

## **DECEMBER 4, 2017 – WORKSHOP**

The Board of County Commissioners, Walton County, Florida, held a Workshop on December 4, 2017 at 10:00 a.m. at the Walton County Courthouse Annex in Santa Rosa Beach, Florida.

The following Board members were present: Commissioner W. N. (Bill) Chapman, Chairman; Commissioner Tony Anderson, Vice-Chair; Commissioner Melanie Nipper, and Commissioner Cecilia Jones. Mr. Larry Jones, County Administrator, and Attorney Heather Christman, Assistant County Attorney, were also present.

Chairman Chapman called the Workshop to order to discuss the 30A Mobility Study (multi-modal transit system).

Mr. Jay Liles, Seaside Institute, thanked the board for the opportunity to present more information relating to the mobility study and introduced Mr. Don Hammick with Dewberry Engineers who would also be providing additional information.

Mr. Liles introduced the following individuals who are involved with the first level of the feasibility study: Mr. Greg Krueger and Ms. Jennifer Kennedy with HNTB Engineering; Dr. Hoquiam Taiber, International Transportation Innovation Center; and Mr. Greg Darden, Structured Parking Solutions.

Mr. Darden spoke about his firm addressing mobility concerns relating to the TDC footprint and stated they have not made any formal findings at this point. They have been hosting public meetings to gather information from the public and key stake holders. Some of the initial findings show their master plan evolves more into a park and ride plan in the south part of the county. Other factors needing to be considered as part of the plan include bike share programs, ride share programs and Uber systems into the central part of the county. He said they would like

to see dedicated right of ways for shuttles for efficiency and the use of technology to improve the mobility system. Mr. Darden stated Phase I would be public and employee based shuttle programs and getting them used to the system. Developing an App for finding shuttles and parking is essential.

Mr. Liles spoke about coordination of the project with the commissioners and trying to expand the economic engine of 30A. His attempt is to create additional opportunities for manufacturing, education, engineering, and technology. However, the congestion on 30A needs to be addressed before people go elsewhere. Their motto for 30A is “Ask people to slow down and enjoy the ride.” The goal is to see less cars on the road and more people using a multi-modal transportation system. They want to make transportation fun by using various types of vehicles and new technology. Mr. Liles stated people around the country are using autonomous vehicles. He spoke about new educational opportunities for our children’s future. Mr. Liles encouraged people to provide input throughout the process. He said they need support from the entire county.

Mr. Greg Krueger, HNTB, presented an overview the project objectives. He stated the primary objective is to develop a feasibility study for what an automated shuttle service would look like in Walton County. There are four key tasks: Needs Analysis; Technology; Concepts; and the Concept Plan.

Mr. Krueger spoke about the Needs Assessment and 12 key statements or problems. Some of the issues included traffic problems, causes of traffic problems, when is the worst congestion, meeting the needs of special events, what attractions or core destinations are most visited, how to get people to the shopping districts, beaches and beach access crowding, paid parking issues, schools/busses, and locations of large employment centers.

Mr. Krueger introduced Dr. Taiber, CEO of International Transportation Innovation Center (ITIC), to address the technology aspect. Dr. Taiber spoke about shared mobility models. Various models of transportation such as passenger vehicles, low seat vehicles, public transit vehicles, trucks and route delivery trucks, were looked at as part of the review to consider the current level of automation. Dr. Taiber stated fixed route automation could currently be used for shuttles. He spoke about various charging technologies, some currently available and what is needed. Communication technologies are needed to support the vehicles. He stated that testing should be done before deploying certain safety and security features. Dr. Taiber presented videos showing the technology currently in place in other locations. He stated there are Federal programs where funding can be leveraged.

Mr. Krueger said the point is to show this project is not pushing Walton County where other places have not already gone. He spoke about other locations in Florida and around the U.S. where this type of automation is happening. Walton County can use the trials from what others have done around the world.

Mr. Krueger introduced Ms. Jennifer Kennedy to speak about the concept scenarios. Ms. Kennedy, Traffic and Transportation Planner, gave an overview of the concept scenarios as follows: Overnight guests; Day Guests; Residents; and Commuters. She spoke about a main component being the park and ride lot and using graphics, architecture, and other features to make them more desirable to use. The goal is to entice people to park and use alternative methods of transportation while they are here. Some features could include: electric vehicle charging stations, valet parking, car wash, and more. Ms. Kennedy stated they are proposing a mobile App for reservation and payments to find shuttle routes, make payments or restaurant reservations. She also spoke about lot security. She spoke about the various uses for the shuttles whether using them

to get to work, using them on demand or reserving a shuttle. There will be day use and night shuttles for weather. She spoke about the use of electric bikes that could use charging systems along the trails, electric mopeds, and ride share vehicles. She also explained the proposed routes. She spoke about amenities with interactive panels and using mobile apps, solar glow in the dark paths for pedestrians. Ms. Kennedy further explained the need for a control center to oversee the technology, vehicle storage area, and maintenance facility. There will also be an opportunity for a learning center which could involve high school students or collegiate programs.

Mr. Don Hammick spoke about the multiple demands of transportation and there being limited right of way. He stated they looked at various alternatives relating to needed travel lanes along 30A for the various types of vehicles. Mr. Hammick explained options for how to divide the lanes for each different type of vehicle use or shared use. Cost projections would still need to be determined.

Ms. Kennedy spoke about the Feasibility Projects which include the service type projects that could be completed in 1-5 years. Service projects include building a park and ride lot for worker, creating the route, intersection improvements, and creating the application. Mid-range projects taking 5-10 years would include: communications, fiber, security, and traffic operation cameras. They are also considering a lane from DeFuniak Springs, a data center, and traffic management center. Long-range projects for 10+ years include several EAD lanes, and park and ride lots.

Ms. Kennedy stated the next step is to complete the feasibility report including the needs and costs for all aspects of the proposed projects, as well as identifying necessary funding.

Dr. Taiber spoke briefly regarding use of the Starship vehicle for deliveries. The program is currently being tried on the west coast and overseas.

Brief discussion was held about the Tesla Station in DeFuniak. Mr. Liles stated Rosemary Beach has requested a charging station be placed there. Tesla hopes to expand their presence in Walton County. Mr. Rob Mahan, West Florida Regional Planning Council, stated DOT has put a project in their 2018 budget for service along Highway 331 from DeFuniak Springs to the south Walton Annex.

Ms. Nipper question why they are targeting the Panama City Airport for the Traffic Management Center. Ms. Kennedy stated it is due to the amount of traffic at that airport.

Commissioner Anderson stated he has attended a mobility conference and is excited for the upcoming technology coming to Walton County and commented on how it will change the face of the county.

Chairman Chapman questioned the plans for Owl's Head. Mr. Liles said development for Owl's Head has a forward motion and still has pieces ongoing. He spoke about the county's funding request to the Triumph Board for infrastructure at Owl's Head. Mr. Liles stated it could be a great location for the education center or research and development center. He spoke about ideas for using the land. He also spoke about the settlement with the VW Corporation and stated Florida will be receiving a large sum of money from that settlement and it is yet to be determined how the money will be utilized. He commented on the Board's wisdom in seeking funding from the Legislature, which was turned down, but he is eager to go back to Tallahassee in 2018 to continue pursuing funding

Mr. Dale Hill, Founder of Proterra Busses, spoke about the efficiency of electric busses and presented a video showing the new technology used. He spoke about funding availability from the Federal Government. He explained the engineering and reliability of their vehicles and the successful testing they have been through. They have various size of vehicles in order to meet the

needs of the customer. Mr. Hill explained how the charging stations are used and also spoke about available funds from the VolksWagen Settlement with the State.

Mr. Liles stated this type of transportation is available now and recognized Mr. Tom Walter, Electric Cart Company, who currently has a business in Walton County.

There being no further comments, the meeting was adjourned at 11:14 a.m.

Chairman Chapman called the meeting back to order for further comments. Commissioner Jones exited the meeting.

Chairman Chapman opened the floor for public comments.

Mr. Bob Brooke commended the board for their forward thinking and looking at problems affecting 30A and longer term problems for the county. He questioned what the real traffic problem is on 30A and said he would like an analysis showing the number of people requiring parking. He also commented on using an airport out of the county and felt the Traffic Management Center should be located in Walton County.

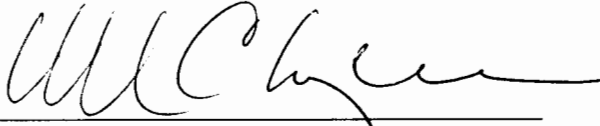
Ms. Celeste Cobena voiced opposition to parking being located in state parks. Florida Statute states the land is acquired for recreation and passive conservation and recreation not for parking and transportation. She spoke about having bike paths that are both fun and safe and encouraged the board to stay out of the forests.


Ms. Leigh Moore, Howard Group, supports what the board is doing to improve transportation. She encouraged them to think about more charging stations.

Mr. Rick Hall commented on traffic counts. He stated the most efficient way to gather information is a Telemetry based traffic count system. A company would place a loop in the pavement and get a seasonal count or pattern for traffic which would be important to transportation companies who will invest in the area. The reports could provide information showing if they need

to operate year round or seasonal. He also commented on current business along 30A who are willing to enter into a public/private partnership to set up bus stations.

There being no further comments, the meeting adjourned at 11:35 a.m.

Approved:   
W. N. "Bill" Chapman, Chairman

Attest:   
Alex Alford, Clerk of Courts and County Comptroller