

MOBILITY 2040: A Vision for the SR 54/56 Corridor Phase 2: Corridor Vision & Implementation Plan

Task Force Meeting Summary and Minutes

Thursday, August 24, 2017 (5:30–8:43 PM)

Pasco County Utilities Administration Building, Cottee Room | 19420 Central Blvd, Land O'Lakes, FL 34637

Task Force Members Present

Hope Allen, Wesley Chapel Chamber of Commerce
 Debby Catanzaro, Citizen-at-Large
 Donna Collier, Citizen-at-Large
 John Copeland, Pasco Alliance of Community Associations (PACA)
 Marilyn deChant, MPO Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)
 Rich Dutter, Citizen-at-Large
 Sandy Graves, Central Pasco Chamber of Commerce
 Steve Henry, Traffic Engineer
 Ronald Hubbs, Council of Neighborhood Associations (CONA)
 Fred Krauer, Pasco Alliance of Community Associations
 Kelly Miller, MPO CAC
 Bruce Mills, West Pasco Chamber of Commerce
 Tom Ryan, Pasco Economic Development Council (EDC) and MPO CAC
 Rob Sercu, MPO (CAC)
 Carlos Sáenz, Pasco Fiasco Representative
 Christie Zimmer, MPO CAC

MPO/County Staff and Consultants Present

Pasco County MPO: Craig Casper, Ali Atefi, Manny Lajmiri, Tanya Archer
 Pasco County: David Goldstein, Matt Armstrong, Ines Nizeye, Chandra Parasa, Kurt Scheible, Margaret Smith
 Florida Department of Transportation: Dan Santos, Lilliam Escalera, Domingo Noriega (AECOM), Rick Langlass (RS&H)
 Tindale Oliver: Bill Ball, Wally Blain
 Jacobs: Rosana Correa

Citizens

Kim Seyer, CT Bowen, Robert Dicaire, Alan Gaddie, Norm Lancaster, Karen Lancaster, Kathy Steele, Philip Tamm, John Wilkerson, John Milnor, Melanie Kendrick, Joe Cascio, Fran Ring, Christina Kopp, Peter Abreut, Sandra Gann, Harry Younkin, Fran D'ascoli, Karen Ford, John Ford, Anne Grivas, George Grivas, Jim Engelmann, Leslie Russo, Mary Lou Fazio, Gregg Parsons, Amy Daigrepont, Rebecca Goyez, Nadeen Gittens, Chris Poole, Ray Mason, Jennie Sammur, Sharon Ogborn, Bob Phillips, Carine Phillips, Brian MKeenan, Warren Fields, Jonathan Beer

Call to Order

- Mr. Casper called the meeting to order at 5:32 PM and provided an overview of the MPO, the Vision 54/56 planning effort, and the expectations for the Task Force meeting.

- Mr. Ryan welcomed all Task Force Members and thanked the public for their attendance. He asked Task Force members to introduce themselves and the organizations they represent. He then reviewed the Task Force objective and encouraged each member to begin thinking about which alternatives they are likely to select for moving to the next round of evaluation as they listen to the presentation and analysis.

Meeting Objectives

- Mr. Ball discussed the role of the Task Force as an advisory group to the MPO and reminded everyone that the purpose of the meeting was to provide information to Task Force members and answer their questions. He noted that no action was being requested of the Task Force at this meeting; future decisions regarding a consensus recommendation would occur at a subsequent meeting. This meeting is an opportunity for the project team to provide an update on the analysis that was conducted for Phase 2: Step 1 and review results with Task Force members to answer any questions.

Vision 54/56 Background/Context

- Mr. Ball reviewed the status of the Vision 54/56 study by providing an overview of the two-phase approach used, an overview of the objectives from Phase 1, and the results leading to the analysis conducted in Phase 2. He stated that Phase 1 began with reviewing and evaluating more than 20 alternatives that were narrowed down to 12 for review during Phase 2 and highlighted that, at this point, the Phase 2: Step 1 analysis is focused on evaluating the 12 alternatives at the intersections of US 41 and Little Road to provide comparative results that will allow Task Force members to make a recommendation to the MPO Board. He reviewed the schedule for Phase 2: Step 1 and indicated that an additional Task Force meeting beyond what had been scheduled may be needed. The Task Force will have the opportunity to discuss this later in the agenda following the review of the evaluation results.
- Mr. Armstrong discussed the County's Long Range Planning effort to evaluate the growth and development expectations for the Gateway Crossings Plan. Along with the West Harbors Market along US 19, the Gateway Crossings area along SR 54 constitutes the county's Urban Service Area where long-term increases in density are expected. He discussed how the land use study would be coordinated with the Vision 54/56 transportation study.
- Mr. Ball reviewed the results of the FDOT PD&E public hearing from December 2015 and the additional analysis that FDOT has conducted since the public hearing. Ultimately, FDOT has placed the PD&E study on hold, awaiting recommendations from the Vision 54/56 study. He also discussed the current ongoing Tampa Bay Regional Transit Feasibility Study and the connections that could be made along the SR 54/56 corridor.

Recap of Task Force Meeting 1 (April 20, 2017)

- Mr. Ball presented an overview of the three topics raised during the April Task Force meeting that required follow-up, including maps of the existing traffic signal and future planned signals on SR 54/56. In total, 30 existing signals and 11 more are planned on SR 54/56 from US 19 to Bruce B. Downs Blvd. Mr. Atefi showed a map of the current and planned traffic signal coordination projects that indicated the locations of fiber optic cables currently in place for coordinating traffic signals. The map also illustrated the locations where projects are currently funded and others that are estimated to be funded within the next five years. The existing projects and those to be funded in the next five years cover the entire limits of SR 54/56 from US 19 to Bruce B. Downs Blvd. Mr. Atefi provided an overview of an existing intersection project for the US 41 intersection that is funded for next year. This project will increase the length of the right-turn lane and dual left-turn lanes on SR 54 approaching US 41 from the west. Ms. Miller asked for clarification on the number of signals and how many signals are on US 19 for a comparison of what the corridor could look like. Mr. Atefi indicated that there could be 25–30 signals on US 19.



- Ms. Zimmer asked for clarification on the intersection project and asked if additional turn-lane improvements would be made on the other sides of the intersection. Mr. Atefi indicated that there were other turn-lane extensions considered on the east and north sides, but the available right-of-way (ROW) for extending those turn lanes was only 35–50 feet, thus making the improvements unfeasible based on the length of the extension and the cost.

Step 1 Evaluation Results and Task Force Discussion

- Mr. Ball framed the discussion by reminding the Task Force that the technical information being presented for the evaluation was conducted to provide a high-level planning overview of the alternatives. A key factor for the comparative analysis of the alternatives is the trade-off between the amount of delay and ROW requirements. He reminded the Task Force members of the 12 alternatives that were selected during Phase 1 for the Phase 2 analysis. Mr. Sáenz requested clarification regarding alternatives 2 and 3 vs. the previous elevated lanes project that was opposed by Pasco residents and asked why these alternatives were still included in the analysis based on previous opposition. Mr. Ball provided an overview of the Phase 1 Task Force discussion and recommendations for further analysis and noted that the incorporation of alternatives 2 and 3 for Phase 2 was the result of the Phase 1 Task Force recommendation.
- Ms. Zimmer provided additional clarification regarding the further history of the concept of the elevated express lanes and the Phase 1 Task Force recommendation and noted that some individuals support the elevated lanes. She also noted that the Task Force is to remain vigilant in discussing the alternatives to arrive at a reasonable alternative. Mr. Goldstein noted that the organizations selected to have representatives on the Task Force had taken a position on the previously-proposed elevated lanes project. In response to Mr. Sáenz question about the County being willing to seek broader comment from the public to express their interest in the alternatives, Mr. Casper noted that the second step of Phase 2 would do this and noted the MPO's process for developing the LRTP includes an extensive public engagement process for evaluating priorities of all the transportation priorities. Mr. Atefi reminded the Task Force that the alternatives being presented came out of the Phase 1 process and included elevated and non-elevated alternatives. He noted that the intent of Step 2 for Phase 2 is to take the alternatives to the public, but taking the initial 20+ alternatives to the public would be confusing; the study has proceeded with the use of the Task Force as community representatives who can evaluate the larger set of alternatives.
- Ms. Graves asked if the elevated lanes includes tolling; Mr. Ball confirmed that tolls were an assumption included in the elevated lanes alternatives. Ms. Graves also asked for clarification regarding the requirement of a referendum for passing any taxes for transportation funding. Mr. Goldstein confirmed that passing sales tax to fund transportation improvements requires a referendum vote of the public and explained that there was no assumption that funding these alternatives would require a sales tax at this time. He noted several additional funding sources that the County uses for funding transportation projects.
- Ms. Zimmer asked about funding options and who would be providing the revenues and how that would be managed. Mr. Goldstein indicated that, at this stage, there are many unknowns about how the multiple funding sources could be used. Mr. Casper mentioned that as part of the LRTP process, the MPO would evaluate the recommendations that come out of the Task Force and deciding how the limited resources could be spread across all of the regional priorities as a whole.
- Ms. Catanzaro stated that she understood that Pasco County could control tolls on a potential elevated lanes, but would this remain SR 54 or have to be converted to a County road. Mr. Goldstein indicated that it would likely remain a State road and that the study is being conducted in a partnership between the MPO, the County, and FDOT.



- Mr. Ball continued introducing the alternatives by noting that many assumptions were made and showed that with each alternative there is a concept for which a wider option could be considered that would have reduced delay or a narrower footprint that results in more delay. He noted that in all the alternatives there is a trade-off consideration in balancing the amount of ROW needed and the amount of traffic delay and showed summary charts illustrating the number of average seconds of delay for each alternative and the number of parcels potentially affected based on the conceptual alternatives that were evaluated for the US 41 and Little Road intersection, indicating that 2040 was used as the future planning horizon. He noted that the averages shown include the traffic on the elevated lanes that is assumed to experience no delay, so traffic at the intersection would experience more delay. Mr. Blain indicated that for alternatives 2 through 5, the average delay at-grade is 157 seconds without including the traffic on the elevated lanes.
- Mr. Atefi stated that the assumption for the number of turn lanes at the intersection was based on a reasonableness test rather than determining the number of lanes needed to eliminate all of the delay at the intersection. He also indicated that including the overpasses was to create mobility options for longer-distance trips and that all of the overpass alternatives have delay at-grade at the signalized intersections.
- After reviewing the overall summary impacts for the alternatives regarding the average delay and potential parcel impacts, Mr. Blain reviewed the details for Alternative 6, describing the conceptual rendering used to illustrate the alternative concept during Phase 1 and providing an overview of the conceptual typical cross-section.
- Ms. Zimmer asked about the need for such a wide median on Alternative 6. Mr. Blain noted that at the intersection, the median off-set was needed to accommodate the transit-way located in the median. Mr. Atefi further noted that the concept was shown as transit in the median, but this alternative could be developed with the transit on the outside shoulder as another option. Ms. Miller asked about elements that could be included in the median in terms of landscaping; Mr. Blain noted that any plantings or landscape treatments would be determined at a later time during project development.
- Mr. Blain reviewed the parcel impact graphic and described that the affected areas were determined based on the assumptions behind the alternative and did not include any design-level considerations. He reviewed the number of parcels and square footage of potential impact, noting that the impacts were evaluated at ¼ mile from the intersection in each direction as a basis for comparing the impacts of all the alternatives.
- A review of the delay analysis was presented to show the average amount of delay that currently exists, the average delay in 2040 under the no-build alternative, and the average delay for the alternative being discussed. The analysis also included information about the maximum number of cycles of delay that could be experienced as well as the amount of time.
- Mr. Copeland asked about for clarification as to why transit capital and maintenance cost components had been included as a consideration for evaluating the alternatives since transit funding wasn't part of the Task Force's objective. Mr. Blain noted that the intent of showing these costs was to illustrate which alternatives include transit characteristics and that the transit component of the alternative would have cost. The charge of Task Force is to identify an overall vision for the roadway corridor and the alternatives that move forward could include transit. Mr. Sáenz cautioned the Task Force to remember that with transit options there are long-term costs that need to be considered when committing to any alternatives. Mr. Dutter commented that if Alternative 6 shows no impact to the no-build delay, transit has no impact on delay; the effect of the roadway configuration at the intersection should be the factor for considering delay benefit in the alternatives.
- Ms. Miller asked that when the Task Force makes its selection, members could have actual data about current technology improvements for autonomous vehicles and car-sharing trends that could reduce vehicles on the roads. Mr. Blain noted that any technology improvements would need to be considered and would have impact across all the



alternatives. From a comparison and evaluation of the alternatives, technology advancements have not been included at this time.

- As scheduled for 7:30 pm, Mr. Ryan opened the public comment portion of the agenda and asked that speakers keep their comments to 3 minutes to provide opportunity for everyone to speak.

Public Comment

- John Wilkerson asked in regards to the analysis and evaluation of SR 54 at the intersections of US 41 and Little Road, what is being done to evaluate the impacts of the intersecting streets? How is this plan dealing with the additional north-south traffic on the intersecting streets that will be accessing the SR 54 corridor?
- Nadeen Gittens stated that if roadways are for the public good, it does not seem premature to discuss the topic of tolls and addressing the issue of whether the residents of Pasco will benefit from tolled roads and not just benefiting the region’s population. She also stated that she does not see clearly stated the issue that each alternative is addressing in the evaluations and asked if information regarding the range of parcels impacted by the alternative could be provided to assist in evaluating the significance of the estimated impacts.
- Kim Seyer asked if there was a basic assumption used for each alternative regarding the ability of traffic for crossing SR 54. Was there an assumption about what locations traffic could cross?
- Norm Lancaster stated that he has often sat through more traffic lights on SR 54 in the mornings than were presented in the graphics and noted that when turning onto US 41 headed to Dale Mabry, people often create unsafe conditions due to the merging that is required. He expressed concern that the analysis was not addressing the issues caused by merging traffic at the US 41 and Dale Mabry area.
- Anne Grivas spoke against the elevated alternative still being considered, given the previous bid that was proposed and the high cost of that proposed alternative.
- Bob DiCaire complimented PCPT for adding the US 41 bus route and reducing the headway on the SR 54 route, noting that this was a great improvement for the community but there is a long way to go. Connecting the Hillsborough and Pasco systems is needed before there can be a dedicated lane for transit on the SR 54 corridor. He also commented on the pace of the study and the breadth of the analysis that was being conducted, noting that it was a slow process, but that he wanted to see it done correctly the first time.
- Greg Parsons expressed concerns regarding the evaluation that was conducted. As the inventor and patent holder for the Parallel Flow Intersection, he offered his availability to answer any questions about it.
- Ms. Gittens asked if there was a timeframe for how long tolls would be in place and if there was an opportunity to consider mini-buses or vans for transit instead of dedicating a specific lane for transit to help reduce cost and pollution.
- Ms. Ogden asked for details supporting the resolution passed by the Board of County Commissioners in 2013 supporting managed lanes solutions. Does this resolution preclude the need for future public approval for tolls?
- Earl Bartholomew noted that there are current priorities that need to be completed or moved forward prior to making a decision on the SR 54 corridor and asked if there was a specific time frame for when the new lights that were previously discussed would be constructed.
- Craig Casper noted that the MPO had provided business cards with a link to the MPO website where additional comments could be submitted directly to staff.
- Mr. Ryan asked staff to respond to questions for which they have answers. Mr. Goldstein addressed the questions regarding the BOCC resolution in support of managed lanes and stated that the Board could choose to build any of the alternatives that have been proposed without a public vote; however, use of certain tax-supported revenues would require a public vote of support to implement and use. Ms. Zimmer asked for clarification regarding which revenue sources would require a referendum vote; Mr. Goldstein indicated that the only revenue sources that would require a



vote if they are the renewal of the Penny for Pasco in 2024 and the Charter County Transportation Surtax, which is the vote that failed in Hillsborough and Pinellas recently. Other revenue funding decisions discussed would not require a referendum. Ms. Graves asked about the funding assumptions that were included in the MPO’s 2040 LRTP. Is the Charter County Transportation Surtax included? Mr. Goldstein stated that there was a long range funding assumption that this surtax was included in the LRTP. This assumption is not a binding decision, but it was the revenue assumed for including some of the transportation improvements beyond 2025. Mr. Blain noted that the assumption in the LRTP was that the Charter County Transportation Surtax would replace the Penny for Pasco as a transportation revenue for the LRTP rather than being an additional revenue source. Ms. Ogborn asked about the recently-received TRIM notices and the line item specifically designated for transportation and if the inclusion of this line item was for future charging residents for transportation projects. Mr. Goldstein answered that this is a historic line previously used by the County Commissioners and that the County has moved towards using more gas taxes and other non ad-valorem revenues for transportation.

- Following the public comments, Mr. Ryan asked that the Task Force return to the agenda and resume with the presentation of information. Ms. Miller asked for clarification on what the next steps would be for the Task Force following the meeting. Mr. Blain stated that the intended format for the meeting was to provide information on Alternative 6 as an example and then review each of the remaining alternatives to identify specific questions or concerns that the Task Force Members may have. Based on the Task Force discussion during the meeting, it appears that there needs to be additional Task Force discussion prior to the survey. This would be accomplished by holding a Task Force Workshop where Task Force members will be able to discuss the alternatives and ask additional questions. Following the workshop, Task Force members would take a survey of the alternatives and then review the results of that survey at the subsequent Task Force meeting where the members will select their recommendation for the MPO Board.

Step 1 Evaluation Results and Task Force Discussion (continued)

- Mr. Blain resumed review of the analysis results for Alternative 6. Task Force members asked for clarification regarding the future year analysis and forecasting that is done and how often the assumptions are reviewed and evaluated. Mr. Blain provided information regarding the MPO’s requirements for the LRTP and the five-year cycle that is used for updating the assumptions of the LRTP and the analysis of future travel demand.
- Mr. Blain discussed the cost component of the evaluation by highlighting the transit capital, operating roadway construction, and ROW cost components. Ms. Miller asked what the costs for Alternative 6 represent, which were assumed to be a cost per mile, and which were for the entire length of the corridor.
- Ms. Zimmer asked for clarification regarding the governor’s decision for funding of the Overpass Road interchange at I-75 and the relative priority of that project to the Vision 54/56 study. Mr. Goldstein indicated that the Overpass interchange is not necessarily a higher priority, but it is a project that is ready to go and made it a project eligible for see State funding. The governor’s veto of State funding for the overpass interchange should not be considered an indication that State funding would not be eligible for a project on SR 54.
- Mr. Sáenz made a statement against the options that include transit and a high cost. Mr. Ryan reminded the Task Force that there is a no-build option that is included in the study and encouraged the Task Force to stay on task to finish up the meeting. Mr. Goldstein noted that all projects included in the analysis have high costs and indicated that transportation projects are costly. Mr. Armstrong noted that transit investment is seen as an economic development tool and not for congestion reduction.



- Mr. Blain concluded the evaluation of Alternative 6 and asked the Task Force to review the Evaluation Summary tables for each alternative, which were designed to assist them in evaluating the results of the alternatives.
- Ms. Graves asked for clarification of the criteria regarding consistency with County goals. Mr. Blain indicated that this was about consistency with the County’s land use and zoning policies and the current studies being conducted by the County’s Long Range Planning Department.
- Mr. Henry asked for clarification regarding the Level of Service measure and the criteria for determining which were bad or only half-bad. Mr. Blain explained that although most of the alternatives had level of service results that would be deficient, the results of evaluation summary were listed to show comparatively how each alternative performed. Mr. Mills asked for clarification on the travel time reduction measures consideration of traffic on the express lanes as well as the general lanes. Mr. Ball indicated that transit travel time was also a consideration in the travel time reduction measure. Mr. Dutter expressed concern that alternatives not meeting a level of service condition would make them a non-viable alternative. Mr. Casper clarified that using the express lanes would allow users to bypass the intersection delay at many intersections rather than experiencing delay at each intersection. Mr. Atefi discussed the cumulative delay that would be experienced by traveling through multiple intersections.
- Mr. Parsons noted that the delay that would be experienced by traffic backing up at the signal through the ramps to the express lanes would also contribute to delay along the corridor and stated that he has many questions about the traffic analysis and that when the ramps get congested, the analysis shows numerous oversaturated movements at all the alternatives except the Parallel Flow Intersection. He also commented that the average delay that is being presented is not being presented in a realistic way and expressed concern regarding the way the traffic analysis results were being presented specifically related to Alternative 1 and the Parallel Flow Intersection alternative. Mr. Parsons noted that he has been a practicing traffic engineer for 30 years and is the designer and patent holder of the Parallel Flow Intersection and described the process by which he has engaged with FDOT during the US 41 and SR 54 PD&E and his interest in proposing the Parallel Flow Intersection as a value engineering option for the PD&E study.
- Ms. Miller proposed that since the meeting had gone beyond the planned 8:30 pm time frame, the Task Force should begin discussing the Next Steps and move forward with identifying a time for the next meeting.

Next Steps

- Task Force members agreed that they need additional time to discuss the evaluation. **A motion was made by Mr. Sercu and seconded by Ms. Catanzaro to have an additional workshop meeting. The motion passed unanimously.** MPO staff will send out a poll for members to respond about availability.
- Following the workshop meeting, Task Force members will be asked to complete a survey for ranking the alternatives, followed by a Task Force meeting at which the survey results will be discussed and the Task Force will select its recommendation for the MPO Board.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 8:47 PM.

