TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL

MEMORANDUM

To: Council Members

From: Staff

Date: July 10, 2020

Subject: Martin Metropolitan Planning Organization ~ Complete Streets: Access to Transit Study Overview

Background

The purpose of this item is to provide an overview of the Martin Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Complete Streets: Access to Transit Study that was led by Council staff and approved by the MPO Board in June 2020. The Study provides an overview of Complete Streets, catalog and illustrative examples of potential improvements, methodology to identify and prioritize locations for improvements, and recommended implementation strategies by the MPO and its partners. Beth Beltran, Martin MPO Administrator, Ricardo Vasquez, Martin MPO Associate Planner/Project Manager, and Council staff will provide a summary presentation to Council.

Analysis

The relationship between land use and transportation systems is one of the most defining characteristics of competitive, successful, sustainable regions. Convenient mobility and safe, efficient access across transportation modes raises property values, expands economic development opportunities, and contributes to improved quality of life. More than twenty years ago, the Federal Highway Administration released guidance encouraging context-based transportation planning and design to improve safety, function, and sustainability of communities. Safety improvements have been highlighted as a key benefit for multi-modal transportation networks that balance the needs of all users and integrate land use conditions in their design.

The National Complete Streets Act of 2009 (S. 584 / H.R. 1443, 2009) defines a “complete street” to mean “a public road that provides safe and accessible options for multiple travel modes for people of all ages and abilities, including modes such as walking, cycling, transit, automobiles, and freight.” Complete Streets are context-sensitive and designed to correspond directly to their unique local conditions. With national studies such as “Dangerous by Design” routinely rating Florida’s transportation network as one of the most dangerous in the nation for pedestrians and bicyclists, the state followed suit in 2012 with the adoption of a state Complete Streets policy. Later in 2017, the State reinforced its policy with the publication of the award-winning Florida Complete Streets Handbook.
Complete Streets play an especially important role in providing safe, effective connections to transit. Because every transit trip essentially begins and ends as a pedestrian trip, there is heightened focus on the “last-mile” connections to and from transit stops to boost transit performance. The Martin MPO identified Complete Streets planning and analysis as a priority for the transportation network, with a specific focus on the benefits for accessing transit safely and expanding the utility of the transportation network. With funding from the Federal Transit Administration, the MPO commissioned Council to develop a County-wide Complete Streets: Access to Transit Study, which was adopted in June of this year.

The Complete Streets: Access to Transit Study provides a comprehensive, long-term approach to an improved roadway network as it relates to existing and anticipated transit stops and routes countywide. The MPO’s recently adopted Long-Range Transportation Plan incorporates the study to help inform transportation priorities and funding through the 2045 planning horizon. In addition to a detailed literature review and analysis of local regulatory and planning documents, the study provides a catalog of various complete streets “interventions,” arrayed by land use context and location along the roadway according to usage zone (e.g., transit, pedestrian, frontage, furnishing, bikeway, and vehicular). The study employs a unique methodology to assess various conditions across the County’s nearly 1,200-mile roadway network to identify and prioritize eligible roadway segments for improvements. Typical before/after conceptual diagrams are included for ten select segments, varied by land use context and roadway dimensions, to illustrate how the various interventions can be combined to complete the street and used to solicit public input at multiple open house events. Finally, the study includes a series of recommended implementation activities by the MPO, local governments, and other transportation partners to achieve a safer, more complete street network going forward. A copy of the study’s executive summary is attached.

Recommendation

For informational purposes only.

Council Action – July 17, 2020

Council received a PowerPoint presentation from Dr. Kimberly DeLaney, Director of Strategic Development and Policy and Jessica Seymour, Regional Planner, Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council (copy attached).

Attachment