Mr. Allen, acting as chairman, called the meeting to order at 4:07 P.M.

II. INTRODUCTIONS

Committee members and other meeting attendees introduced themselves.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

The minutes of November 30, 2004 were corrected as follows:

- Page 2, Item V, Point 3, Bullet 1: "Tyrone Mall area, crossing **Alternate** U.S. 19"

The minutes were approved as corrected.

IV. UPDATE ON REGIONAL STUDIES BY FDOT

A. Regional Goods Movement Study

Frank Kalpakis of U.R.S. Corporation, a consultant to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), gave a presentation on the Tampa Bay Regional Goods Movement Study. This is a study of regional freight mobility looking at all modes of freight transportation within the Tampa Bay region. These modes include trucking, rail, shipping, seaports, and airports. The study is intended to identify what needs to be done to facilitate efficient freight mobility within the region without compromising personal mobility and other community assets.

The study encompasses an examination of the economic value of freight mobility to this region, evaluates regional freight movement, looks at emerging freight industry trends, and identifies

the regional freight activity centers and corridors. A regional goal is to create a seamless transport of goods on a multi-modal system. The study area includes District 7's five counties.

A major finding of the study thus far has been that the freight industry does not understand the transportation process, and planners don't understand the freight industry. There needs to be some way to integrate freight into the transportation planning process.

The projected increase in freight business in the area is 50% by 2025. The I-4 connector could benefit the region and solve some of the traffic problems.

A draft of the study is being finalized at this time.

B. The West Central Florida Outer Beltway Corridor Study

Lee Royal of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) reported that the Chairs Coordinating Committee had requested that the FDOT develop a scope and obtain a consultant to look at the impacts of a facility that would carry traffic around I-75. The contract for this Outer Beltway Study has been executed.

This will be feasibility study that encompasses all the counties of District 7 as well as Sarasota/Manatee Counties and Polk County, which are encompassed by the Chairs Coordinating Committee. By its completion, there should be an analysis that shows if such a corridor or alternative is feasible. There is no cost affordable project shown in the Regional Long Range Transportation Plan, and revenues have not been identified.

Ms. Royal noted that the Turnpike Enterprise is in preliminary discussions with Sarasota/Manatee on the analysis of an east-west type of travel corridor.

A question was asked about linking U.S. 19 with I-75 where it merges with I-275. The region could have a complete beltway with the exception of one small area where U.S. 19 meets the Pinellas/Pasco county line and where the merger takes place near New Tampa. If those areas could be linked, there would be a beltway. It would go around the bay, through the middle of Pinellas County, around Hillsborough County, and down to Manatee County. The northern part of the beltway could go into Pasco County. There is no east-west corridor in the northern areas of Hillsborough and Pinellas Counties where they meet Pasco County and where there is growth. Someone should look at this before the cost of land rises.

Ms. Royal responded that the concept could be part of the Outer Beltway Study and that she would forward the suggestion to the study group. She also noted that Pinellas County currently has under study the C.R. 296 connector and the 118th Avenue connector, which would connect U.S. 19 to I-275.

C. Strategic Regional Transit Needs Assessment

The Strategic Regional Transit Needs Assessment has just commenced and will last 18 to 24 months. This study will look at transit needs, infrastructure, systems, and operations in the region encompassed by the eight counties of the Chairs Coordinating Committee. The purpose is to establish a system than can be prioritized by regional needs. Goals and objectives are being determined. The study group will meet with stakeholders including regional transit agencies, local governments, and the MPOs. The CCC has done an extensive evaluation to develop a Regional Needs Plan and a Cost Affordable Plan.

V. REGIONAL CONGESTION MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

The goal of the Regional Congestion Management System is to increase mobility in congested corridors and to better utilize the existing system without widening roads. Intersection improvements and adding turn lanes are ways of meeting the goal.

The first step was to gather data and do a performance report on all the regional roads. With the help of Pinellas County staff, performance measures have been reviewed. Recommendations were made, and many of them were incorporated into the process to give a more multi-modal view of the system rather than focusing only on the road. Land use, transit, and pedestrian mobility are being examined.

The next step, with the help of a consultant, is to collect data, analyze the regional roads, and to prepare a performance report on the roads. When this is completed, congested corridors will be identified and strategies will be determined for making improvements without widening the roads. Following that, the programs will be implemented and the improvements will be measured for their effectiveness.

Mr. Allen noted that Pinellas County is considering its Pinellas Mobility Initiative, and this could be integrated into the study.

The study team will consider that an area may not have completed its development and may look different in five or ten years.

VI. UPDATE OF CCC PRIORITY LIST OF REGIONAL PROJECTS

The committee reviewed a Recommended Ranking of Regional High Priority Projects prepared by the MPO staffs of the eight participating counties of the West Central Florida Chairs Coordinating Committee. (The list mailed with the meeting packets was replaced by a list distributed at the meeting. No projects had been added or deleted, but some had been rearranged.)

All the projects came from the Interim Regional Long Range Transportation Plan. The projects are expected to be cost affordable by 2015. The first page showed 20 projects that were ranked. The second page showed 10 projects that were not yet ranked but will be when additional data are available. It shows the region's funding needs for projects.

When finalized, the list will go to the Chairs Coordinating Committee at their next meeting. It will then be sent to both state and congressional delegations.

Mr. LeDuc noted that Gandy Boulevard on the Pinellas side is on the list but that there is no Gandy Boulevard project on the Hillsborough side. Gandy Boulevard would be important to Pinellas residents during a hurricane evacuation. Regionally, the road needs to connect to the Crosstown Expressway in Tampa and to I-275. Currently, there are three connectors between two counties that have over 1 million residents each. Mr. LeDuc noted that businesses and residents on the Hillsborough side may oppose a Gandy Boulevard project. Nevertheless, it is an important safety issue.

ACTION: Mr. LeDuc moved that Gandy Boulevard between the Gandy Bridge and the Crosstown Expressway needs to be on the CCC Priority List of Regional Projects as an unranked high-priority project, in concert with Project #9 for Pinellas County, as a partially controlled access thoroughfare connecting the Crosstown Expressway to the Gandy Bridge. The motion was seconded and it carried.

ACTION: Mr. Guenther moved to accept the CCC Priority List of Regional Projects as presented, with the addition of the projects for Gandy Boulevard and I-75 to the unranked list. The motion was seconded and it carried.

ACTION: Mr. LeDuc moved to place on the unranked regional high priority list of projects the plan that presently exists to deal with the part of I-75 between S.R. 60 and Fowler Avenue. Mr. Steenson seconded the motion, and the motion carried.

VII. REGIONAL TASKS IN FY 2005/06 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM

The individual MPOs are developing the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to allocate planning funds to the programs that support all the studies needed to advance transportation projects in the plan. All of the MPOs in the region have added two regional tasks that would deal specifically with only the regional multi-modal transportation system.

The finalized UPWP will go to the MPOs later this month.

VIII. OTHER BUSINESS

A. Process to Add Transit, Multi-Use Trails, and GIS Committees to CCC Operating Procedures

At a meeting of the Regional Transit Committee, it was requested to add the names of the regional coordination teams to the CCC's operating procedures. At the time the operating procedures were drafted, it was unknown what committees might be needed.

ACTION: Mr. LeDuc moved to amend the CCC's operating procedures so that the CCC may appoint other committees on an ad hoc basis. Mr. Guenther seconded the motion. The motion carried unanimously.

B. Pasco County Citizen Participation

The committee discussed how to encourage the participation of other counties in the Joint CAC. Pasco County had been a charter member of the Joint CAC. Mr. Allen noted that the distance of the meetings makes participation inconvenient for some counties. Staff will return with some suggestions for increasing the participation of other counties.

C. Meeting Schedule

The Joint CAC's meeting dates for 2005 are March 1, May 31, August 30, and November 29. This schedule was established to have the committee meet ten days before Chairs Coordinating Committee meetings.

D. Member Comments

Mr. Steenson referred to an editorial from the *Tampa Tribune* in which U.S. Representative Don Young of Alaska, chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, was reported to be critical of this area during a recent visit here. Mr. Steenson further reported that from 1998 through 2003, Florida had received an average of 86 cents for every dollar in federal gas taxes it had collected and sent to Washington. Alaska got \$6.08 for every dollar it contributed. The chair of the Senate's Transportation and Infrastructure Committee is from Alaska. Florida needs to get back its fair share of tax dollars.

IX. ADJOURNMENT

There was no further business. The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.