



Project Advisory Group (PAG) Meeting # 11 Final Meeting Notes

Attendees: **PAG Members**

Date: December 9, 2015
Time: 1:30 pm – 3:30 pm

1. Joe Bitar, FDOT
2. Sam Weekley, FDOT
3. Lois Bollenback, R2CTPO
4. Vinny Wang, R2CTPO
5. Pedro Leon, Daytona Beach International Airport
6. Carleen Flynn, LYNX
7. Heather Blanck, VOTRAN
8. Jeff Hopper, Seminole County
9. Mike Cash, City of Sanford
10. Jon Cheney, Volusia County
11. Doug Gutierrez, City of Daytona Beach
12. Ron Paradise, City of Deltona

Consultant Team to FDOT

- Ralph Bove, Parsons Brinckerhoff
- Chuck Hymes, Parsons Brinckerhoff
- Adriana Rodriguez, Parsons Brinckerhoff
- Ginger Corless, Tindale Oliver
- Pat Northey, Ghyabi & Associates (FDOT Public Information Liaison Contract)
- Jamie Snow, AECOM

Place: FDOT D5
Materials Office - Sailfish Room
1650 North Kepler Road
DeLand, FL 32724

Project No.: 173970A
Re: Volusia Transit Connector Study
Project Advisory Group Meeting #11

Prepared by: Ginger Corless

NOTE: These meeting notes are Parsons Brinckerhoff's attempt at capturing the key discussion points, decisions, action/follow up items, and resolutions discussed at the meeting. If you would like to clarify or comment on any point, please notify Alan Danaher by phone (407-587-7835) or email (danaher@pbworld.com) within 48 hours of this email distribution. ***If no comments are received within 48 hours, these meeting minutes will be assumed to serve as the official meeting record.***

Meeting handouts:

- PAG Meeting #11 Agenda and Presentation
- Larger Project Notebooks (for those that needed them)

Meeting highlights

Welcome

Joe Bitar welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked for a round of introductions. Joe stated we are in the final stages of the project and today, input is needed to determine what the steps are moving forward, while trying to provide a benefit to Volusia County and the communities within the Study Area.

Ralph Bove then reviewed the meeting agenda and the format for the presentation.

PowerPoint Presentation & Related Discussion

1. FOLLOW-UP ACTION ITEMS FROM LAST MEETING (slide 3)

Ralph reviewed the status of the action items identified from the October 21st PAG meeting:

- Prepared for upcoming meetings – Completed

2. RESULTS OF NOVEMBER PUBLIC MEETINGS (slides 4-10)

- Ralph discussed the attendance (78 total) and felt that it may have been lower due to the information regarding the funding issues with SunRail Phase II coming out at the same time.
- He then reviewed the highlights from each of the meetings (Daytona Beach, DeLand and Deltona).
- The project team, upon request by the Halifax Council of the Blind, made a presentation of the alternatives. Concerns were voiced that the Rail alternative may not be as accessible to the transportation disadvantaged. This group strongly supports improvements to Votran bus service.
- There were similar comments derived from all meetings; however, in Deltona there was a strong opinion that the alternatives did not properly serve the City of Deltona.
- Based on the comments received there were clear common themes:
 - Need to enhance overall local bus service
 - People preferred rail but were concerned with the ability to fund this alternative
 - Consider starting small and phasing the project (i.e., local bus service improvements, BRT, then Rail)
- Based on the results of the technical analyses conducted to date, and in consideration of public and public agency input it appears that an Implementation Strategy needs to be developed to be presented to the County Council and the R2CTPO.

3. UPDATE ON REFINED ALTERNATIVES (slides 11-33)

- Ralph did a quick review of this section for most of the information had been presented in earlier presentations.
- Ralph informed the group that the Conceptual Definition of Alternatives document had been prepared and submitted to the Department for review (this document was passed around the table). This document has a series of alignment plans for both the BRT and the Rail. Station Plans are also shown with platform layout and also existing land use within ½ mile of the station. He stated that once the Department has reviewed, it would be posted on Project Solve.
- The feeder bus improvements for both the BRT and Rail were reviewed.
- Ralph provided an update on work that had been completed since the last PAG meeting including updated capital and O&M costs, ridership projects and FTA project justification (starting on slide 19).
- The capital costs have been updated to include right-of-way (ROW) costs for both alternatives (see slide 21). The ROW costs were provided by the Department in a lump sum for each alternative, not on a parcel by parcel basis.
- On slide 21, Refined O&M Cost Estimates in Millions, there was a question to clarify that the total O&M costs were annual costs. Ralph stated that they were for the first year and assumed to be annual.
- Ridership was reviewed (slides 24-26). There were several comments made regarding the slides as summarized below:
 - Ron Paradise requested an overview of the methodology used in determining ridership. This was provided by Ralph and Jamie Snow (AECOM). Ron stated that based on his understanding the future changes to land use were not considered and the answer was, that was correct.
 - Lois Bollenback stated that if we wanted to increase ridership we needed to change future land use to increase intensity/density in areas served by the system.
- Ralph then discussed slide 26, Ways to Increase Transit Ridership.
- Slide 27, Preliminary Traffic Impact Assessment was reviewed.
 - Lois requested more information on this assessment. She stated that perhaps the different agencies could start programming the improvements to assist with improving the impacts and setting the stage for the future transit improvements.
 - Ralph informed the group the assessment would be posted to Project Solve once reviewed by the Department.
 - Jon Cheney asked for the list of proposed improvements to be resent to him as an attachment, not imbedded in the email.
- The FTA New/Small Starts Evaluation Criteria and Major Ratings were reviewed (slides 28-33). A few of the highlights are as follows:
 - In order to achieve an Overall Rating of Medium, FTA requires a medium rating for both project justification and local financial commitment.
 - Slide 32, the project team is still working on determining the rating for the Economic Development criterion for the Project Justification Rating Assessment.
 - Slide 33, the project team is still working on determining the rating for the Commitment of Capital and Operating Funds and Reasonableness of Capital and Operating Cost Estimates and Planning Assumptions/Capital Funding Capacity criterion for the Local Financial Commitment Rating Assessment.

4. NEXT STEPS (slides 34-38)

- Ralph reviewed the project team's initial thoughts on building an Implementation Strategy. (see slides 35-38)

5. SCHEDULE (slide 39)

- Complete Refined Alternatives Evaluation (December)
- Develop Draft Implementation Strategy in January
- Next PAG Meeting, January 27, 2016 (same location)
- February/March 2016 - Elected Officials Briefings

6. DISCUSSION

Ralph facilitated a discussion regarding building the Implementation Strategy. The group was actively engaged in the discussion. Notes were taken on a large notepad and hung on the wall for review. The following summarizes the discussion notes.

- We need to identify and then start reserving the "transit corridors" or alignments
- Evaluate the ability to breakdown the project into smaller projects, still realizing the ultimate project and present to FTA that way
- Identify MOT and TSM&O projects to improve overall congestion and assist with local bus headways, especially on the ISB and 17/92 corridors. Ideas included:
 - Temp BAT lanes (south side)
 - For special events
 - Eliminating multiple driveways on ISB (north side)
 - Further evaluate the effects and access on adjacent population
- Use ITS and Virtual Messaging Systems to provide advance warning of congestion and special event notices.
- The expanded use of the Speedway was discussed so that all participants understood that the issues were not rare, but frequent, and would be increasing.
- The group felt it was important for the elected officials and the R2CTPO to be informed of the true costs, and that conversations would need to be held regarding what projects may need to be given up to achieve the enhanced transit system.
- Votran existing (\$20-23 million) and the proposed O&M costs of the alternatives were discussed. The question needs to be asked "Is it fair for the amount of community being served?"
- The importance of seeking political support and maintaining political resolve over a long period of time was discussed.
- There was a lengthy discussion on the ability to phase the project into different BRT projects, and present to FTA or to local officials to be able to secure funds. FTA restrictions and revaluation will be evaluated as the Implementation Strategy is further defined. Look at early wins.
 - ISB would be an easy win on the east side due to densities and highest ridership, including special events.
 - 17-92 from DeBary to DeLand on the west
 - SR 472 has opportunities to expand to Deltona

- When phasing is evaluated, need to take into consideration how FTA looks at competing projects such as the BRT on 17-92 and SunRail Phase 2 north.
- Funding strategies for operating funds must be included in the Implementation Strategy. Some of the strategies discussed included:
 - Traffic operations funding
 - SIS funding
 - Congestion Management
 - Operating Revenue
 - TIFF
 - Look at how others have used alternative funding such as Tri-Rail for operations
 - Sales Tax
- There was a question asked by Jon Cheney if anyone saw any fatal flaws in how the County Council will perceive the the Implementation Strategy.
 - There was discussion that the Implementation Strategy must be clear on providing options to the Council and others on implementation including the following.
 - Must include strategies and specific actions on how to address employments centers, infill land use and land development code in areas served by the system (TOD).
 - Economic and redevelopment stimulus ideas are needed to encourage TOD development in the corridor
 - The plan needs to be flexible and have the ability to change as opportunities for implementation may change over time
 - Fatal flaw would be if local officials are not willing to make the land use changes necessary to increase intensity/density which will result in an increase in potential ridership
 - Need to have infrastructure to support land use changes such as water and sewer (Orange City was given as an example)
- Pat Northey summarized the discussion, “We need to provide the elected officials with a road map to where we need to go in implementing an enhanced transit system. We need to identify strategies and tools that we can start to put in place now to someday realize the full potential of the project.”
- There was an overall consensus to move forward with building an Implementation Strategy as discussed.

7. FOLLOW-UP ACTION ITEMS

1. Jon Cheney asked for the list of proposed improvements to be resent to him as an attachment, not imbedded in the email.
2. Post the Conceptual Definition of Alternatives Report on Project Solve, once approved by the Department
3. Send out PAG meeting invite for January 27, 2016 at the FDOT Kepler Road facility.

cc: Attendees
Other Invitees Unable to Attend
Parsons Brinckerhoff File #173970A