Draft Meeting Summary

Representatives of FDOT District 4 engaged in a series of listening sessions with local governments and transit agencies in late September as part of the I-95 Corridor Mobility Plan.

FDOT met with representatives of the City of Pompano Beach on September 23. The group discussed the various strategies the City’s departments are undertaking in pursuit of its land use and transportation goals and the indicators they are currently using (or hope to use in the future) to track success.

# Key Themes and Takeaways

* The City is undertaking corridor studies along Atlantic Boulevard, Dixie Highway, and Federal Highway that will look both at transportation and land use. These studies will help set the redevelopment and revitalization framework for the future of the corridors and provide a citywide system perspective across multiple corridors.
* The City already has taken steps in its Community Redevelopment Areas (CRAs), particularly near Old Pompano and along East Atlantic Boulevard near the beach, to create a pedestrian friendly downtown.
* Pompano Beach’s large industrial area is economically important for the City. It significantly increases the City’s daytime population, and the City envisions a more housing/employment balanced future.
* As part of its vision for the City, the CRA pursued a Trafficways Plan Context Sensitive designation for Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard. It is the first such designation in the county.
* Similarly, as part of the corridor studies, the City will be pursuing a lane reduction on South Dixie Highway and is in the middle of FDOT’s lane elimination process. On East Atlantic Boulevard, the City leveraged an FDOT project to enhance the streetscape and improve sidewalks and bike lanes.
* The City does not explicitly track performance measures; however, measures could include: plans and studies that have been completed, completion rates of plans/project lists, vacancy rates, community appearance, and the amount and quality of destinations in the City (places to go and things to do).
* The City is taking the land use steps necessary to prepare for a proposed FEC station near the current BCT transfer center. They have adopted a Transit Oriented Corridor (TOC) future land use designation, undertaken massing studies, and created form-based zoning regulations for the area. To help the community visualize the future, a three-dimensional model is being created.
* The City believes it has good working relationships with transportation planning agencies, as demonstrated by the Context Sensitive designation and other project partnerships. Coordination with neighboring cities could be enhanced.

# Action Items

* FDOT will revise the Aspirational Future Scenario Map to include the missing TOC within Pompano Beach.
* FDOT will provide the City with information about the proposed walls associated with the I-95 Managed Lanes PD&E Study.
* FDOT will investigate and provide landscaping plans for the entire segment of I-95 within the City’s boundary.

# Participants

* Jennifer Barrow, FDOT District 4, Complete Streets Coordinator
* Robin Bird, City of Pompano Beach, Director of Development Services
* Chris Clemens, City of Pompano Beach, Planning and Zoning
* Karen Kiselewski, Renaissance Planning Group, Project Manager
* Amanda Parker, City of Pompano Beach, Planning and Zoning
* Pete Schwarz, Broward County Planning Council
* Tom Turberville, FDOT District 4, Strategic Intermodal System & Concept Development

# Discussion

After an initial overview of the I-95 Corridor Mobility Plan project and status update, FDOT representatives and project team members engaged the representatives from the City of Pompano Beach in a dialogue on the City’s vision, strategies, and indicators.

## Current Initiatives & Strategies

### Corridor Studies

The City is conducting corridor studies to examine their major corridors from system and corridor level perspectives. The City made a substantial investment in the creations of visions and action plans of the first three corridors. The corridor studies along Atlantic Boulevard, Dixie Highway, and Federal Highway are economic development driven and look both at transportation and land use.

A purpose for the studies is to outline the City’s vision for the future so that private development can support the vision and plan, instead of the City letting the market dictate future development. Identifying opportunities to incentivize appropriate development is the next step and could include preparing future land use amendments, providing infrastructure, and revising land development regulations. The City is taking an attitude typically reserved for Community Redevelopment Areas (CRAs) and applying it elsewhere, albeit with a different tool set. Development projects need to be integrated into the City, and the City’s philosophy is to seek solutions that are attainable in this regard.

### Infill and Redevelopment

Pompano Beach is growing in population, and some of its older areas are 40 years old. As redevelopment occurs to accommodate the population growth, the City anticipates that property values in the eastern part of the City will continue to rise, and the central part will continue to be “affordable.”

Pompano Beach is already “built out.” New development within the City will need to be infill development or redevelopment. Consolidating and combining properties is a strategy the City is trying to promote, and the City just initiated a process for doing so with Broward County.

Also, as mentioned below, the City seeks more density at locations to be supportive of transit. In particular, they will be looking for additional housing to be built and for parcels to redevelop into more vertical and horizontal mixed uses.

### Transit and TOD

The City realizes that transit will be a key asset for the future, and the City is “involved in getting mass transit to work” from a land use perspective. City staff believe Atlantic Boulevard could qualify for trolley or light rail service, and they envision a transit loop for Sample Road, Dixie Highway, and Powerline Road in the future.

The City wants to see more TOD, but is “unclear about gearing up for it.” The ocean is still Pompano Beach’s number one attraction, and the “East” along Federal Highway is the new destination. Pompano Beach wants to encourage the density to support transit. Pompano Beach has a lot of residential areas with a very diverse population – a prime “workforce,” but not as much employment. The City would like to see a better balance between employment and residential uses.

The City has designated the area near Atlantic Boulevard and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard/Hammondville Road east of I-95 and beyond Dixie Highway as a TOC for the future FEC rail station. However the I-95 Mobility Plan Aspirational Future Scenario Map does not show this TOC.

The City continues to operate a community bus and recently received a grant to investigate an additional route on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard, State Road 7, and Sample Road, linking the various education facilities and nearby neighborhoods. The City is working with MPO that will manage the study.

### Complete Streets

Pompano Beach is embracing the Complete Streets movement, and staff are working to better “manage the scale of its streets.” The City is examining elements like block size, right-of-way width, and circulation for all modes. On example of a finished Complete Streets project is East Atlantic Boulevard. The City also has plans for Complete Streets projects along Riverside Drive, Briny Avenue, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. The latter road was the first facility to be designated a Context Sensitive Corridor by the Broward County Planning Council, which was a first step in being able to implement the changes.

The City is “desperately looking” at lane reductions on Dixie Highway to help businesses. The businesses have rented the FEC right-of-way behind many of these businesses for parking as a result of losing parking when Dixie Highway was widened. The City is working through FDOT’s lane elimination process.

Another road the City would like to see reconfigured is East Copans Road. City staff believe this road could be narrowed, but would need to think ahead for the trolley system. The City also is looking at connecting streets that would allow for multimodal movement without accessing the major arterials. Examples include reinventing 2nd and 4th Streets and Racetrack Road.

The City wants to be clear in what it wants when talking with FDOT and Broward County. However, sometimes the planning timing has been a challenge. Also, coming up with funding to support the desired streetscaping can be daunting.

### Changes in Housing and Land Use

The City acknowledged that the Comprehensive Plan and CRA master plans convey the City’s vision for the future. Some focus areas are:

* City staff desire to be able to convert rental housing back to owner occupied housing. Owner occupied units are a way to increase value, especially with vertical housing.
* The City is moving from a typical suburban model to a more urban model for residential neighborhoods, which changes the character of its neighborhoods.
* Eastern Pompano Beach has the advantage of being east of I-95, and the City is trying to make its western neighborhoods updated and contemporary.
* Pompano Beach’s industrial area increases the City’s daytime population. The City would like to better balance housing and employment, to “get people to stay” and not just as users but as contributors.
* City staff mentioned its Aging in Place Program and referenced the mixed use solutions it is promoting, such as in the Collier City Master Plan.
* The land uses along US 1 are “over-retailed” with examples like Ford and LA Fitness. There is a need for housing in this area.
* City staff noted that the dwelling units in dense developments have stayed in good condition, but “smaller ones” that are only a block or two in size are in decline. City staff attribute this to economies of scale.

### Public Art

Pompano Beach has a public art committee, which has installed art in public places. A master plan for this committee is underway. Public art and other corridor improvements are seen as a strategy to reinvigorate interest in the corridors, primarily interest in improving private properties.

### Beach Redevelopment

The City of Pompano Beach developed a master plan for its Beach CRA, which won the support of the Broward County Planning Council for its comprehensive approach. The City is working on redeveloping this area. Sidewalk reconstruction is complete; pier reconstruction is underway. The City adopted a land use plan amendment for pier parking to allow retail, commercial, and hotel uses. The Beach CRA is using different tools to handle redevelopment.

## Challenges

### Too Many Master Plans

The City has developed many different plans and studies and needs to take steps to implement them. The new City Manager is reorganizing and focusing on all the plans and studies to ensure follow through in a coordinated manner.

Funding is always an issue in trying to make improvements, especially in areas without dedicated CRA funding. The City will be hiring a grant writer with the intent of obtaining more funding for various projects.

Planning staff is busy focusing on doing the day-to-day work and it is difficult to take the time to look longer term or big picture. There are constant distractions, and the City working to make projects and processes more user friendly and easier to manage. The City also is fortunate that it has a capital improvement reserve that has allowed it to undertake the corridor studies and zoning code revisions.

City staff noted that it is important for staff to have a vision for the future and have vision about innovative ways to achieve it. Cities are never stagnant; they either continue to redevelop and evolve or lapse into decline.

## Indicators of Success

City staff admitted they do not use quantitative measures. Anecdotally, they look at plans that have projects with dates, and some of these projects have been implemented. The City is reviewing these types of plans, and could calculate some type of measure, such as 20 percent of the projects within 30 years have been implemented, as an example.

The City Commission looks at certain indicators such as vacancy rates, overall appearance, and destinations – places to go and things to do.

The City just finished developing a strategic plan. The City adopted the strategic planning process and hopes to revisit the reporting of the strategic plan on an annual basis to track implementation and achievement of the goals.

## Strategies for Implementation and Coordination

The City noted that it has a good rapport with FDOT and the MPO. Good coordination between the City, FDOT, and the MPO has resulted in improvements on Atlantic Boulevard and US 1, and continued maintenance of the entryways at Copans Road and Atlantic Boulevard. The City did express a desire for a southbound Florida’s Turnpike sign indicating an exit to Pompano Beach. (It currently mentions Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard and Coconut Creek.)

The City continues to improve corridors as it can afford them. It took them nearly 15 years to get Harbor Drive built, for example.

The City noted the need for a good plan “going in” because the public and private interests will attempt to detract from it over time. Similarly, the City sees enforcement as an important tool to maintain community appearance standards and ensure compliance to development codes.

City staff identified challenges in aligning funding with planning and forecasting. The City does not think a project is “real” until time of permit. However, many transportation planning agencies need commitments earlier as projects are identified and phased into work programs and plans.

Another challenge is a lack of communication, especially if there is turn over in the City Commission or with staff. The strategic plan recently adopted is meant as a mechanism to address the institutional knowledge problem.

# Strategies and Indicators

The following tables list the strategies and indicators that the City of Pompano Beach mentioned throughout the listening session.

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| Strategies |
| System-Wide   * Hire a grant writer to pursue funding opportunities * Clearly specify the City’s vision for future development and create visual representations * Create corridor master plans that address transportation and land use * Balance employment and housing, modifying land uses as appropriate * Use CRA redevelopment techniques, to extent feasible, everywhere * Create a strategic plan and use to drive budget and goal setting   Facilities   * Plan corridor revitalization and infrastructure improvements as can afford them   Places   * Create TOD supportive land use and form-based zoning regulations in preparation for premium transit service * Use code compliance and enforcement to ensure regulations are adhered to (particularly, to maintain landscaping, facades several years after installation) * Capitalize and leverage on assets (e.g. the beach) * Increase density and encourage mixed uses |

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| Indicators |
| Quantitative   * Vacancy rates * Number of plans completed * Percentage of plans implemented   Qualitative or Anecdotal   * Overall community appearance * Quantity and quality of destinations in the City |