Draft Meeting Summary

Representatives of FDOT District 4 conducted a series of listening sessions with various planning partners in Fall 2013 as part of the I-95 Corridor Mobility Plan.

FDOT met with representatives of the Broward County Planning Council (BCPC or Planning Council) on October 30. The group discussed the various goals and challenges of the BCPC, the strategies and efforts the Planning Council is undertaking, potential indicators to measure success of their goals and strategies, and coordination efforts with other planning partners.

# Key Themes and Takeaways

* BCPC’s strategies are mainly driven by the municipalities, and many are focused on promoting mixed use.
* The Planning Council is working on transitioning the Mixed Use future land use category to a Multimodal category that moves away from a transit-only focus to one that incorporates bicyclists and pedestrians as well as transit.
* With the new Multimodal future land use category, the Planning Council hopes to set up a policy where developers can receive some sort of ‘credit’ in the land use amendment process to redevelop in these areas. The Planning Council is looking at both multimodal level of service and land use impacts.
* The Planning Council is working with Broward County staff to establish a Speakers’ Bureau as a broad outreach campaign on quality of life.
* The Broward County Commission waived the fee for an amendment to the Trafficways Plan for two years to encourage local governments to request a Context Sensitive Solutions designation supporting the Complete Streets Guidelines. The Planning Council has received one application to date: MLK/Hammondville Road in Pompano Beach.
* BCPC sees its role mainly as a coordinator for the local governments with Broward County and the MPO, and has established good working relationships with the County and the MPO.
* BCPC mainly looks at challenges encountered in land use amendments and the goals, objectives, and policies within the Broward County Comprehensive Plan as indicators of success.

# Action Items

* BCPC staff will share the map of mixed use areas and future transit with FDOT staff and the I-95 project team. BCPC will consider posting this map to their website.

# Participants

* Barbara Blake Boy, Broward County Planning Council, Executive Director
* Lois Bush, FDOT District 4, Policy Planning Section Leader
* Ivan Cabrera, Broward County Planning Council, Assistant Planner
* Jessica Dimmick, Renaissance Planning Group, I-95 Corridor Mobility Plan Project Team
* Matthue Goldstein, Broward County Planning Council, Associate Planner
* Karen Kiselewski, Renaissance Planning Group, Project Manager
* Pete Schwarz, Broward County Planning Council, Planning Manager
* Dawn Teetsel, Broward County Planning Council, Associate Planner
* Deanne Von Stetina, Broward County Planning Council, Director of Planning

# Discussion

After an initial overview of the I-95 Corridor Mobility Plan project and status update, FDOT representatives engaged the participants from BCPC in a dialogue on the Planning Council’s vision, goals, indicators, and coordination efforts.

## Strategies and Efforts

The Broward County Planning Council’s strategies are mainly driven by the municipalities, and the Planning Council staff sees their role as primarily coordinating amongst the municipalities and Broward County in a bottom-up approach as opposed to top-down. Many of their current strategies are focused on promoting mixed use.

### Multimodal Future Land Use Designation

The Planning Council is working on transitioning the Mixed Use future land use category to a Multimodal category that moves away from a transit-only focus to one that incorporates bicyclists and pedestrians as well as transit. This idea arose from the ongoing Complete Streets efforts. The Planning Council expects this new designation to stay linear in character, and will be used as a category for areas where localities desire redevelopment. BCPC staff explained this transition as part of the evolution of the future land use categories: Regional Activity Center (RAC) was the first mixed use category, after which the Local Activity Center (LAC), Transit Oriented Development (TOD), Transit Oriented Corridor (TOC), and Mixed Use Residential designations evolved.

BCPC staff mentioned the TOCs along U.S. Route 441 as the first place that this new Multimodal future land use category might be implemented, but staff are thinking about how this could be implemented throughout the county. The Planning Council has discussed this change internally through a workshop, but has not yet communicated it to the public. Council staff are working to facilitate the process for the transformation for the localities. The Council does not often make Council-initiated future land use map amendments because of the potential pushback from the localities. The Council would simply change the land use plan to add another category, which the localities could designate. The Council sees this change as a way to help the municipalities implement Complete Streets policy. When asked about the designation of the Multimodal category, BCPC staff replied that they “wouldn’t rule out trying to designate areas as Multimodal,” but right now they see the effort as more focused on renaming the designation.

The timing of this change would begin with a presentation to the Broward County Commission at its next hearing. The Planning Council anticipates that these policies may be adopted in April after the County Commission hearing. The Planning Council hopes to set up working groups to work through several concepts related to the Multimodal designation.

### “Giving Credit” for Developer Contributions to Multimodal Level of Service

With the new Multimodal future land use category, the Planning Council hopes to set up a policy where developers who want to redevelop in these areas can receive some sort of ‘credit’ in the calculation of transportation impacts during the land use amendment process . The Planning Council explained it tried to introduce a policy like this six or seven years ago, but was unsuccessful. Planning Council staff believe that the time may be “ripe” to reintroduce this concept.

This ‘credit’ could have two parts: (1) Multimodal Level of Service and (2) land use impacts. Planning Council staff said these two parts would be helpful when evaluating land use map amendments, and inquired about developing level of service standards for various modes. This could be a way to tie in the Complete Streets projects with giving credit to developers.

The Planning Council explained they hope to put together a future committee to figure out how to give developers credits for transit improvements. BCPC staff envision working together with FDOT and the regional planning council, as well as others to ensure comprehensive coordination. BCPC believe the way in which the County charges fees for the Transit Oriented Corridor designation has laid the groundwork and can be expanded.

### Speaker’s Bureau

The Planning Council is working with Broward County staff to establish a Speakers’ Bureau as a broad outreach campaign on quality of life. The Speakers’ Bureau targets a variety of audiences, not just the municipalities. It is intended to educate everyone within the community about Complete Streets and multimodal transportation and land use, not just about transit.

### BCPC Map of Mixed Use Areas and Future Transit

BCPC staff have prepared a map that shows the mixed use future land use areas (multimodal districts) and future premium transit service and Tri-Rail, which they would be willing to share with others. BCPC staff explained this map helps BCPC to communicate with cities on the broader vision.

When asked whether this map could be incorporated in the Planning Council’s land use plan, staff explained that keeping this map separate from the land use plan allows it to be a more useful tool, because BCPC staff can update the map without having to go through the extensive protocol for land use plan amendments. It allows the map to be updated and current. BCPC staff said integrating it into the land use plan is a possible idea.

### Trafficways Fee Waiver for Complete Streets Projects

In an effort to encourage local governments to implement Complete Street projects, the Broward County Commission waived the more than $6,000 fee for applying for an amendment to the Trafficways Plan requesting a Context Sensitive designation for a two-year period beginning in June 2013. So far, the Planning Council has only received on application: the Martin Luther King, Jr./ Hammondville Road trafficway in Pompano Beach. The Planning Council expects to receive another application from Fort Lauderdale.

Planning Council staff were expecting to see more applications as a result of the fee waiver, but explained that localities face the challenge of limited staff to prepare the plan amendment materials. The application has a two-page checklist, and does not require an excessive amount of engineering. The most extensive part of this application is the modeling, which BCPC conducts. BCPC staff noted the design of the cross-section may be the biggest hurdle for localities. BCPC requires that localities have a vision for the corridor and document what the corridor’s design will be.

BCPC staff believe that localities desire to implement many potential Complete Streets projects, some of which are fueled by the desires of elected officials, but they are unable to capitalize on these desires and see them through. Planning Council staff expect that the Complete Streets initiatives that are currently underway will make this easier in the future. The Pompano Beach Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) produced typical sections and acquired a standard trafficways plan amendment to expand the right-of-way.

### Complete Streets and Context Sensitive Design

Broward County adopted its Complete Streets Guidelines, and the County is currently updating its land development code to include road design guidelines for Complete Streets. BCPC staff expect the County to adopt the road design guidelines within the next two months, and said this is a “huge victory” for the Complete Streets movement. This movement started with the Context Sensitive corridor designation, which recognized the conflicts between engineering standards and context sensitive design.

BCPC staff explained there was a need ”to loosen up” the road design standards. In previous efforts, engineers have been uncomfortable with the totality of using up to ten various alternative designs in one cross-section. BCPC staff said the engineers would have been more comfortable approving three or four, and thus developed a “hybrid” cross-section.

## Challenges

### Impacts to I-95

BCPC staff acknowledged that the policies in the Planning Council’s Land Use Plan regarding the impacts of development do not adequately address impacts to I-95, and recognized that this is an area of concern for FDOT.

FDOT recognized that it is almost impossible for a development to address the impacts to “the mainline” I-95, but that interchanges are an area where developer contributions could be a possibility. Participants reflected on whether it would be possible for a developer to contribute funds towards interchange improvements.

### Conflicts between Complete Streets and Auto Level of Service

Planning Council staff recognized that Complete Streets projects can reduce the capacity of a road for moving auto traffic, which produces negative effects for auto level of service. If a city implements a Complete Streets project, and does not follow through on the land use side by properly incentivizing or “giving credit” for compatible development, negative effects for the system will result. Planning Council staff recognized this is an issue that needs to be resolved.

Planning Council staff explained that Complete Streets projects may be met with resistance because public citizens and elected officials understand that a trip in a car may take longer and worry about congestion. BCPC staff see their role as an educator for the multimodal benefits in this regard.

Powerline Road is a good example of this conflict. Powerline Road is a potential parallel reliever, meaning it could serve as an alternate road for cars making short trips to travel north-south instead of taking I-95. However, localities in Broward County desire to transform this street through a “Complete Street” redesign with lane eliminations. These appear to be conflicting purposes.

BCPC staff noted the vision for transit requires a paradigm shift in the thinking of both the general public and elected officials.

## Coordination Efforts

In general, BCPC staff reach out to and have relationships with most of the local governments and the CRAs. BCPC works with the CRAs when the CRAs request changes to the trafficways plan through land use proposals. BCPC retains a list of interested parties that they keep in the communication loop, including developers, lobbyists, community partners, the South Broward Hospital district, and others. BCPC conducts outreach to a large base of interested parties.

BCPC believes they have a good working relationship with the Broward MPO. Mr. Schwarz sits on the MPO’s Technical Coordinating Committee and LRTP steering committee.

The BCPC is an ‘independent’ agency, meaning they are separate from the Broward County government structure. While Broward County is obligated to provide funds and service sufficient for BCPC to meet its responsibilities, the BCPC Executive Director and her staff serve under the direction and control of the Planning Council membership, not the Broward County Board of County Commissioners. BCPC staff explained that this makes coordination with Broward County challenging, particularly with respect to the travel demand model. BCPC is concerned about how the model is functioning with regard to the trip origins and destinations, and the MPO and BCPC have a meeting in two weeks to discuss. Overall, BCPC characterized its relationship with Broward County as a “good working relationship.”

## Indicators of Success

### Budget Items

One way BCPC staff measures success is the number of challenges the Planning Council encountered in land use amendments at the state level.

### Comprehensive Plan Goals, Objectives, and Policies

BCPC also looks at whether the goals, objectives, and policies in the Broward County Comprehensive Plan are being addressed. The Planning Council bases its recommendations on whether a decision will meet these goals, objectives, and policies.

### Multimodal Level of Service

BCPC staff noted that introducing multimodal level of service would help Broward County immensely, and that education and buy-in will be key to bringing people on board with the concepts of Complete Streets, which is one of the purposes of the Speakers Bureau effort.

# Strategies and Indicators

The following tables list the strategies and indicators that representatives from BCPC mentioned throughout the listening session.

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| Strategies |
| System-Wide   * Provide venues for community dialogue and education on quality of life (e.g. Speakers Bureau). * Maintain a map of multimodal or mixed use districts and the future premium transit to serve these areas, and use this map in dialogue with local governments to communicate a broader systems-level vision. * Maintain coordination with County, MPO, and local governments through ongoing coordination and participation in committees. * Evaluate decisions against the goals, objectives, and policies within adopted comprehensive plans. * Monitor the implementation of mixed use designations, and adjust policies accordingly.   Facilities   * Incorporate Multimodal Level of Service standards. * Waive fees for Trafficways Plan amendments for Complete Streets projects. * Develop and adopt Complete Streets Road Design Guidelines * Consider developer fees for I-95 interchange improvements.   Places   * Add a new future land use category (Multimodal) to better incorporate pedestrians and bicyclists in the planning for mixed use areas. * Provide incentives (or “credits”) to developers for developing through infill or redevelopment within multimodal districts. |

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| Indicators |
| Quantitative   * Number of challenges Planning Council encounters in land use amendments * Multimodal Level of Service   Qualitative or Anecdotal   * Goals, objectives, and policies within Comprehensive Plan |