

Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)
Meeting Minutes
March 8, 2023

Members Physically Present:

Doug Hall
Terry Lodge
Ted Wendler, Vice Chairperson
Paul Eik
Larry Coletti
Nic Mostert
Bob Storke
Gayle Belin
Nancy Epps
Maggie Ardito
Emery Jeffreys
Jason Aufdenberg, Chairperson
Meghan Lindsey (non-voting)
Lisa Divina (non-voting)
David German (non-voting)
Jacob Lunceford (non-voting)

Members Virtually Present:

Luis Leal
Patrick McCallister
Gwen Perney (non-voting)
Stephanie Moss (non-voting)

Members/Technical Appointees Absent:

Adam Mengel
Tom Ryan (excused)
Andrew Dodzik (excused)
Mark Oebbecke (excused)
Christy Gillis (excused)
Tim Grigsby
Chris Daun (excused)
Roy Walters

Others Physically Present:

Debbie Stewart, Recording Secretary
Stephan Harris
Pam Blankenship
Richard Hamilton

Others Virtually Present:

Colleen Nicoulin
Robert Barto
Ken Bryan

Representing:

Daytona Beach
DeBary
DeLand
Flagler Beach
Flagler County
New Smyrna Beach
Orange City
Ormond Beach
Ponce Inlet Alternate
Volusia County District 1
Volusia County District 1 Alternate
Volusia County At-Large Alternate
Volusia County Parks & Recreation
Volusia County School Board
Volusia County School Board Alternate
Votran

Representing:

Deltona
Lake Helen
Port Orange
FDOT

Representing:

Flagler County
Holly Hill
Palm Coast Alternate
Ponce Inlet
South Daytona
Volusia County, District 4
Volusia County Council Chair
Volusia County at Large

Representing:

TPO Staff
TPO Staff
TPO Staff
Scenic A1A Byway

Representing:

TPO Staff
East Coast Greenway Alliance
Rails to Trails Conservancy

I. Call to Order / Roll Call / Determination of Quorum / Pledge of Allegiance

The meeting of the River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) was called to order at 2:00 p.m. by Chairperson Jason Aufdenberg. The roll was called and it was determined that a quorum was physically present. The meeting was held in a hybrid format with 11 voting and five non-voting members physically present; and two voting and two non-voting members virtually present. Rulings from the Florida Attorney General require that the members physically present vote to allow virtual participation due to "extraordinary circumstances".

The Pledge of Allegiance was given.

MOTION: *A motion was made by Mr. Lodge to allow members attending virtually to participate and vote. The motion was seconded by Mr. Mostert and carried unanimously.*

Ms. Epps asked if there is a procedure to remove the need for this motion to be made at every meeting and note that virtual participation is allowed.

TPO staff explained that is not possible; it is based on extenuating circumstances on an individual basis for each meeting.

II. Public Comment/Participation

There were no public comments.

III. Action Items

A. Review and Recommend Approval of February 8, 2023 BPAC Meeting Minutes

MOTION: *A motion was made by Ms. Belin to approve the February 8, 2023 BPAC meeting minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Wendler and carried unanimously.*

IV. Presentation and Discussion Items

A. Presentation and Discussion of Trail Funding Opportunities

Mr. Ken Bryan, Rails to Trails Conservancy, gave a PowerPoint presentation and discussion of trail funding opportunities; he provided this presentation recently at the Active Transportation for All Workshop. He reviewed Florida's strengths as a trail state; trails are embraced for transportation, economic development/tourism, and recreation and health benefits. He noted the importance of the five-year Work Program and the blend of federal, state, and local funds that help build the trails. The largest funding source for trails is the Transportation Alternatives Program (TA); Florida's current share is approximately \$85 million. Federally, it requires a 20% local match; however, FDOT provides that local match by using tollway dollars which increases the state's buying power to approximately \$101 million. He referred to House Bill 915 and the companion Senate Bill 106; it is approximately \$250 million and is moving through the Legislature now; it is expected to pass. This bill will provide a one-time contribution to the SUN Trail Program of \$200 million and would increase the annual allocation from \$25 million to \$50 million for active transportation projects in the state of Florida. He explained the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) provided a 70% increase which is split between the urban and rural areas. This provides new opportunities for trails, existing programs, and a new focus on connectivity and equitable access. One of the new programs is the Active Transportation Infrastructure Investment Program (ATIIP); \$45 million was budgeted for the ATIIP program with the budget that passed in December. Their strategy is to get that funding flowing to projects as soon as possible. He explained the TA program supports maintenance activities consistent with the recreational trails program. He reviewed Florida's apportionment of the TA grants and the Recreational Trails Program. He reviewed some of the other active transportation-eligible opportunities including the carbon reduction program. He will be releasing a webinar and a case study soon focused on what FDOT is doing with carbon reduction funds. He referred to the IIJA/BIL law and noted that Volusia County does a good job of getting projects ready to be competitive. He encouraged members to think about how to give their projects a leg-up moving forward for feasibility studies, master plans, right-of-way issues, etc.; so many issues are addressed in advance, and they are ready for long-term maintenance. He is hopeful that with the increase in SUN Trail funding, and the allowance for maintenance, it will allow for more opportunities for local governments. He suggested looking at trails holistically and being prepared for long-term maintenance.

Members discussed the presentation and the various funding opportunities. It was asked what the best approach was to make connections throughout the county; it was suggested they contact Mr. Tim Baylie, Volusia County Parks and Recreation Director, for advice.

Mr. Bryan also suggested reviewing the Rails to Trails database and maintenance study for useful information. He referred to the Friends of the Pinellas Trail and explained they are a group of volunteers, an auxiliary force, that help to augment the local government management of the trail; they provide services to trail users such as assistance with flat tires, repairs, picking up litter, emptying trash, etc.

Chairperson Aufdenberg referred to a section of trail in Volusia County between Lake Monroe and Green Springs that has been repaved; it is an example of a local trail where needed maintenance was taken care of. He would like to know how that came about. He asked what the TPO's share of the carbon reduction funding is.

Mr. Harris replied he does not have that information now, but the TPO has started receiving some of it which is being programmed on projects on the priority list. He will provide the dollar amount next month. Most projects that moved into FDOT's Work Program are using carbon reduction funds; the types of projects that are eligible for carbon reduction funding are bicycle/pedestrian projects and certain roadway projects such as roundabouts.

Ms. Ardito asked if there are any available funds for intermodal or bicycle/pedestrian connections to transit or SunRail; if there are any federal programs specific to connecting urban areas with railroads.

Mr. Bryan replied they could be built into a larger grant for transportation alternatives funding; he explained the largest pot of funding in Florida is Strategic Intermodal Systems (SIS) funding which includes the interstates, seaports, airports, etc. Trails have been funded with SIS dollars in the past; the Coast-to-Coast Trail and the St. John's River to Sea Loop are two examples. A place to start is SunRail as it is on the SIS system; it would not be successful to submit for a six-block sidewalk, but it could be part of a station build or a larger SIS project.

Chairperson Aufdenberg asked if Mr. Bryan would recommend the BPAC advocating for SB 106 and HB 915.

Mr. Bryan replied absolutely; all support is useful, but they would need to move quickly as these bills are moving through the process rapidly. Flagler County is House Speaker Renner's district, and it would be good to see if he can move some funding to that area.

Members continued to discuss the presentation and funding opportunities for trails.

Mr. Lodge asked if there is a priority for major trails in Florida and if any need to be completed.

Mr. Bryan replied that there are currently two priority network trails in Florida; the St. Johns River to Sea Loop Trail and the Coast-to-Coast Trail; he has heard rumors of a third trail system being pursued in the near future. However, with the Senate and House bills moving through the Legislature now, that could change as SB 915 will roll the Florida Wildlife Corridor into the SUN Trail network. The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) just held its statewide workshops for updating the priority and opportunity maps; that will influence what projects are eligible for SUN Trail funding. There are a few corridors proposed to be added and one is proposed to be removed; the new bill puts the entire Florida Wildlife Corridor into it. The dust will need to settle on that before any additional trail networks are selected as priorities.

B. Presentation and Discussion of the 2023 River to Sea TPO Annual Call for Projects

Mr. Harris provided an update on the applications received through the annual Call for Projects which closed on February 28, 2023. He referred to Tier C on the bicycle/pedestrian priority list, projects waiting on feasibility studies, and noted that the top three were completed last year; the Anastasia Drive sidewalk project in South Daytona; the DeLand West Greenway project in DeLand; and the Jackson Street sidewalk project in Port Orange. All three studies are finalized and available for review on the TPO's website. TPO staff encouraged the project sponsors to submit applications for funding of these projects; however, South Daytona did not submit an application as they ran out of time to prepare it. An application for the DeLand West Greenway was received but it is not for the shared-use path that was evaluated in the feasibility study; it is for paved shoulders along the same route, Alabama Avenue to the DeLand SunRail station. It is a traffic operations project so the TIP Subcommittee will be reviewing the application and scoring it.

Ms. Ardito asked what the difference is between a buffered bike lane and a paved shoulder; if that means the bike lane will not be protected from vehicle traffic.

Mr. Harris replied that not all bike lanes or paved shoulders have buffers; he does not recall the city requesting a buffer. Bike lanes are designated as such with markings; there are many paved shoulders without that designation that can be used by bicyclists; it still provides a separation between the bicyclist and the motorist. He explained that a good portion of this project is in the right-of-way of Volusia County and the county does not typically designate bike lanes. The city is using the same project limits as the study for the shared-use path; the TIP Subcommittee will review that application and score it. He continued with his review and the Jackson Street sidewalk project in Port Orange. The city of Port Orange submitted an application to fund the replacement of the bridge and not the sidewalk; the existing bridge does not accommodate a sidewalk and it is too old to be retrofitted. The options were to build a separate pedestrian bridge or replace the existing bridge with one that will accommodate bicyclists and pedestrians. That application is also a traffic operations project and will be reviewed and scored by the TIP Subcommittee. He reviewed the bicycle/pedestrian applications received; two were received from New Smyrna Beach; one from Daytona Beach; and one from South Daytona. From New Smyrna Beach, a multi-use trail is proposed to start on SR 44 at I-95, in the northwest quadrant; it will go underneath I-95 and end in the northeast quadrant where a new development is being built; the developer will connect it to a private trail within the development. The feasibility study for this was completed in 2020.

Mr. Mostert asked where bicyclists and pedestrians would cross SR 44.

Mr. Harris explained the trail does not cross SR 44 but crosses the on/off ramps of I-95 and goes underneath the interstate; it connects to a small trail near the Walmart on the west side of I-95. The second application from New Smyrna Beach is for the South Street Trail which starts at Turnbull Bay Road and ends at US 1; this feasibility study was completed in 2022. This trail is on the south side of South Street adjacent to the city airport and will eventually connect to the St. Johns River to Sea Loop Trail at US 1. He referred to the Mason Avenue Corridor Study that FDOT conducted and presented the results to the BPAC in August 2022; the study included short-term and long-term improvements. The short-term improvements are in the current Work Program and include filling in sidewalk gaps, crosswalks, and signal improvements within the existing right-of-way and not moving any curb lines. The city of Daytona Beach submitted an application to fund the long-term improvements which will move the curb lines, require additional right-of-way, and include a shared-use path; the application is for the required PD&E study; the city also submitted a traffic operations application for this project. The project limits are from North Beach Street to Clyde Morris Boulevard. Unfortunately, the application did not include a buffer for the bike lane; he will contact the city for clarification prior to the BPAC Project Review Subcommittee meeting.

Mr. Jeffreys asked if they were including raised crosswalks as shown in the August presentation.

Mr. Harris replied those are part of the short-term improvements that are completely funded; the PD&E study for long-term improvements is what they submitted the application for. The last project application received is from South Daytona for the construction of a portion of the St. Johns River to Sea Loop Trail that will start at Saul Street and go to Carmen Drive. This project is on the SUN Trail priority list. This trail section will run north at Saul Street, turn east on Reed Canal Road along the south bank of the canal to just short of the railroad tracks north of Carmen Drive. He announced the BPAC Project Review Subcommittee will meet Wednesday, March 22, 2023, at 1:00 pm here at the airport. He will prepare an agenda, including the project applications and supporting documents, to be sent to members a week prior to the meeting.

Mr. Coletti commented that he is frustrated that Flagler County once again did not submit any applications.

Ms. Ardito asked what the plan is for the Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) grant the TPO was awarded.

Mr. Harris replied webinars are being held to discuss the next steps; the next step is to execute an agreement with the TPO and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA).

Ms. Ardito asked if there will be an opportunity to get a bigger picture of what connectivity there may be so that when the county is planning resurfacing projects they can plan for connection routes and provide protection for bicyclists if it is on an identified route; if some of the SS4A funding could be invested in the larger vision.

Mr. Harris explained that part of the discussion will be to work out the scope of the project with the TPO's partners, Volusia and Flagler Counties.

V. Staff Comments

→ BPAC Project Review Subcommittee meeting

Mr. Harris stated the BPAC Project Review Subcommittee meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 22, 2023 at 1:00 pm in the Airline Room at the Daytona Beach International Airport.

→ Mobility Week 2022 Bicycle Lane Design Contest Winners

Ms. Blankenship stated that as part of Mobility Week 2022, the TPO partnered with FDOT on a bike lane design contest with two elementary schools: McInnis Elementary in DeLeon Springs and Wadsworth Elementary in Palm Coast. The contest ran from October 21, 2022 through November 30, 2022. Each school was broken into two groups: pre-kindergarten through second grade and third grade through fifth grade. The students were provided with a template to design and color. The schools, FDOT, and the TPO selected the winners in each category at each school and they are in the process of selecting the location to install the bike lane marking at each school. Once installed, the TPO and FDOT's Safety Office will provide a bike safety presentation to each class. She showed the winning designs of each category and school. She hopes to have photos of the finished installation by the April BPAC meeting.

Ms. Moss explained the process for the bike lane markings is a thermal plastic. The contractor will make the design in their office then lay it on the ground and put heat to it so that it sticks to the ground.

VI. Information Items

- BPAC Attendance Record
- News Release – Safe Streets and Roads for All (SS4A) Grant
- TPO Board Report
- TPO Outreach and Activities

VII. BPAC Member Comments

Mr. Hall announced he is flying to Washington D.C. this Friday and next week, he, Mr. Harris and two others from the TDLCB will be going to Tallahassee to speak with legislators regarding transportation issues.

Ms. Belin asked if it was possible for presenters attending virtually to show on the screen after their presentations to answer questions.

Ms. Blankenship replied yes, that can be done.

Ms. Epps announced BPAC member Mr. Mark Oebbecke's wife was just named Citizen of the Year in Ponce Inlet.

Mr. Eik commented that he would like staff to add an agenda item a discussion to move the BPAC meeting start time to 1:00 pm from 2:00 pm in order to miss the afternoon traffic following the meeting. He also commented that presenters to the BPAC should attend in person instead of virtually.

Ms. Ardito announced the St. Johns River to Sea Loop Alliance is holding its annual bike ride on March 18, 2023; the rides will start in Gemini Springs Park; there will be rides and activities for all ages and abilities. The rides will range from five miles up to 28 miles. They are having a ride around Lake Monroe and partnering with the DeLand Athletic League. She would like the BPAC members to attend if possible. They are having a barbeque and prizes; she has flyers with her today if anyone would like one.

Mr. Lodge asked what time the rides will start.

Ms. Ardito replied it depends on which ride; the longest ride will begin at 8:30 am and the others will be staggered from there out.

Ms. Lindsey announced Volusia County is holding two public meetings regarding their Trails Master Plan: March 16, 2023 at the Brannon Center and March 27, 2023, at the Sanborn Center. There is a QR code provided on the flyer that will link to the draft Trails Master Plan, maps and a place for public comments. There is also an online survey for comments and suggestions.

Mr. Harris announced Mr. Tim Baylie, Volusia County Parks and Recreation Director, will be providing a presentation this month to the other advisory committees and TPO Board; he will provide the presentation to the BPAC at the April 12, 2023 meeting.

Mr. Coletti stated he recently visited The Hub Cycling center in Port Orange and purchased a book, Bike Trails in Central Florida; it includes the TPO's area as well as the Orlando area and places in-between. It is a well written book and he and his wife plan on doing most of the rides. He announced he will be attending an FDOT public meeting at the Casements in Ormond Beach this afternoon regarding SR A1A from Ormond-by-the-Sea up to Beverly Beach; he wants to ensure there are buffered bike lanes heading north and he wants to know what the plan is for the center islands south of the Flagler Beach pier that prohibit bicycles and cars from traveling together. He attended another FDOT meeting regarding SR 11 in Bunnell to SR 40; they are going to install a roundabout at SR 304 which is one of the most dangerous intersections in Flagler County. He asked if there would be bike lanes installed and was told no but the speed limit will be 25 miles per hour (mph); he has yet to see cars traveling at 60 mph slow down to 25 mph.

Ms. Ardito added that this is why we need an active transportation master plan; to identify these critical routes so this does not keep happening.

Mr. Mostert stated that this time of the year is when we look out for motorcycles; however, we also need to look out for wildlife on the roads; he is seeing many dead animals that have been struck by vehicles. He does not know if signage would help. SR A1A from Ormond Beach to Flagler Beach and the loss of sand dunes have displaced many gopher tortoises.

Ms. Moss stated that in January, FDOT provided a presentation on the tentative Five-Year Work Program and there were questions asked that the presenter needed to research. Mr. Coletti had asked about repaving SR A1A in Ormond Beach and FDOT does have a resurfacing project coming up north of Roberta Road to Flagler County; the question was if there would be a bike lane. The scope of the project is not yet written so there is time for the BPAC to provide input on the project; it will be advertised next week so there are approximately 90 days to provide input. The same question was asked about Old Kings Road but FDOT will need to work with Volusia County on that as it is a county road. There was a question regarding if the driveways on SR A1A would be repaved as part of the resurfacing and the answer is yes; they will improve the driveways to tie in and harmonize with SR A1A. Ms. Ardito had asked if SR A1A was part of the St. Johns River to Sea Loop and what provisions are being included in the project for SUN Trail; FDOT is always trying to find ways to maximize SUN Trail funding and they want to see all gaps in the trail closed. Mr. Bryan provided information earlier regarding House and Senate bills in reference to SUN Trail funding; she will keep the BPAC updated on that progress. There was a question about SunRail Phase II and if there would be another bridge with bike lanes; there will not be another bridge built; regarding the remaining useful life of the West French Avenue Bridge, she put in a request with the Structures Department and is waiting on a response. Chairperson Aufdenberg asked if the charging stations being installed would accommodate non-four-wheel vehicles; FDOT's Central Office is working to obtain a charging port that will support that.

Ms. Belin asked if there is an update on the widening of Williamson Boulevard to Hand Avenue and if there will be any construction on Hand Avenue; she was told there would not be any sidewalks or bike lanes. The speed limit is 50 mph and people are getting killed on that road while bike riding. There is development in that area and more is coming.

Ms. Moss replied she will do some research and provide an update next month.

Ms. Belin added that she was told there would be no sidewalks until Hand Avenue is widened and that is not even on the calendar to occur. She referred to the traffic on Granada Boulevard and that a study showed a turn lane or traffic light was not needed; however, there is so much traffic it can take up to five minutes or more to make a left turn out of the development; drivers are trying to get off Granada Boulevard and take Hand Avenue instead as it is a parallel road.

Ms. Moss replied she will have the Traffic Operations Department revisit that study.

Ms. Ardito stated that historically, SUN Trail funding has been divided into thirds; one third for each of the top two priorities and the remaining third for other trails; she asked if there has been a change in the allocation of SUN Trail funding.

Ms. Moss replied she has not heard anything, but she will get an update.

Chairperson Aufdenberg asked if FDOT's D-5 Bicycle Master Plan is going to come back.

Ms. Moss replied no, since the local municipalities and planning organizations have their own master plans, FDOT's focus will be on what is in those.

Chairperson Aufdenberg commented that there are two bills (HB 657 and SB 588) in the Legislature to install traffic cameras in school zones that will fine drivers for speeding through them. New York City has radically increased their speed cameras which has reduced speeding by 70%. This could go along with the bike lane design contest winners. He is going to contact his representatives to advocate for these bills. He commented that he was riding along Nova Road southbound between Bellevue Avenue and Beville Road; there was a "bikes may use full lane" sign that is now mangled and on the side of the road; it is a 50 mph road so bicyclists are using the sidewalk. North of Bellevue Avenue is a double-wide sidewalk and it would be nice if that could be extended.

Ms. Ardito stated the League of American Bicyclists and People for Bikes have been advocates of taking the lane and sharrows; however, they have both reversed that opinion based on the data. The only way to save lives is with separated bike lanes and lower traffic speeds. She has some booklets if anyone is interested.

VIII. Adjournment

The BPAC meeting adjourned at 4:12 p.m.


River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization



Dr. Jason Aufdenberg, Chairperson
Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)

CERTIFICATE:

The undersigned duly qualified and acting Recording Secretary of the River to Sea TPO certifies that the foregoing is a true and correct copy of the minutes of the March 8, 2023 regular meeting of the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC), approved and duly signed this 12th day of April 2023.



Pamela Blankenship, Recording Secretary
River to Sea Transportation Planning Organization

**** A recording of the March 8, 2023 BPAC meeting is available upon request.**