



RETREAT AGENDA ITEM

MIDTOWN AREA TRANSPORTATION PLAN UPDATE

STATEMENT OF ISSUE

This item provides an update on the public involvement efforts of Phase II of the Midtown Area Transportation Plan including recent survey findings.

HISTORY AND ANALYSIS

The Latest

Initiated in early 2019, Phase II of the Midtown Area Transportation Plan builds upon the options identified and evaluated in Phase I (discussed on page 3 of this item) through conducting stakeholder meetings, surveys, general public workshops, and an open house. This phase includes a focus on receiving community input related to the needs of Midtown's bicycle, pedestrian and transit users and, to date, has included the following efforts (with future planned public involvement efforts shaded in *italics*):

- March to present – email/phone contact with **Midtown area neighborhood associations** discussing project and seeking to be attend upcoming neighborhood meetings
- March 25 – **Midtown Working Group** (facilitated by Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department) meeting to discuss project with Midtown neighborhood and business representatives
- April 30 – **Midtown Merchants Association** meeting to discuss project and receive input; continued email contact requesting to attend upcoming meetings
- May 16 – Informal project **pop up event** in Midtown area (location: Waterworks)
- May 9 – July 30 – **Midtown Online Survey** active
- June 4 – **Public Workshop** conducted at Tallahassee Senior Center to receive project input
- July 18 – meet informally with **Midtown area neighborhood association representatives** to discuss project and receive input (Brass Tap)
- August 20 – meet with the **Los Robles Neighborhood Association** to discuss project and receive input
- *November 2* – Planned Informal weekend project **pop up event** in Midtown area
- *November 6* – Planned **Public Workshop** at Tallahassee Senior Center to receive input on refined options
- *January 2020* – Planned **Open House** to present draft recommendations

Ultimately, the extensive public involvement efforts of Phase II will assist in refining identified options from which the plan's recommended options for the Midtown area will be developed.

Next Steps Phase II

Based upon the public input received up to date (including input from the Midtown online survey), a second **public workshop** has been scheduled for November 6 to further refine the options for the Midtown area. Specifically, different options will be created for three distinct corridors in the Midtown area: (1) Thomasville Road near 5th Avenue, (2) Thomasville Road near Whole Foods and (3) Monroe Street near 5th Avenue). At the meeting, attendees will be able to vote on which of the options they most prefer for each of the three corridors.

The final phase of the project involves the development of draft recommendations based upon the most recent public input received from the second public workshop and, once completed, the Midtown Area Transportation Plan draft recommendations will be presented to the public at an **open house** (currently planned to occur in January 2020).

The project is scheduled to be completed and presented for CRTPA board approval in early 2020.

Midtown Area Transportation Plan Background

Building on the recent efforts identified for the Midtown area of Tallahassee, the Midtown Area Transportation Plan was initiated at the June 19, 2017 CRTPA meeting. The plan is being developed in two parts (Phase I and Phase II).

Such recent efforts identified in the Midtown area include:

- The CRTPA's Connections 2040 Regional Mobility Plan" (adopted on November 16, 2015) which identifies the Thomasville Road/Meridian Road/Seventh Avenue intersection for improvement. This project has been included on the agency's RMP Roadways Priority Project List (and is on the most recent Roadway PPL scheduled for adoption at today's meeting).
- Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Community Enhancement project ("Midtown Placemaking (Thomasville and Monroe Roads)") that identifies improvements at the five-points intersection of Meridian Road/Thomasville Road/Seventh Avenue as well as streetscaping improvements to Monroe Street (Thomasville Road to Tharpe Street) and Thomasville Road (Monroe Street to Post Road). This project was included in the November 2014 passage of the Leon County Penny Sales Tax Extension.
- FDOT safety study ("Thomasville Road (Midtown) Safety Study") was conducted by the FDOT on Thomasville Road (Monroe Street to Betton Road) based upon a request by the CRTPA to evaluation bicycle and pedestrian safety along the corridor. The study, presented to the CRTPA on September 19, 2016, identified potential pedestrian safety improvements along the corridor (some of which are included on the agency's Transportation Systems Management (TSM) Priority Project List for funding).

Phase I of the Plan is complete and provided a technical review analyzing potential changes to the transportation network to gain a better understanding of travel patterns in and around the Midtown area of Tallahassee. This phase provided an evaluation of existing conditions including data collection efforts that have included use of Bluetooth technology to provide a picture of traffic patterns throughout the Midtown area (including traffic traveling both to and through Midtown).

Included within Phase I was the identification of options and how each option performs based on both qualitative and quantitative criteria. Specifically, the following nine (9) transportation options (many of which are not stand alone and may be implemented in coordination with other identified options) were identified:

- **Beard St and North Gadsden St Realignment** - Realignment of Beard Street within existing right-of-way to improve connectivity at this location has been identified.
- **Sidewalk Connectivity** - Missing gaps in the Midtown area are identified (including key missing gaps at N. Gadsden, discussed below).
- **North Gadsden St corridor improvements from 6th Ave to Thomasville Rd** - Identifies construction of missing key sidewalk gaps and road diet in this key location of Midtown.
- **Midtown Boulevard/Complete Street** - by definition, complete streets are streets designed for all users (pedestrian, bicyclists, transit users as well as motorized transportation). Many of the proposed alternatives evaluated can be implemented in a manner that to improve the Midtown area for all users.
- **One-way southbound option of Thomasville Rd from N Gadsden St to N Monroe St** - This alternative improves roadway level of service and could be constructed to use existing right-of-way for complete street improvements. Potential negatives with proposal include reduced access to businesses.
- **One-way southbound option of Thomasville Rd from N Gadsden St to 6th Ave** - This alternative improves roadway level of service and could be constructed to use existing right-of-way for complete street improvements. Potential negatives with proposal include reduced access to businesses.
- **Thomasville, Meridian and N Gadsden Roundabout (includes all existing movements)** - Analysis identifies that this option does not operationally work and will have constructability issues. Additionally, a roundabout at this location creates pedestrian challenges. Study recommendation – Consider not moving forward with further exploration of this option.
- **Thomasville, Meridian and N Gadsden Roundabout (No Gadsden to Meridian movement)** - Analysis identifies constructability issues. Additionally, a roundabout at this location creates pedestrian challenges. Study recommendation – Consider not moving forward with further exploration of this option.
- **6th and 7th Ave Bi-Directional Roadways** - Convert the existing one-way pairs into two-way roadways. Analysis identifies that this change would reduce level-of-service and create additional conflict points at intersections. Study recommendation: Do not move forward with further exploration.

On February 20, 2018, the CRTPA approved Phase 1 of the plan and eliminated the last 3 options (identified in shading above) in from further study. Due to the technical nature of Phase I of the Plan,

coordination efforts focused largely on meetings with the Florida Department of Transportation District 3 and the CRTPA's local planning partners.

Phase II of the plan, discussed in more detail above, involves extensive public and stakeholder input on the plan's development including the refinement of the options identified in Phase I.

A project page for the Midtown Area Transportation Plan (<http://crtpa.org/midtown-area-transportation-plan-phase-ii/>) provides project highlights and details public involvement opportunities.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Project Map