



DRAFT
MEETING MINUTES
SOUTHEAST FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION COUNCIL
Friday, February 19, 2021, 11:00 a.m.
Virtual Meeting

Board Members Present

Chair Oliver G. Gilbert III, Miami-Dade TPO
Vice Chair Beam Furr, Broward MPO
Fred Pinto, Palm Beach TPA

Also Present

Sabrina Aubery, FDOT District 4
Aileen Boucle, Executive Director, Miami-Dade TPO
Bryan Caletka, Broward MPO
Paul Calvaresi, Broward MPO
David Clark, Broward MPO
Tewari Edmonson, Miami-Dade TPO
Wilson Fernandez, Miami-Dade TPO
Steven Grant, Mayor of Boynton Beach
Greg Stuart, Executive Director, Broward MPO
Nick Uhren, Executive Director, Palm Beach TPA
Jamie Opperee, Recording Secretary, Prototype, Inc.

Regular Items
(All Items Open for Public Comment)

1. Call to Order, Roll Call and Recognition of Quorum

Chair Gilbert called the meeting to order at 11:11 a.m. Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

2. Approval of Minutes – October 30, 2020

Motion made by Mr. Furr, seconded by Mr. Gilbert, to approve the minutes. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

3. Approval of Agenda

Motion made by Mr. Furr, seconded by Mr. Gilbert, to approve the Agenda. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

4. Public Comments

Steven Grant, Mayor of Boynton Beach, advised that the city has recently added funding for a Brightline station to its Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). He requested that SEFTC take an active role in communications between different municipalities and counties to achieve this goal.

Mr. Grant also addressed the proposed New River bridge crossing, stating that this is a multi-billion dollar project to move commuters across this bridge and recommending that the three South Florida transportation entities work together toward this goal. He concluded by noting Florida Statute 334.0.44, Section 26, which requires the state to put 1.5% of any new costs into landscaping; however, the state does not necessarily use these funds to immediately replace trees that have been removed for the construction of roads.

5. Comments from the Chair

None.

ACTION ITEMS

1. MOTION TO ELECT OFFICERS, Chair & Vice Chair, to Serve for the Next Year, February 2021 Through January 2022

Mr. Furr nominated Mr. Gilbert for Chair. In a voice vote, Chair Gilbert was unanimously reelected.

Mr. Gilbert nominated Mr. Furr as Vice Chair. In a voice vote, Vice Chair Furr was unanimously elected.

2. APPROVAL of the FY 2021-FY 2026 Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) List

Paul Calvaresi of Broward MPO Staff showed a PowerPoint presentation on the fiscal year (FY) 2021-2026 Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) list. He noted a number of formatting changes to the document, advising that all three county transportation entities are providing funds for South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA) rolling stock. The Regional Transportation Technical Advisory Committee (RTTAC) has created an ad hoc committee to consider how the TRIP process, including communications between the three transportation entities as well as the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and regional transit partners, can be improved.

Vice Chair Furr observed that SFRTA may develop its Coastal Link, in which case there will need to be significantly more rolling stock than what is funded in the current TRIP list. He asked if there have been any estimates on this amount so far. Aileen Boucle, Executive Director of the Miami-Dade TPO, stated that this organization is currently in negotiations with the Miami-Dade Board of County Commissioners. Information may be released once those negotiations are complete.

Vice Chair Furr pointed out that the Coastal Link will be a major joint effort among the three counties, and strongly recommended considering economies of scale so the counties can help one another. He spoke in favor of both dividing the costs between the three agencies and apply together for federal funds toward the project. He asked if there is a mechanism through which the agencies may work toward this goal together.

Ms. Boucle estimated that Miami-Dade can bring information to SEFTC and work collectively to share this information with the other agencies. Thus far, Miami-Dade County estimates that the total capital costs for the Miami-Dade portion of rolling stock will be approximately \$345 million, which includes commuter rail infrastructure, park and ride facilities, and maintenance facilities. She reiterated that the breakdown of rolling stock costs will be forthcoming.

Ms. Boucle continued that Miami-Dade's estimated annual costs for operations and maintenance will be roughly \$16 million per year, not including access fees, which are being negotiated at present. These costs, and the costs of rolling stock, apply from the Miami-Dade terminus through Aventura.

Greg Stuart, Executive Director of the Broward MPO, noted that the Broward segment of this link will be longer and more expensive than Miami-Dade's, and the Palm Beach portion will be the longest and most expensive of the three. He suggested that FDOT provide some background to SEFTC of where they were before progress on this project was halted to accommodate Brightline, as well as what is being done in Miami-Dade County to advance this project.

Vice Chair Furr emphasized the importance of being ready to proceed with this project once the Biden administration makes federal funding available. Mr. Stuart advised that the three counties should be in position to seek Infrastructure for Rebuilding America (INFRA) grant funds in 2022. If the counties miss the 2022 window, he felt it would be much more difficult to secure this funding, as elections may change the dynamic within the U.S. House and Senate. The transportation agencies will need to encourage FDOT Districts 4 and 6 to move more quickly through the Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) process in advance of a possible funding request. He recommended bringing FDOT into the next SEFTC meeting for further discussion.

Vice Chair Furr noted that the South Florida region is eligible for funds that single transportation agencies would not be able to access. Mr. Stuart confirmed this,

explaining that the entities receive a certain amount of funding together through a formula that divides these dollars between agencies. Their combined population provides more bargaining authority when making requests for federal funds.

Ms. Boucle advised that Miami-Dade, not FDOT, is leading the effort on environmental documentation, although FDOT is closely aligned with the TPO and will support federal grant requests submitted by Miami-Dade.

Motion made by Vice Chair Furr, seconded by Chair Gilbert, to approve the TRIP list. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Mr. Pinto asked if the TRIP list has been finalized or if there is a timeline for its finalization. Nick Uhren, Executive Director of the Palm Beach TPA, explained that the list includes new projects from each of the transportation agencies seeking TRIP funding between FY 2022 and FY 2026. The amount of funding requested significantly exceeds the funding available in the TRIP program. Entities may pursue additional discretionary grant funds whether or not their projects are on the TRIP list.

Mr. Stuart stated that when the 2045 Regional Transportation Plan (RTP) was finalized, it requested that the State Legislature give the region its share of funding and allow them to distribute these dollars among themselves. If the agencies' advocates to state government are successful, this would allow the amount of funding coming to SEFTC to increase. Ms. Boucle confirmed that regional needs will always exceed funding levels in every category, including not only TRIP but other discretionary funding sources.

Mr. Pinto asked if the TRIP list could be approved today and modified at a later date. Mr. Stuart replied that while this is technically done once per year, SEFTC may meet again to take additional action as needed. Mr. Calvaresi added that this is the purpose of the ad hoc committee, as the expectations for programs on the TRIP list are not clearly defined.

Mr. Pinto noted that three criteria must be satisfied for a project to be funded through the state's TRIP program:

- Project must be on the TRIP list
- Project must submit an application for TRIP funding to FDOT by Friday, February 26, 2021
- Project must have a bona fide commitment of local or SU matching funds

Mr. Pinto pointed out that the first two of these three criteria appear to be out of sequence, as the list being adopted prioritizes projects that may not have been submitted to the state's funding program(s) until next week. He felt it would be more practical to wait until after the submittal deadline to review the submitted projects for quality and constructability, and then put forward a prioritized list for adoption.

Mr. Pinto continued that SEFTC should meet again in March 2021 and see a presentation of the projects submitted to TRIP, including review and determination of those projects' constructability. Ms. Boucle advised that the agencies are very aware of the projects in their respective areas that are eligible for TRIP funds, as this funding category is restrictive and requires projects to include a regional aspect. Mr. Stuart added that while the TRIP list may be amended in the future, it is necessary to submit something to state funding sources now.

Mr. Pinto asked if it would be possible to postpone approval of the TRIP list until SEFTC's meeting in March 2021. Mr. Calvaresi stated that if approval is postponed, SEFTC would miss the deadline to submit TRIP projects.

Sabrina Aubery, representing FDOT District 4, explained that the 2021 cycle application for the TRIP list ends on March 1. This is the due date each year for projects to be submitted to the TRIP list. Local agencies should be working with their MPOs to submit projects for the TRIP list by this deadline.

Mr. Uhren observed that he has heard some local applicants for TRIP funding state that they will submit projects by the deadline, and that these projects be included on the TRIP list. He suggested that if SEFTC wishes to adopt the TRIP list at today's meeting, these applicants should still be afforded the opportunity to present their projects at next month's meeting.

Chair Gilbert asked if a project must be included on the TRIP list before an application is submitted, or if it can be added to the list after application. Ms. Aubery stated that a project must both be on the approved list and an application must be submitted before the March 1 deadline.

Mr. Uhren advised that he can make "placeholder" line item additions to the TRIP list if necessary to provide for greater flexibility, but would prefer at least one more week to work with prospective applicants. Mr. Stuart pointed out that the only years listed in the Work Program that are solid at this point are years one, two, and possibly three; projects in the later years could be added next year, as they are not imminent.

Mr. Uhren requested that the following two projects be added to the TRIP list:

- Flavor Pict Road from Lyons Road to Hagen Ranch: \$5 million is requested in FY 2024 and potentially additional funds in FY 2026 for construction
- State Road (SR) 80 street lighting from Belle Glade to County Road 880: \$6.5 million is requested in FY 2026, with the possibility of advancing this project into an earlier timeline

Motion made by Mr. Pinto, seconded by Chair Gilbert, [to add] these two projects. [The **motion** passed by unanimous consent.]

Motion made by Chair Gilbert, seconded by Vice Chair Furr, [to adopt] the TRIP list as amended. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Ms. Boucle stated that the Strategic Miami Area Rapid Transit (SMART) Plan was endorsed by SEFTC as a regional plan, as four of the six SMART Plan corridors cross regional boundaries to the north and south. Miami-Dade would like to program a regional demonstration project on the North and Northeast Corridors through Miami Gardens Drive and further west. They will work closely with FDOT to submit joint prioritization on their priority list later in 2021, and welcomes the opportunity to amend the TRIP plan as this project is developed. The demonstration project is currently in the planning stage.

NON-ACTION ITEMS

1. 2045 Regional Transportation Plan Outreach Update

Mr. Calvaresi recalled that over summer 2020, FDOT adopted a Florida Transportation Plan (FTP) which includes their policy statements. These policies are significantly more comprehensive than SEFTC's plans, although there are several aspects of the SEFTC plan that line up with the FTP.

The 2045 RTP update takes a targeted approach to address specific items with specific organizations and/or individuals. The message is tailored toward each potential audience, with individualized PowerPoint presentations and a website, MoveFloridaForward.org. He emphasized the importance of continuing the momentum of outreach efforts through 2021, including use of communications technology to meet with Florida legislators.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

1. Member Comments

There being no further business to come before the Council at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 11:58 a.m.

NEXT MEETING: April 30, 2021