



September 27, 2005

AGENDA ITEM # 4

**C. TRANSPORTATION EQUITY ACT FOR THE 21ST CENTURY
TRANSPORTATION ENHANCEMENT PROGRAM
PRIORITY PROJECT LIST**

REQUESTED BY: CRTPA Staff

TYPE OF ITEM: Discussion/Action

STATEMENT OF ISSUE

The Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21) Priority Project List (PPL) is one of the project priority lists annually adopted by the Capital Region Transportation Planning Region (CRTPA) to provide guidance to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) in considering projects for funding consideration. The TEA-21 Enhancement Program typically provides funding for the provision of bicycle and pedestrian facilities, safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicyclists, landscaping and beautification, and other activities.

This year, the CRTPA received two applications for funding consideration under the TEA-21 Program: *The Meridian Greenway Trail*, and *The Downtown Tallahassee Pedestrian Signage System*. Both projects were reviewed by the CRTPA Subcommittees and forwarded to the FDOT, District 3, for eligibility and feasibility review in May of 2005 by the CRTPA.

Staff is currently seeking approval of the TEA-21 Priority Project List as reviewed by the CRTPA Subcommittees and Staff, for funding consideration in the Tentative Five-Year Work Program for FY 2007 – FY 2011.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

Option 1: Adopt the TEA-21 Priority Project List and forward to the Florida Department of Transportation, District 3, for funding consideration in the Tentative Five-Year Work Program for FY 2007 – FY 2011

HISTORY AND ANALYSIS

Eligible Projects

The Federal Transportation Act, known as the Transportation Equity Act for the 21st Century (TEA-21), contains a provision for “transportation enhancement” projects. Under the Act, 10% of all Surface Transportation Program funds are to be set aside for “transportation enhancement” activities. These activities include:

- Provision of facilities for pedestrians and bicycles;
- Provision of safety and educational activities for pedestrians and bicycles;
- Acquisition of scenic easements and scenic or historic sites;

- Scenic or Historic Highway Programs (including the provision of tourist and welcome center facilities);
- Landscaping and other Scenic Beautification;
- Historic Preservation;
- Rehabilitation and Operation of Historic Transportation Buildings, Structures, or Facilities (including historic railroad facilities and canals);
- Preservation of Abandoned Railway Corridors (including the conversion and use thereof for pedestrian or bicycle trails);
- Control and Removal of Outdoor Advertising;
- Archaeological Planning and Research;
- Environmental projects to prevent water pollution due to highway runoff or reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality while maintaining habitat connectivity, and
- Establishment of transportation museums.

Overall Process and Schedule

Each year, the Capital Regional Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA) is to submit a priority list of enhancement projects to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District 3, for consideration in development of the Five Year Work Program. The process of developing this priority list involves approximately one year to complete, from application solicitation to final prioritization of the proposed projects. This schedule, from start to finish, can be viewed, for your information, in **Attachment 1**.

Application Solicitation

This year, CRTPA staff solicited new applications from the community, as well as welcomed the resubmittal of applications from previous years. Announcements were sent to previous applicants and all CRTPA member local governments to ensure their awareness of the application process. Additionally, CRTPA staff provided technical assistance to local governmental agencies and organizations throughout the months of December 2004 through February 2005 for the development of enhancement applications. The application deadline was Monday, February 28, 2005 at 5:00 PM.

Project Applications Submitted to the CRTPA

Project applications were submitted for the following projects:

1. Meridian Greenway Trail (City)
2. Downtown Pedestrian Signage System (City)

Each of the projects identified above is summarized in **Attachment 2**. The applications are also provided as **Attachment 3** for the Meridian Greenway Trail, and **Attachment 4** for the Downtown Tallahassee Pedestrian Signage System.

Sponsorship and Eligibility Review

Before the CRTPA can submit the project applications to the FDOT for eligibility review, each application must have a project sponsor. Project sponsors are any municipal, state, county or federal agency willing to do the following:

1. Provide any local funding match that may be required;
2. Enter into a maintenance agreement with the Florida Department of Transportation; and/or

3. Support other actions necessary to fully implement the proposed project.

Both of the applications that were submitted to the CRTPA received sponsorship at the February 16, 2005 City Commission meeting.

The applications were both reviewed by the CRTPA Subcommittees and CRTPA in May of 2005, and deemed appropriate to forward to the FDOT, District 3, for eligibility and feasibility review for ultimate funding consideration in the FY 2007-2011 Work Program.

Funding

The FDOT will provide the soft match funds to the federal funding. The projects that require City, County, or City/County sponsorship also require a commitment on behalf of the sponsor to enter into a maintenance agreement with the FDOT and/or support any other actions necessary to fully implement the proposed project. The costs associated with the maintenance of these projects have not yet been determined. It should be noted that not all submitted projects make it through the entire review process. The project must be determined eligible by the FDOT, must be ranked as a high priority by the CRTPA, and must be funded by FDOT through the Five-Year Work Program. The applicants from the various City departments need to appropriate funds for the maintenance of the projects in their budgets. The earliest likely date for funding to be available for these projects is the State's Fiscal Year 2010 (beginning July 2009).

The Meridian Greenway Trail is estimated to require a \$300,000 allocation from FDOT Enhancement funds, and an additional \$100,000 of local funds. *The Downtown Tallahassee Pedestrian Signage System* is estimated to require a \$1,024,380 allocation from FDOT Enhancement funds, and an additional \$113,820 of local funds.

For information purposes, **Attachment 5** provides a historical account of the enhancement projects and associated funding that the Tallahassee-Leon County MPO has received in the past ten (10) years from the FDOT. The average funding per year is \$693,000, although this amount deviates greatly from the actual amount received in any given year (highest amount was \$1,457,000 received in FY 2005, and the lowest amount was \$45,000 received in FY 2004).

ENHANCEMENT PROJECT PRIORITIZATION REVIEW

Since receiving conceptual approval in May, CRTPA staff worked with an Enhancement Subcommittee composed of two members from each of the CRTPA Subcommittees (Technical Advisory Committee, Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, and the Citizens Advisory Committee) to develop a recommended Priority Project list for the two applications received this year. The Enhancement Subcommittee met twice (May 18, 2005 and August 17, 2005) to hear presentations from the project applicants and to consider the merits of the projects. The purpose of the Enhancement Subcommittee was to streamline the recommendation phase of the enhancement process by allowing members of the full CRTPA subcommittees to pioneer the research of the projects and report back to their respective subcommittee on the merits and downfalls of the projects as presented to them.

The Enhancement Subcommittee recommended the following Priority List for the Tea-21 Enhancement Project Applications for 2005.

1. Meridian Greenway Trail
2. Downtown Pedestrian Signage System

The Enhancement Subcommittee, after careful consideration, chose the Meridian Greenway Trail as their number one priority based on the overall cost-benefit of the project, fact that it added actual travel facilities to the existing transportation network, and that it provided more interconnections to area schools and parks, which they felt was very important.

On September 13, 2005, the CRTPA Subcommittees met and reviewed the TEA-21 Priority Project List recommendation of the Enhancement Subcommittee.

RECOMMENDATIONS BY CRTPA SUBCOMMITTEES AND STAFF

The CRTPA subcommittee agendas were distributed to all representatives on September 6, 2005 with the subcommittee meetings held on September 13, 2005. The following are the actions that each subcommittee took regarding the TEA-21 Priority Project List along with the attendance from each of the CRTPA subcommittees.

Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

The TAC approved a motion recommending the TEA-21 Priority Project List to be submitted to the FDOT, District 3, as follows:

- 1. Meridian Greenway Trail*
- 2. Downtown Tallahassee Pedestrian Signage System*

The members that attended the TAC meeting include the following representative organizations: Leon County Public Works, CRTPA, Tallahassee Regional Airport, Blueprint 2000, City of Tallahassee Growth Management, City of Tallahassee Traffic Engineering, City of Tallahassee Public Works Engineering, Apalachee Regional Planning Council, Commuter Services of North Florida, Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department, Gadsden County Growth Management, Leon County Administration, and Quincy Building and Planning.

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

The CAC did not have a quorum at this meeting but members recommended approval of the TEA-21 Priority Project List to be submitted to the FDOT, District 3, as follows:

- 1. Meridian Greenway Trail*
- 2. Downtown Tallahassee Pedestrian Signage System*

The members that attended the CAC meeting represented the following CRTPA organizations: City of Tallahassee, Leon County, and Town of Havana.

Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)

The BPAC approved a motion recommending the TEA-21 Priority Project List to be submitted to the FDOT, District 3, as follows:

- 1. Meridian Greenway Trail**
- 2. Downtown Tallahassee Pedestrian Signage System**

The BPAC also asked that the costs associated with the construction of the Meridian Greenway Trail be examined closely with FDOT to be certain that the requested funding will be adequate to complete the project and to provide adequate signage and pavement markings where the trail crosses Meridian Road.

The members that attended the BPAC meeting represent the following CRTPA organizations: City of Midway, City of Tallahassee, and Leon County.

CRTPA Staff Recommendation

CRTPA staff is in agreement with the recommendation of the CRTPA Subcommittees to rank the Meridian Greenway Trail Enhancement Project as the number one priority from the CRTPA, and the Downtown Tallahassee Pedestrian Signage System following with a number 2 priority ranking.

NEXT STEPS

Once approved, the TEA-21 Priority Project List will be sent to the FDOT, District 3, for funding consideration in the Tentative Five-Year Work Program for FY 2007 – FY 2011. At that time, the FDOT will prioritize all enhancement applications within District 3, and determine how to allocate the available funds (approximately 3 million dollars) throughout the district. The CRTPA will be notified in the fall of 2005 if the Enhancement Projects for the area have been included in the FY 2007-2011 Work Program.

Following informal notification, the Draft Work Program is typically presented to the public and the CRTPA in November. Subsequent to presentation of the FDOT's Draft Work Program to the CRTPA, staff will initiate development of the FY 2007 – FY 2011 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) reflecting these funded projects.

OPTIONS

- Option 1: Adopt the TEA-21 Priority Project List and forward to the Florida Department of Transportation, District 3, for funding consideration in the Tentative Five-Year Work Program for FY 2007 – FY 2011.
- Option 2: Provide other direction.

RECOMMENDED ACTION

- Option 1: Adopt the TEA-21 Priority Project List and forward to the Florida Department of Transportation, District 3, for funding consideration in the Tentative Five-Year Work Program for FY 2007 – FY 2011.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Schedule for the 2005 Transportation Enhancement Project Application Process.

Attachment 2: Summary of the received 2005 Transportation Enhancement Project Applications

Attachment 3: Meridian Greenway Trail Transportation Enhancement Project Application

Attachment 4: Downtown Tallahassee Pedestrian Signage System Transportation Enhancement Project Application

Attachment 5: Transportation Enhancement Projects Funded in the Tallahassee-Leon County MPO area.