

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Recommendation that the Board accept the Immokalee Transportation Network Plan that identifies opportunities to improve the transportation network in Immokalee.

OBJECTIVE: To improve the transportation network in Immokalee.

CONSIDERATIONS: The Immokalee Area Master Plan recommended that Collier County Transportation Management Services Department (TMSD) complete a transportation planning study to identify potential connectivity improvements of both the collector and local street grid, as well as the sidewalk network, to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety and connect residential areas to community facilities and commercial services.

To comply with this direction, TMSD contracted with Atkins to complete the planning study. The goal of this effort was to identify missing gaps in the sidewalk and roadway network to improve mobility, connectivity and the multimodal network while also establishing priorities for those improvements. A gap analysis is significant to the sidewalk and roadway network as it focuses on smaller projects which can connect a larger network of existing facilities. These projects provide the opportunity for Immokalee area residents to safely walk or ride bicycles to get to transit, work, school, and other destinations.

Recognizing that many studies have been completed in the Immokalee area, the Immokalee Transportation Network Plan compiled the analysis from previous studies, looked at what projects were existing, committed, or planned and focused on recommendations to complete infrastructure connections. The goal of this report was to support prior studies and projects and help with setting future priorities and grant development.

This review focused on the goals and objectives set in the Immokalee Area Master Plan which included supporting transportation and mobility, specific community policies, and identifying key connections to destinations with transportation and mobility improvements. Additionally, data, maps, and projects from prior studies were compiled.

To gain a better understanding of the existing mobility-related conditions in the study area, the study team conducted several field reviews throughout the study area, held two workshops and formed a stakeholder's advisory group (SAG) consisting of groups and agencies working in Immokalee. The draft study was also presented to the Collier MPO's Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee, the Immokalee Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and the Immokalee Beautification MSTU.

With input from these groups and the SAG, an initial list of sidewalk and roadway projects was developed. This included all the projects identified in previous studies as well as projects Atkins identified that would close gaps in the network, create better connections, expand the network, and address safety and operational issues. The sidewalk projects consist of projects that expand and complete the sidewalk network allowing for safer walking conditions throughout the study area. The roadway connection projects provide for improved interconnections, increase safety for all users and improve emergency access.

The study team recognized the need to prioritize these projects. To accomplish this, evaluation criteria were developed to prioritize the proposed sidewalk and roadway projects. Closing gaps in the network, creating better connections, expanding a connected network, and addressing safety and operational issues were ranked with the focus on directing future investments.

The evaluation criteria for unfunded proposed sidewalks included six (6) categories: connectivity to the existing network, proximity to a major activity center, proximity to a shopping/retail center, proximity to a bicycle/pedestrian crash that occurred within the last five years, proximity to a school, and proximity to a transit stop. The evaluation criteria for roadway projects included five (5) categories: connectivity to the existing roadway network, funding status, project status, proximity to evacuation routes, and right-of-way availability.

The criteria when applied to each of the 122 sidewalk and 27 roadway projects, produced a list of projects ranked as high, medium, or low. It should be noted that strict adherence to the ranking is not advised. As funding becomes

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available through the County, the Florida Department of Transportation, the Metropolitan Planning Organization, grants, and other sources, some lower-ranked projects may meet the funding criteria better than others. In these cases, it is advisable to capitalize on the available funding and advance the qualifying project or projects. The identified sidewalk and roadway evaluation criteria used for the analysis in the study and the lists of projects to improve the current network gaps, and corresponding maps meet the intent of the recommendation in the Immokalee Area Master Plan.

The Immokalee CRA and MSTU both accepted the plan at their Joint meeting on November 15, 2023. They recognized that the identification of gaps in the network, connecting a multimodal network that includes walking, bicycling, transit, along with pathways in this study will help to coordinate activities and may assist with future funding activities.

FISCAL IMPACT: There is no Fiscal impact associated with this Executive Summary. The plan was completed in accordance with the scope for \$192,296. Subsequent projects or grant requests developed from the plan, if applicable, would be brought to the Board for approval and for authorization of a future funding request.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT IMPACT: This project is consistent with the County's Growth Management Plan, the Immokalee Area Master Plan and the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan.

LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS: This item has been reviewed by the County Attorney, raises no legal issues at this time and requires majority vote for acceptance of the Plan. -JAK

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board accept the Immokalee Transportation Network Plan that identifies opportunities to improve the transportation network in Immokalee

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ATTACHMENT(S)

1. [Linked] Immokalee Transportation Network Plan (PDF)