



COUNTYWIDE BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN MASTERPLAN SCOPE OF SERVICES

Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization
1926 Victoria Avenue
Fort Myers, Florida 33901
www.mpo-swfl.org

January 2010

Introduction

Bicycle and pedestrian transportation issues have long been an important part of transportation planning efforts in Lee County, but previous Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPOs) Plans (included as an element in the Long Range Transportation Plan) have been limited to identifying bicycle and pedestrian projects on the state roadways. The purpose of the Plan is to effectively integrate bicycle and pedestrian travel on the County's transportation system while helping to create a more livable environment allowing for viable mobility choices for commuting as well as for recreational purposes. The Plan seeks to improve bicycle/pedestrian access to major trip attractions.

The goal of the Plan is to provide a safe accessible and connected bicycle/pedestrian system. The Countywide Plan is intended to give a blueprint for short term and long term improvements on the arterial and collectors throughout the County. Having the Plan will provide increased consistency and integration with other transportation and land use decisions and will open up funding opportunities we currently do not have access to. The Plan will incorporate the bicycle/pedestrian improvements identified in each of the local jurisdiction's plans (and will provide that information in one consolidated document) and then will move on to ensuring that connectivity and consistency is provided across the system. In addition, the development of the Plan will allow citizen input to help form the final product that will include easy to read and follow graphics and maps displaying the data and information.

The development of a County-wide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan will provide a more consistent network of facilities across jurisdictional boundaries, and will help build partnerships with other public agencies, non-profits, businesses and the public. It will also provide the local jurisdictions an opportunity to capture the bicycle/pedestrian box funding for high priority needs and will provide direction as to what bicycle/pedestrian facilities need to be included as projects move forward. In addition, this will allow more projects/facilities to be eligible for possible Enhancement Funding consistent with recent discussions by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to provide a certain amount of Enhancement Funding for regional projects. This will also put the MPO and the local jurisdictions in a better position when we are seeking various competitive funding sources.

The development of a Plan is an important step towards reducing single occupant vehicle travel on an increasingly constrained roadway network. Improvements to the bicycle and pedestrian network will provide opportunities to reduce congestion enhance multimodal convenience, comfort and connectivity and improve accessibility at land use destinations or transit stops for people of all ages and abilities. Other benefits of the Plan include the potential of new jobs, increased business at local bicycle/friendly businesses, enhance eco-tourism opportunities, promotion of healthier lifestyles within Lee County and its visitors and the reduction of congestion helping the environment. Finally, the implementation of the facilities will contribute to a better quality of life for the

residents and will help attract seasonal visitors and tourists related to it while proving a more livable community.

Within that context, it is important for the MPO to develop and maintain a countywide bicycle and pedestrian system plan that demonstrates how activities at the local, state and regional level are coordinated and leveraged to complement overall mobility objectives, economic opportunities and redevelopment efforts on arterials and collectors. This Plan will provide an inventory of existing and planned facilities and will synthesize the various bicycle and pedestrian activities relating to safety, connectivity, health, education and environmental concerns. In addition, the approach of this plan is consistent with Lee County Smart Growth and the Complete Streets Act of 2009, US Senate (S.584) and House (H.R 1443), <http://www.completestreets.org/> and the Florida Conserve by Bicycle Program. It will define program goals and objectives within an overall policy context, identifying key challenges, needs and opportunities for the efficient development of an effective bicycle and pedestrian system.

This Scope of Services describes the tasks to be completed by the Consultant to develop the Lee Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian System Plan in partnership with the Lee MPO and its member communities.

Work Scope

Task 1 – Data Collection, Inventory and Review

The first task in the project will be to take the existing bicycle and pedestrian databases and GIS maps that the MPO has collected from each of the jurisdictions in Lee County and to update this database with any existing changes. The intent is to produce a database that includes all of the facility attributes to establish minimum criteria for bicycle and pedestrian facility types. This includes paved shoulders, bike lanes, sidewalks, pathways, wide-curb lanes and also includes the width of facilities, type of surface, maintaining jurisdiction and whether they are signed and striped, etc. This data will have to be verified as some of it is now several years old and facilities have been added, removed or changed as new construction or widening has occurred. The end product will be a database of existing bicycle and pedestrian facilities on the arterials and collectors within Lee County. In addition, the MPO will provide a copy of the Lee County Greenways Master Plan. The Greenways Master Plan will need to be incorporated with other databases and maps relating to trail facilities from the local municipalities within Lee County. Any existing bicycle intermodal facilities should also be identified as part of this data collection activity.

Other documents and data to be obtained include the local jurisdictions bicycle and pedestrian plans (including the surrounding Counties of Hendry, Charlotte and Collier to ensure consistency of facilities across County lines), the local jurisdictions land development codes that relate to the construction and/or maintenance of facilities, local design standards for building facilities, comprehensive plan policies relating to bicycle and pedestrian facilities and their Capital Improvement Programs. The Consultant will also obtain the existing revenue information from the MPO and each of the jurisdictions that will be used to determine projects under Task 5 (the MPO staff will provide the information we have received from each of the jurisdictions).

With assistance from MPO staff to gather information, the consultant will obtain and review policies concerning bicycle and pedestrian facility design and safety from the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) and appropriate agencies, such as FDOT, the transportation policy of The School District of Lee County, and other local agencies. In addition this task will include the consultant obtaining and reviewing bicycle and pedestrian education programs in place within Lee County, whether through The School District of Lee County, the FDOT, counties or cities, law enforcement or emergency management agencies. Any existing use data should be sought through the schools, LeeTran, the local jurisdictions and the various Bicycle organizations. Consideration should be given to getting volunteers to collect data that can be used as part of this study or to doing a survey to help form some base use data. From this exercise, the Consultant should make recommendations on how to improve our data collection for use in any future amendments to this Plan. Also, GIS overlays of transit routes and stops, rail facilities, schools, colleges and universities, airports, water taxi, and the locations of large employers and attractions should be created within the Plan.

All data should be base year 2007, but incorporate projections up to the 2035 LRTP horizon year. Also, this data should include demographic data that would help us identify higher use and higher need areas. Zdata and SCE data should be taken into account to guide the type or types of facilities necessary within the county.

Task 2 – Review of Best Practices

An essential part of this project is assembling relevant national, regional and local information from various sources that provide a sense of context and connectivity for bicycle and pedestrian investments. This task will bring a broad national and state perspective to development of the plan, which will be complemented by the local policy framework, accomplishments and initiatives by the Lee County Department of Transportation and its municipalities.

State and National Perspective

The consultant will review and summarize trends, research findings, best practices and relevant studies at the statewide and/or national level that address the importance of walking and bicycling from a public health perspective, reduced vehicle miles of travel and enhanced community livability. Information from sources such as the Environmental Protection Agency, Centers for Disease Control, Florida Department of Health, Federal Highway Administration, Research Board, The Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations, Association of Pedestrian and Bicycle Professionals, and League of American Bicyclists will be reviewed and concisely summarized. As part of this task, the consultant will review information that identifies what other comparable areas to Lee County are undertaking to promote walking and bicycling, particularly from a safety, education and livable roadway/community design perspective. The consultant should also contact the local colleges, universities, chambers of commerce, bike clubs and bike stores for their input in best practices.

Local Perspective

The MPO and Lee County staff will provide the consultant with narrative describing the trail history in Lee County, major milestones in trail development, previous MPO bicycle

and pedestrian plans, regional trail plans and priorities and local projects or initiatives. Policies obtained and reviewed in **Task 1** will be used to help document the local context and summarize priorities to facilitate sidewalk and bicycle lane and off-the-road trail construction and network development.

Other central elements of the local perspective are the land use/development context and public involvement process. The consultant will summarize how the Long Range Transportation Plan and other planning documents relate to the need for an improved bicycling and walking environment, particularly with regard to continued development of the transit system and local redevelopment practices.

The local perspective, and input towards that, can be obtained from many different governmental and private entities including non-profits. Some suggested agencies/groups to contact (and to include in the Public Involvement) include: Visitors Bureau, Smart Growth Committee, the School Board, Lee County Sheriffs Office, the Health Department, LeeTran, the local jurisdictions within Lee County, Universities/Colleges, Chambers of Commerce, Southwest Florida Foundation, the Media, Bike Clubs and Bike Shops.

The product of this task summarizes the national and local perspectives on walking and bicycling, and provides the MPO with recommendations on what should be implemented.

Task 3 – Encouragement and Support of Bicycle and Pedestrian Activity

This task will involve a discussion of activities and strategies intended to encourage and support bicycle and pedestrian travel. It will start with a review of MPO objectives and policies to indicate what current strategies the MPO is pursuing to accomplish this objective. This includes current and future efforts to expand the existing network of bicycle and pedestrian facilities. This will be followed by a brief assessment of what is needed in the way of land development/redevelopment strategies.

Safety and education are key elements in the MPO's efforts to encourage and support bicycle and pedestrian activity. Regarding safety, due to the increasing occurrence of walkers and bicyclists having to interact with vehicular traffic at busy intersections and other street and driveway crossings, pedestrian and bicycle safety is increasing in importance, visibility and priority for many citizens and elected officials in Lee County. For this task, the consultant will document the efforts and discussions of MPO advisory committees (BPCC, TAC and CAC), NHTSA, the School District of Lee County, colleges and universities, FDOT, local law enforcement and emergency management concerning bike and pedestrian safety. The Consultant should also provide suggestions on how other areas have improved enforcement of traffic laws that help make biking and walking safer.

This task will focus on issues and activities related to visibility, safe design, driver education/training and cycling education. The consultant will review and summarize available crash data currently existing in electronic format obtained from sources in Lee County. From this task, the Consultant shall make recommendations on how we might improve the collection, use and sharing of this data. Lastly, this portion of the task will include a discussion and assessment of the MPO's current educational efforts to

promote safe pedestrian and bicycle travel, and recommendations on what the MPO should do to enhance these activities. The Consultant shall provide specific recommendations in the final documentation on how the MPO (Board, Committee's and staff) can encourage and support Bicycle/Pedestrian activities.

Task 4 – Develop the Bicycle/Pedestrian Needs Plan

This is the synthesis task for the project. The challenges, needs and opportunities will characterize and frame the continued development of the countywide bicycle and pedestrian system through planning and development trends, community outreach findings, policy imperatives and funding. For this task, the consultant will define the overall system objectives and priorities based on the findings in previous tasks. As appropriate, the consultant will prepare GIS maps indicating critical or high priority gaps in the development of the system from a continuity and land use perspective.

Policy similarities and conflicts will be identified, such as transportation concurrency or Land Development Regulation inconsistencies, how roadway design may favor automobile mobility versus livable community principles of walkability and access, and how funding priorities may be established in terms of school access on local streets versus bicycle and pedestrian treatments to county arterial facilities. The consultant will summarize challenges, needs and opportunities by community, as appropriate.

As part of this task, the consultant will incorporate alternative roadway design examples (illustrations, photos, typical sections, etc.) from other sources for use as case study examples. In addition, the consultant will offer some recommendations of land development and site design strategies needed to further the efforts of the MPO with regard to encouraging pedestrian and bicycling activity. Some discussion will be provided to indicate how the street and site design strategies described fit into the MPO's livable community objectives and the importance of these travel modes to achieve a quality experience in an urban environment.

As indicated previously, with the increasing occurrence of bicycle and pedestrian interaction with vehicular traffic in the county, there is a growing need to address the issue of providing opportunities for bicyclists and pedestrians to safely cross busy streets. This section will address this issue and offer recommendations for addressing it.

The end result of this task will be a comprehensive list of bicycle and pedestrian facilities needed to meet the existing and future demand. This list should be separated by jurisdiction (state, county and city) consistent with the way the LRTP currently lists road projects. This list shall include needed bike lanes, paved shoulders and sidewalks along with cost estimates to implement those projects (planning level costs based on local data). In addition, a second list of off-the-road pathways (essentially outside of road right-of-way) shall be developed that includes the Lee County Greenways Master Plan pathways, but also adds facilities that are planned or identified as Needs within the Cities. A third list should be created that shows connectedness, or lack thereof, of the bicycle/pedestrian facilities from jurisdiction to jurisdiction, and from county to county. Lastly, proposed bicycle parking facilities or where there is a need to provide facilities to connect to other modes should be identified to also be included within the Needs Plan.

Task 5 – Develop the cost feasible plan/master plan implementation

The consultant will develop a prioritization process that will be used to prioritize the Needs Plan projects as well as providing a methodology for the MPO to use in prioritizing the Bicycle/Pedestrian box funds. This prioritization process shall be vetted through the MPO staff and committees for approval. The Consultant will then develop a list of Cost Feasible projects based on the available revenues. In addition, the Consultant shall develop an updated Bike Map consistent with the current distributed map so that this can be used by the MPO staff to copy and hand out as needed.

Lastly, this section will include a discussion of FDOT and local policies and whether they are sufficient to accomplish the MPO's bicycle and pedestrian planning objectives, and what policy changes are needed for local planning efforts to be more effective. In addition, the Consultant shall suggest funding opportunities/possible dedicated funding sources that could be used to implement the Needs Plan projects to get a complete bicycle and pedestrian network. The Consultant should look at the NCSL report which provides many examples from other states. Finally, the Consultant shall provide quantitative performance measures that will be used by the MPO to meet our goals and objectives.

Task 6 – Public Involvement and Coordination

As part of this task, the consultant will participate in up to thirteen meetings with the MPO Board and its advisory committees. The timing of these meetings will be determined in conjunction with MPO staff; however, at a minimum they will involve at least four meetings with the Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinating Committee, and then two meetings with both the Technical Advisory Committee and the Citizens Advisory Committee to present initial findings and gather input on challenges, needs and opportunities. Two presentations are planned for the MPO board with the final adoption being a public hearing. Public involvement forums will coincide with at least two of the Bicycle Pedestrian Coordinating Committee meetings and at least two additional public meetings will be held to get input from the public including bike organizations, neighborhoods, school kids and other activists. The consultant will also meet up to five times with MPO and/or local agency staff to discuss data availability, project deliverables and milestones.

Task 7 – Jurisdictional Consistency

After developing the Plan, it will need to be adopted not only by the MPO Board, but by all local jurisdictions. The consultant will develop a process that outlines how all agencies within Lee County should update their individual Bicycle/Pedestrian Master Plans to become consistent with this multi-jurisdictional Plan, by providing standards, but also flexibility. Also, they will develop a process on how to keep these individual master plans consistent in the future (as well as keeping the base data up to date).

Task 8 – Documentation

The consultant will prepare a final report with an Executive Summary that provides a concise and visually appealing summary of the findings from each task, which clearly defines a countywide bicycle and pedestrian system. The Executive Summary should

be developed with the thought that it will be included as the Bicycle and Pedestrian Element of the Long Range Transportation Plan when this gets updated and adopted in December of 2010. In addition, a regional component map (one map of bicycle and pedestrian facilities and one map of off-the-road trail facilities) should be developed so that this can be used to help capture regional funding opportunities and be used in our regional coordination planning documents.

The report should generally follow the attached outline provided by MPO staff and will document work tasks, methods and products, highlighting the challenges, needs, opportunities and suggested remedies. The focus of the final report will be a synthesis of overall system development objectives, priorities and initiatives that blend local and regional perspectives. In addition to an Executive Summary, the final report will include an appendix with a glossary and map series showing the existing and planned facility network in relation to important trip generators/attractors, intermodal centers, etc. The draft report will be submitted to review in electronic format. Once the draft final report is reviewed and accepted by MPO staff, the consultant will provide 10 bound reports and one unbound report to the MPO, along with all electronic files (entire document, text, tables, maps and GIS shapefiles) that will be reviewed through the Committee's and the Board prior to the development of a final document that will approved through the Committee's and adopted by the Board.

The final documentation should include the bicycle/pedestrian facilities that are planned to be built throughout the County. This should also include funding information on how the local jurisdictions are funding those improvements. The final document shall include the maps and databases of the existing bicycle/pedestrian facilities, Needs Plan and Cost Feasible projects throughout the County. The documentation will also include recommendations on best practices, encouragement and support of the system, data collection policies and policies. The final document should also include what public involvement activities have occurred and the result of those activities. The final report should include graphs, tables illustrative diagrams to illustrate all of the components of the Plan. Finally, the source data used throughout the project will need to be provided in a file at the end of the project to the MPO for use in future amendments or updates.

Schedule

This project will need to be completed by December of 2010 to meet the LRTP schedule and to also match the LAP requirements for the SE funding. The consultant will be required to submit monthly invoices along with the supporting progress report.