

Meeting Summary
SWFRPC Technical Stakeholders Committee
Regional Component of LeeTran VCLI Grant Project
March 10, 2014

Attendees:

Jerry Conway	Commander Disabled American Veterans (DAV), Cape Coral
Julia Davis	Good Wheels
John Ebling	Lee County Veteran Services
Wayne Gaither	LeeTran Planning Department
Linda Hafner	United Way 211
Johnny Limbaugh	Lee County MPO
Deborah Reardon	CareerSource Southwest Florida
Debi Stephens	FDOT Southwest Area Office – District One

Staff

Sean McCabe	SWFRPC
Margaret Wuerstle	SWFRPC

Agenda Item #1: Welcome and Introductions

Meeting called to order by Sean McCabe at 3:05 pm; attendees introduced themselves.

Agenda Item #2: Overall Project Update from LeeTran Perspective, Mr. Wayne Gaither

Mr. Gaither provided an overview of the project, and explained the roles of LeeTran and the SWFRPC.

Agenda Item #3: Planning Efforts for Regional Coordination Study - Ms. Margaret Wuerstle

Ms. Wuerstle provided a status update on the regional planning council's component of the grant research; she stated that the focus at this point was reviewing the draft report.

Agenda Item #4: Draft Plan Review – Mr. Sean McCabe

a. Format and Content

Mr. McCabe explained the current format of the report, and provided a summary of the contents and findings of the report. He then asked for assistance from the group, in the form of suggestions for revising the report's format and organization, revising or adding to the report's findings, removing parts of the report that are not relevant to the study, etc.

Recommendations for improving the format of the report:

- Increase size of the maps.

- Attempt to address the blank spot on the Veterans maps north of Immokalee (pg. 11-12); for purpose of this study, can state something like “data not available”, but try to get Census Bureau to fix data gap for future studies.
- Amend the general transportation summary table by moving information from footnotes into the body of the text.
- Send descriptions of individual county transportation departments to those entities for review.

b. Regional Transportation Gaps

Mr. Gaither provided an update on proposed connectivity between Lee, Collier, and Charlotte counties:

- Lee and Collier have a potential solution for continuing the LinC route between Lee and Collier counties, contingent upon support from participating entities;
- A potential connection between Lee and Charlotte counties is being evaluated; Lee County is looking at sites that could be used as a park and ride location, which could subsequently become a transfer site between Charlotte and Lee County;
- No connections are currently being planned between Lee and Hendry counties, or for a connection with Immokalee in Collier County along SR 82.

c. Regional Transportation Solutions

A frequently mentioned issue in the survey was difficulty getting to and from VA medical facilities.

Various parties provided an explanation of the VA-DAV Volunteer Transportation Network (VTN). The DAV has a partnership with Ford Motor Company to provide the DAV with vehicles. If a particular area needs a van, that area is responsible for doing the fundraising for the vehicle; the funds are given to a local DAV chapter, which initiates the vehicle order through DAV’s national headquarters. The vehicle is then given to the VA, which pays for the licensing, insurance, and other vehicle maintenance costs.

Lee County MPO recently completed a rail feasibility study for utilizing the Seminole Gulf Railroad for passenger rail service; the study evaluates the possibility of establishing passenger rail service between Southwest Florida counties. If purchased, the rail line could provide fixed route passenger service from Collier County through Charlotte County, through DeSoto County, up to Arcadia. Sarasota County has already purchased part of the rail line for use as a trail. The study is available from the Lee County MPO web site: <http://www.leempo.com/RailStudy.shtml>.

d. Additional information

Regional transit coordination: the transit systems and MPOs hold joint meetings to coordinate planning efforts.

Agenda Item #5: Questions, Comments, Concerns

Mr. Gaither asked if SWFRPC would schedule another meeting of transportation entities in the region to discuss the study; staff agreed to schedule the meeting.

Agenda Item #7: Next Meeting of Stakeholder Committee

The next and final meeting of the Technical Stakeholders Committee will be held on May 5, 2014.

Agenda Item #8: Adjournment

Meeting adjourned at 4:20 p.m.