



To: Public Advisory Committee
From: TSP Project Management Team
Date: October 10, 2012

Re: TSP-Related Policy Work Completed to Date by the Policy Working Group (PWG) and Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

BACKGROUND

The PWG, made up of 12 members of the TSP Public Advisory Committee (PAC), was created to review and recommend transportation-related policies to the full PAC. The final policies will become part of Chapter 5 of the County's Comprehensive Plan.

The group has so far met five times to discuss county-wide and rural area policies. Remaining meetings will focus on urban area policies. Policies resulting from these meetings were reviewed by the TSP TAC in May and August.

At the onset of this process, it was agreed to distinguish between policies for urban areas and for rural areas (defined as inside and outside the urban growth boundary [UGB]) because of the different transportation needs and opportunities in these areas. The county-wide and rural area policies reviewed and discussed by the PWG and TAC included policies addressing the following topic areas:

- Freight, Rail, Airports, Pipelines, Water Transportation, Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), and Economic Development
- Rural Roads and Rural Land Use
- Rural Land Use and Rural Transportation
- Rural Equity, Health and Sustainability, Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

In total, 128 new and existing policies have been reviewed by these groups and recommended for further consideration and possible inclusion into the County's Comprehensive Plan. The policies, attached, are being provided to the PAC at its October 16, 2012 meeting for review and at its November 29, 2012, for discussion.

SUMMARY OF POLICY DISCUSSION TO DATE

The following is a brief summary of existing and new policy topics and issues discussed by the PWG and the TAC and reflected in the potential policies recommended by these groups.

Freight, Rail, Airports, Pipelines, Water Transportation, ITS, and Economic Development

Topics: General freight; freight-economic development; freight-land use impacts/equity; freight trucking; rail; airports; pipelines; water transportation [49 policies]

The majority of these policies are new. Many were developed to more specifically address freight movement as it relates to economic development and the protection of sensitive land uses (such as schools, senior centers, hospitals, parks and housing) and natural areas. Other new policy areas include:

- funding that supports freight, rail, air and water transportation;
- safety;
- rail, trucking and airport connections, and
- ITS projects.

Discussion focused primarily truck and rail freight movement and especially on economic development; how to address equity goals; and how to protect sensitive land uses and sensitive habitat areas from negative impacts associated with freight movement. The groups also discussed existing and new airport and water transportation policies.

Other existing policies relating to these topics were reviewed to ensure they still meet the county's needs for the movement of freight and coordination with other agencies, and to ensure compatibility with the proposed new policies.

Rural Roads and Rural Land Use

Topics: Building rural roads; improvements to serve development; scenic roads; rural tourism; recreational/off road development; rural roadway standards; rural to urban connectivity; needed roadway improvement [32 policies]

New policies were developed to support and recognize the importance on the local economy of resource-related uses such as agriculture and forestry. Policies address the need for the following:

- ensuring rural development is supported by adequate and appropriate roadway facilities;
- consideration for the passage of agricultural equipment and trucks in addition to cars, buses, pedestrians and bicyclists on rural roads, and
- supporting rural tourism.

The committees discussed functional classification of roads; rural-urban connectivity; the use of multiple modes of travel on rural roads; and the importance of supporting the agricultural and forestry sectors of the economy. Some discussion surrounded around what *rural* means to different people. Historically the county's policies have not distinguished much between the needs of rural and urban roadway users; the intent of these conversations and the policies is to address this distinction.

In addition to the new policies, the PWG and TAC reviewed current language for encouraging the use of Transportation Demand Management (TDM) strategies by employers; requiring right-

of-way dedication and on-site improvements for development; functional classification; and Scenic Road designations.

Rural Land Use and Transportation

Topics: Rural land use and transportation integration; intergovernmental partnerships and coordination; road access standards; agricultural equipment movement; safety and road conditions; parking; Traffic Safety Action Plan; and equestrian [17 policies]

The first new policy states the expectation that land use and transportation plans would be integrated to “create livable and sustainable rural communities” in the rural area. Other new policies support this concept by:

- addressing safe and convenient access for pedestrian, bicyclists and transit users;
- considering road improvement needs for safely moving agricultural equipment along public roads;
- addressing how to improve safety for equestrian use on roads or multiuse trails (emphasis was for well-connected system of trails, rather than having horses share right-of-way and road shoulders with other users), and
- supporting the implementation of a new Traffic Safety Action Plan for the county.

The committees also discussed the types of road users (pedestrians, bicyclists, equestrians, and agricultural equipment operators) and conflicting travel needs that could merge on road shoulders. (Additional review is needed to determine the types of cross sections of rural county roads that could best meet the varied needs.) The groups also discussed whether lower operational standards for rural road network makes sense, although there were concerns that very low standards may create safety issues.

In addition, the groups reviewed existing policies about road access standards and off-street parking requirements for special needs of rural area development, and to ensure that both vehicle and bicycle parking needs were addressed in rural communities.

Rural Equity, Health and Sustainability, Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities

Topics: Pedestrian and bicycle facilities; transit; maintenance; emergency response and disasters; rural equity issues; storm water management [30 policies]

The PWG and TAC discussed potential new policies developed to ensure that multi-use systems (pedestrian, bicycle, transit as well as automobile) were supported in the rural area. Policies addressed the need for the following:

- sufficient right-of-way for vehicles, bicycles, shoulders and storm drainage ;
- way-finding system for bicycle network;
- TSP that supports emergency service providers and provides access to all of the County during natural or human-caused incidents, and
- for rural equity in pedestrian, bicycle and transit access for the identified Transportation Disadvantaged Populations (TDP), along with prioritizing program and projects to expand travel options for these residents.

The committees discussed how equity also should be evaluated with respect to allocation of funds to ensure that the rural area receives its fair share of resources.

In addition to the new policies, the PWG reviewed current language for transit use, and pedestrian, bicycle and multi-use path accessibility. County policies have been viewed as having an urban-area focus, so the intent was to ensure that these services are included in expectations for development in the rural area. Existing policies also addressed the county's financial obligation to maintain county transportation systems whether inside cities or in unincorporated areas; the county is considering a new policy that supports the priority to focus its maintenance dollars on county roads in the unincorporated areas.

NEXT STEPS

Topics that remain for discussion in upcoming PWG and TAC meetings include:

- Urban Equity, Health & Sustainability
- Urban Land Use & Transportation
- Urban Roads and Travel
- Funding and Other Countywide Policies

Policies in these topic areas will be reviewed by the PWG and TAC during their meetings over the next six to eight months, then will be provided to the PAC for review in between February and June 2013.

All proposed current, revised and new policies coming out of this process will go to the Project Management Team (PMT) and Planning & Zoning Division staff to incorporate into Chapter 5 of the County's Comprehensive Plan. Policies may be combined and repetitive policies will be eliminated (i.e. policies will remain only in one place). Planning staff will also review the policies to ensure implementation is feasible through the land use application and/or development process.

The PAC and TAC will have the opportunity to review the Chapter 5 changes before they go to public hearings before the Planning Commission and the Board of County Commissioners for adoption. The public hearings to adopt the transportation-related policies into Chapter 5 of the Comprehensive Plan are expected to take place in fall 2013.