

## MEMORANDUM

### CITY OF CAPE CORAL PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

TO: Mayor Gunter and CTAC Commissioners

FROM: Michael Ilczyszyn, City Manager *MI*  
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DATE: March 14, 2024

SUBJECT: Multimodal Transportation Master Plan and Bike/Pedestrian Plan  
Request for Approval and Direction to Proceed

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#### **Purpose**

The purpose of this memo is to provide the Commission with an overview of Multimodal Transportation Master Plan ('Master Plan') final recommendations and request direction to proceed with five (5) short-term (1-5 year) priority projects.

#### **Summary**

The Master Plan provides a strategic 20-year vision for creating a safe multimodal transportation network in Cape Coral for people of all ages and abilities. The Master Plan updates Cape Coral's first (2016) Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. It identifies nearly 300 policies, programs, and projects for funding and implementation within five-year, ten-year, and 20-year horizons.

#### **Background**

In the 1950s, car-centric development was seen as a symbol of progress and prosperity. This mindset was reflected in the development of Cape Coral, where the focus was on creating a suburban paradise with easy access to the waterways and beaches of Southwest Florida. This vision of the perfect suburban lifestyle, coupled with the convenience of automobile transportation, made Cape Coral an attractive destination for families looking to escape the hustle and bustle of city life. However, as the city grew and the population increased, the negative effects of car-centric development have become apparent. Traffic congestion, safety, air pollution, and the loss of natural habitat/tree canopy all became pressing issues.

Multimodal Transportation Master Plans are necessary adaptations to the more traditional transportation plans, which focused almost solely on auto-centric capacity. This Master Plan considers options to provide for alternative travel equal to auto travel demands. Today, Cape Coral is working towards creating a more sustainable and balanced transportation system, with a focus on public transportation, bike lanes, and pedestrian-friendly streets. While the city's history may be rooted in the 1950s American automobile culture, it is now looking towards a safer, well-connected, more sustainable, and environmentally-friendly future.

## Findings

The goal of a Multimodal Transportation Master Plan is to create a comprehensive and integrated transportation system that meets the needs of all users, including pedestrians, cyclists, public transit riders, and drivers. This plan recognizes that transportation is not just about moving people and goods from one place to another, but also about creating livable and sustainable communities. By incorporating a variety of transportation options, the plan aims to reduce reliance on single-occupancy vehicles and promote more sustainable modes of transportation.

The Multimodal Transportation Master Plan was completed in five chapters: Public Stakeholder Input, Priorities and Emerging Trends, Existing Conditions, Needs Analysis and Opportunities, and Implementation Plan. Findings are summarized as follows:

### Public Stakeholder Input

Overall, residents gave the City's transportation system a 27% approval rating. However, there is a strong interest in seeking alternative transportation options. About 50% are willing to use public transportation and 75% regularly walk or bike. Additionally, one-third are open to using golf carts, e-mobility, or Mobility on Demand. Traffic congestion is the most concerning issue. There is a correlation between the willingness to use alternative transportation and the potential to reduce congestion by providing these options.

### Priorities and Emerging Trends

Given the growing concern for mitigating congestion and projections for substantial population growth, it is imperative to prioritize viable alternative transportation options. Many cities have set a precedent by implementing sustainable transportation practices, such as building dedicated low-speed vehicle lanes, adapting micromobility and Mobility on Demand policies, and expanding sidewalk networks. These efforts not only reduce auto-dependency but enhance the livability and attractiveness of cities for residents and visitors. The Multimodal Transportation Master Plan considers these needs and outlines policies, programs, and projects to incorporate Transportation Demand Management, micromobility, and MoD programs.

### Existing Conditions & Opportunities

The 2023 Interactive Growth Model Update predicts a 48% increase in Cape Coral's population between 2016 and 2045, with approximately 100,000 more people expected to call Cape Coral home in the next 25 years. 75% of this growth is projected to occur north of Pine Island Road. Additionally, Cape Coral has experienced significant growth in other areas, with a 229% increase in total crashes per 1,000 people from 2012 to 2022. The Master Plan provides recommendations on 20 intersections and 6 key corridors to address crashes, increase safety, and adapt to the growing population. In addition, the Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan Update identified approximately 80-miles of sidewalk projects and over 200-miles of multi-use paths, bike lanes, or bicycle boulevards.

The Master Plan identifies spot improvements and pilot programs. These spot improvements are strategically located in areas that have been identified as high traffic areas or areas with safety concerns. By implementing these improvements and pilot programs, the Master Plan aims to address specific issues and improve overall safety and efficiency of the transportation network. The proposed projects include bridge improvements, signal installations, intersection improvements, lane repurposing, midblock crossings, pedestrian bridges, roundabouts, and the 'Golf Course Loop' South Cape micromobility pilot project.

Travel demand modeling was utilized to predict the effects of multimodal improvements resulting from the city's roadway widening projects listed as cost-feasible by the MPO. The modeling incorporated policy changes to simulate traffic calming effects, including speed limit reductions, MoD impacts, and new active travel connections. Modeling results indicate that the average congestion speeds are slightly reduced overall with the multimodal improvements. However, they are considerably reduced within certain segments, such as Cape Coral Parkway east of Santa Barbara and Santa Barbara Blvd south of Veterans Parkway.

### Implementation

Nearly 300 recommendations were made for the Multimodal Transportation Master Plan and the update to the 2016 Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan. These recommendations were prioritized and organized into three phases for short-, mid-, and long-term implementation. The draft Final Recommendations Policy, Programs, and Projects list is available upon request.

It is understood that Cape Coral's ability to rationally implement the transportation projects and programs in the Master Plan depends on funding. An extensive list of funding opportunities was provided as part of the Plan's implementation. These opportunities contemplate existing funding sources, such as the General Fund or the Special Revenue Fund, grant opportunities, toll revenue, and Local Option Fuel Tax. Because existing funding options are limited, and potential funding sources are variable, Cape Coral will need to identify new sources or other options for local funding. For this reason, a Mobility Plan and Fee are proposed as a priority project to ensure dedicated funding is available to implement the Multimodal Transportation Master Plan.

### **Request for Direction**

- (1) Staff is requesting confirmation from CTAC Commissioners to approve and accept the 2024 Multimodal Transportation Master Plan and Bike/Pedestrian Plan Update as a guiding document for the next 20-years of transportation planning within Cape Coral; and
- (2) Staff is concurrently requesting directive from CTAC Commissioners to proceed with establishing funding and implementing five (5) short-term priority projects identified within the Multimodal Transportation Master Plan. The priority projects are as follows:
  1. Mobility Plan & Fee
  2. Corridor Planning Studies
  3. Areawide Local Roadway Speed Limit Study
  4. Micromobility Feasibility Study & Pilot Program
  5. South Cape Mobility Hub Planning Study

Details on the five (5) priority projects are provided below.

- 1. Mobility Plan and Fee:** A mobility fee is a one-time fee paid by a developer to a local government. It pays for transportation improvements that mitigate any impacts to transportation facilities caused by new development and redevelopment. Mobility fees would replace impact fees in areas where a mobility plan applies, such as the priority corridors listed in the Multimodal Plan. A mobility fee would provide the City with a source that pays for multimodal projects included in the Master Plan and Mobility Plan rather than solely paying for road capacity projects that impact fees fund.
- 2. Corridor Planning Studies:** The bicycle, pedestrian, and micromobility facility recommendations included in the Cape Coral Multimodal Master Plan present a framework and priority list of needed improvements that will have a significant positive impact on multimodal mobility. Looking at future opportunities for prioritizing and implementing a connected, safe multimodal network, the following are recommendations for additional evaluations that Cape Coral should undertake:

Diplomat Parkway	Diplomat Parkway is identified in the 2045 MPO LRTP Cost Feasible Projects: City of Cape Coral Road Projects (Table 5-11) as a 4-lane limited access facility with anticipated funding in 2026-2030. The proposed corridor planning study seeks to update the E/W Corridor Study's findings to provide recommendations for updated widening needs, alternative multimodal capacity projects, and an updated impacts and costs scope.
SE 47th Terrace	SE 47th Terrace serves as the de facto mainstreet in Cape Coral's downtown. It is anticipated that infill development will create a desirable walkable downtown and the need for additional measures to facilitate mobility. The proposed corridor planning study on 47th Terrace shall focus on updating this emerging mainstreet to enhance safety by evaluating roundabouts, creating a bicycle boulevard, improving ADA accessibility, and providing context-based transportation improvements to adjacent land uses, and facilitate the development of a bike share/micromobility pilot program, and consideration for a downtown mobility hub.

- 3. Areawide Local Roadway Speed Limit Study:** According to the US Department of Transportation, speed control is one of the most important methods for reducing fatalities and serious injuries, especially on roads where vehicles and vulnerable users mix. Typical speed limits include 25 miles per hour (mph) in residential or school districts. Speed limits in Cape Coral range from 25 to 55 mph, although all of Cape Coral's local roads post a speed limit of 30 mph. The study examines if speed limit reduction would be a viable policy decision to enhance safety on local roadways in Cape Coral.
- 4. Micromobility Feasibility Study & Pilot Program:** The 'Golf Course Loop' is a micromobility feasibility and pilot program focusing on multimodal capacity building, safety, and connectivity in South Cape. The proposed feasibility study will assess a lane repurposing on Country Club Parkway to accommodate bicycle and e-mobility users. The micromobility program will look to establish regulating ordinances for accountability, data requirements, complaint processes, geofencing operational areas, and operator fees,
- 5. South Cape Mobility Hub Planning Study:** A mobility hub brings transit, micromobility, bike share, car share and other modes of transportation together in one place. The South Cape 'Core Connect' Mobility Hub is envisioned to bolster the existing transfer station, but also includes placemaking features, art, landscaping elements, flex commercial space, and real-time travel information all in one "hub." This study coincides with the need to provide viable alternative transportation options as the downtown becomes denser to limit congestions impacts and offsets single-occupancy vehicle parking needs.