2040

City of Punta Gorda Comprehensive Plan

Transportation Element

Adopted XXXXX
Resolution #

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I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Existing patterns of urban development have seriously compromised sustainable growth, the quality of life, and economic viability of cities. The practices of land use segregation and automobile dependent design have resulted in wide-spread loss of open space; increased traffic congestion and air pollution; environmental degradation; increased housing and transportation costs; inadequate provision of schools and public services; and growing areas of declining property values, crime, and poverty. The resultant loss of community identity adds to these problems by discouraging citizen awareness of, and participation in, community affairs.

The City seeks to ensure that growth forms an integral part of a community of functional neighborhoods and retail centers; increases community identity to promote civic awareness and responsibility; and enhances the quality of life for the entire City to ensure the greatest possible economic and social benefits for all residents.

The existing Land Development Regulations and other city plans such as the Community Redevelopment Area Plan, consider future growth, promote a coherent built environment, which respects local and regional architecture. The land use plans of the City rely on the establishment and maintenance of an integrated and balanced transportation system based on pedestrian, bicycle, transit, and automobile use. In order to further the goal of creating a truly multimodal city the transportation network must respect the natural environment and through the protection and replenishment of City greenscape and tree canopy by landscaping of both the public realm and private development projects.

Looking ahead to future growth goals in the City of Punta Gorda, the downtown area should be viewed as a park once area, where pedestrian movement is encouraged and vehicle transit is secondary to pedestrian activity. Multimodal planning will be necessary, and the current groundwork in the City supports this idea. Planning guidelines should continue to encourage walk able retail districts with significant office and residential components.

The *Transportation Element* contains the data and analysis necessary to move toward a general conformity in goals, objectives, and policies, with those in the MPO Long Range Transportation Plan while providing the City with the policies needed to develop compact and contiguous developments.

The City's *Transportation Element* was completed with the assistance by the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). The MPO Long Range Transportation Plan fulfills the State and Federal requirements for transportation elements in the comprehensive plans of Charlotte County and Punta Gorda. The scope and content of the MPO's product is shaped by the Intermodal Surface Transportation Efficiency Act of 1991 (ISTEA).

Introduction

The City encourages the development of a network of interconnecting streets that work to disperse traffic while connecting and integrating neighborhoods with the existing urban fabric of the City. The City also encourages the development of a network of sidewalks and bicycle lanes that provide an attractive alternative and safe mode of travel for cyclists and pedestrians. Interconnecting street networks encourage walking and bicycling, enhance transit service opportunities, improve traffic safety through slower speed design, and promote the reduction of vehicle miles traveled within the street network.

Purpose

The purpose of the *Transportation Element* is to develop a multimodal built around street network which will safely and efficiently accommodate walking, bicycling, and public transportation as well as automotive traffic. The plan is intended to assist in developing streets that are integral components of community design. Streets shall be detailed to compliment neighborhoods and commercial centers and shall be pedestrian in scale. Streets are encouraged to be designed with on street parking.

This element evaluates the existing transportation facilities throughout the City of Punta Gorda, reviews the connectivity of the neighborhoods and district within the City, establishes policy guidelines for use by staff and other decision makers and creates standards for the provision of facilities as needed to meet the demand for safe and efficient travel.

Relationship to the City's Comprehensive Plan

The *Transportation Element* is closely related to other Elements of the City's Comprehensive Plan. They are identified below:

- The Future Land Use Element must coordinate with the Transportation Element to ensure that roads are sited in the most appropriate areas possible and that these roads are designed in a manner which minimizes impacts to the surrounding land uses and promote a pedestrian and bicycle friendly community. The traffic model, used to develop the Charlotte County – Punta Gorda Metropolitan Planning Organization's 2040 Transportation Plan, relies on population and employment projections based upon the Future Land Use Maps for both the City of Punta Gorda and Charlotte County.
- The Conservation Element inventories and describes the City's existing and proposed natural preserves and conservation areas within and adjacent to the City. It provides the underlying foundation and detailed policies regarding conservation, use and protection of natural resources. This element also contains key data and goals concerning exceptional natural resource areas, wildlife corridors and other issues having implications for future road projects. Consideration to impacts on wildlife crossings,

water quality, and species habitats must also be reviewed for any roadway development.

- *Coastal Management Element* identifies hurricane evacuation issues and addresses the effectiveness of the routes which are dependent on an interconnected and functional roadway network. Consideration to impacts on wildlife crossings, water quality, and species habitats must be reviewed for any roadway development.
- The *Infrastructure Element* utilizes the data obtained from the Utilities Department when road improvements are proposed. Specifically:

  Stormwater – Drainage systems necessary to meet recommended level of service standards for stormwater quality and conveyance and coordination with Charlotte County for improvements to systems in basins which serve the City but are outside its jurisdiction.

  Potable Water – Potable water treatment facilities are necessary to serve the water demand generated by the population of the City Utilities Service Area. In order to plan for these facilities policies must be established and recommendations must be made for capital improvements which ensure adequate potable water supply and delivery. Opportunities to establish, maintain and/or improve water distribution infrastructure should be considered when planning for transportation improvements.

  Sewers – Waste water treatment infrastructure and facilities are necessary to dispose of treated domestic waste water generated by the population of the City Utilities Service Area. In order to plan for waste water infrastructure and facilities, policies must be established and recommendations must be made for capital improvements which ensure adequate capacity to treat domestic waste water. Opportunities to establish, maintain and/or improve waste water treatment infrastructure should be considered when planning for transportation improvements.

- *The Recreation and Open Space Element* identifies the strong community desire for greater bicycle and pedestrian connectivity between neighborhoods and commercial areas to provide both recreation and transportation.
- The *Intergovernmental Coordination Element* identifies the coordination efforts needed between the local and regional agencies regarding transportation issues.
- The *Historic Element* enhances the City's strategy to preserve and protect Punta Gorda's locally designated historic districts and landmarks by connecting key destination points through the Punta Gorda Pathways concept. These multi-use recreational trails will enable residents and visitors access to the City's most valued and important assets.
- The *Capital Improvements Element* ensures "concurrency", is achieved within a five (5) year concurrency related capital improvements schedule and capital improvements program. The capital improvements schedule and capital improvements

program are tools used by the City as tools for managing growth and maintaining or improving the level of service.

II. LEGISLATION

Federal Regulations

The City coordinates with numerous agencies on a variety of issues. Most entities realize the importance of identifying and resolving incompatible goals, objectives and policies and therefore voluntarily include processes and procedures that benefit the coordination efforts between the participating parties.

United States Department of Transportation (USDOT)

Federal legislation, which authorizes funding for surface transportation programs, can influence planning philosophy. The current Federal Transportation Act is the Fixing America's Surface Transportation Act, or the FAST Act. The FAST Act was signed into law in December of 2015 after the adoption of the 2040 Transportation Plan of the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO in October of 2015. The 2040 Transportation Plan is based on the provisions of the previous Federal Transportation Act MAP-21 (https://www.transportation.gov/map21) and the policy guidance of the Florida Transportation Plan.

State Regulations

There are many State regulations governing land use and development impacts that relate to the transportation needs in the City of Punta Gorda. While the City strives to abide by all Florida State Statutes, the City seeks to curb suburban sprawl and promote compact and contiguous development through coordinated transportation and land use decisions supported by the Florida Statutes. The 2040 Transportation Plan of the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO Plan is also required to be consistent with the goals and objectives of the Florida Transportation Plan.

Local Regulations

City Ordinance

Chapter 20, Streets and Sidewalks

Currently, Chapter 20, Streets and Sidewalks, of the City's local development code is inconsistent with Chapter 26, Land Development Regulations. Chapter 26 has been updated to reflect the City's balanced approach to facilitating all modes of travel. Chapter 20, which deals with public works projects, needs revision in order to more fully support the City's multimodal focus. The revision of Chapter 20 would support the provisions of Chapter 26 and other City transportation planning efforts.

Chapter 26, Article 9, Streets

This section of the Land Development Regulations (LDR's) encourages the development of a network of interconnecting

streets that work to disperse traffic while connecting and integrating neighborhoods with the existing urban fabric of the City. Equally important, the Ordinance encourages the development of a network of sidewalks and bicycle lanes that provide an attractive and safe mode of travel for cyclists and pedestrians. Interconnecting street networks encourage alternate modes of transportation to the automobile, enhance transit service opportunities, improve traffic safety through promoting slower speeds, and potentially reducing vehicle miles traveled within the street network.

It is the intent of this Ordinance to build streets that are integral components of community design. Streets shall be designed with a focus on detail which compliments neighborhoods and commercial centers and shall be pedestrian in scale. Streets are encouraged to be designed with on street parking. Landscaped public right-of-ways encourage pedestrian and cyclist activity by providing shade and buffering from motorists and enhancing a sense of place.

Other Local Plans

2000 Eastside and Downtown Planning Study

A plan which focused on the update to the 1990 Downtown Community Redevelopment Plan. It contained two key focal points within the Community Redevelopment Area, the East Side Residential Neighborhood and the Central Retail District.

2005 CRA Charrette

In the aftermath of Hurricane Charley, the citizens of Punta Gorda came together in order to establish a vision for the future of the City. These efforts were first lead through the actions of the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) during February of 2005. The CRA sought direct community input through a Charrette process that resulted in the *2005 CRA Charrette* document, which built on the visioning efforts first established in the *2000 Eastside and Downtown Planning Study.*

2005 Citizens Master Plan

In an overwhelming show of community pride and resiliency the citizen founded advocacy group TEAM Punta Gorda was formed. The primary mission of TEAM Punta Gorda "is to serve as a collaborative resource uniting our citizens in accelerating revitalization to achieve the potential of our unique waterfront community".

2009 Parks and Recreation Master Plan

Adopted in 2009, the Park and Recreation Master Plan provides an inventory of existing and proposed park sites; evaluates each site for its design as a passive or active park; details how the community wants to use each park (for festivals, art markets, relaxing, sports activities, etc.) with amenities added accordingly; and evaluates its level of service (LOS) to the residents. The benefits identified in the City's Park and Recreation Master Plan promote the City's sense of place by providing a strong

foundation on which the parks & recreation system can continue to grow and environment all benefit from investments in a well-developed parks and recreation system.

Complete Streets Resolution

In 2014 the City adopted a Complete Streets Ordinance to ensure that the safety of all roadway users would be at the forefront of any transportation planning, engineering, construction or infrastructure rehabilitation project within the City. This ordinance marked the renewal of a long standing City commitment to bicycle and pedestrian modes of transport as well as enhancing the quality of life for all residents and visitors through investment in roadway safety.

III. DATA AND ANALYSIS

Population

Florida's population has increased yearly from the 1940's through the 2010 and develop, creating a boater's destination and increasing business opportunities. This development is essential for a sustainable community. Our health, community, economy Census. The Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) reports a variety of statistics of all Florida Counties and Cities including population estimates. The population projections used by the City are based on the 2010 Census population and the 2015 BEBR estimate. The City projections are also based on the numbers used and published by the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda Metropolitan Planning Organization in the 2040 Transportation Plan.

Staff reviewed the City's population growth since 1990. Census population figures identified in Table 7.1 - City of Punta Gorda's/ & Charlotte County Population, for the years 1990, 2000, 2010 and population projections for 2020, 2030, and 2040. These projections are shown for the City of Punta Gorda, Unincorporated Charlotte County, the County-wide total and the City of Punta Gorda percent share of the total county population.

Table 7.1 - City of Punta Gorda's/ & Charlotte County Population

Place	1990	2000	2010	2020*	2030*	2040*
City of Punta Gorda	10,747	14,344	16,641	18,742	20,953	27,178
Unincorporated County	100,228	127,283	143,337	157,796	175,004	180,036
Total	110,975	141,627	159,978	176,538	195,957	207,214
% of Share	10%	10%	10%	11%	11%	13%

*Population projections
Source: City of Punta Gorda Urban Design, US Census, and 2040 Transportation Plan Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO

Projections for the City of Punta Gorda were then developed using the University of Florida Bureau of Business and Economic Research (BEBR) estimates as the baseline numbers. City staff used a mathematical extrapolation technique. Mathematical extrapolation techniques involve the manipulation of data on a given population, without comparison to other populations, in order to project a trend. Extrapolation techniques require historical data series, measured at two or more intervals, which can be plotted or arranged to show a pattern or trend. The City used a linear growth rate of 1.18 percent per year for population projections, illustrated in Table 7.2 - City's Applied Growth Rates, to generate the population projections in Table 7.3 - City of Punta Gorda's Population Estimates and Projections.

Table 7.2 - City's Applied Growth Rates

Year	% Change
One Year	1.18%
Five Year	5.90%
Ten Year	11.80%

Source: City of Punta Gorda Urban Design

Table 7. 3 - City of Punta Gorda's Population Estimates and Projections

City of Punta Gorda	
2010	16,641
2015	17,675
2016	17,884
2017	18,095
2018	18,308
2019	18,524
202	18,742
2030	20,953
2040	27,178

Source: City of Punta Gorda Urban Design, US Census, and 2040 Transportation Plan Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO

Punta Gorda is considered a retirement community by most residents and observers. This view is supported by the demographics for the City with almost half of the total population in the 65 and over age cohort and a median age of 65.5. These figures are significantly higher than the figures for the State of Florida as illustrated in Table 7.4 - Age Group Characteristics.

Table 7. 4 Age Group Characteristics

	Total Population	Male	Female	65+	18+	Under 5	Median
Florida	18,801,310	9,189,355	9,611,955	3,259,602	14,799,219	1,073,506	40.7
Punta Gorda	16,641	7,899	8,742	7,967	15,113	390	65.5

Source: 2010 Census, United States Census Bureau

Seasonal Population

The part time residents of Florida are typically present during the winter months and produce a significant increase to the population base. These "snowbird" residents usually cause a spike in the population from mid-November through mid-April. They may own a second home in the region or may have a long term rental arrangement. The Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council estimates that during the season, winter residents may increase the six County Region's population by as much as twenty-two percent (22%). SWFRPC based this estimate on a combination of taxable sales, the number of homes held for seasonal use, and the ratio of seasonal households to total households. Although precise numbers are not readily available, it was estimated that the City's seasonal population is similar and is included in the overall County prediction and shown in Table 7.5 - City of Punta Gorda's Seasonal Population (2010 – 2040.

Employment

With high levels of retirement and seasonal populations it can be easy to overlook another significant component of Punta Gorda's character, employment. Within the context of Charlotte County Punta Gorda is a major employment center. In 2010 a total of

12,328 employees could be found with the traffic analysis zones that encompass the City. Through 2040 employment growth is expected to continue as illustrated in Table 7.6 - City of Punta Gorda's Employment Projections (2010 – 2040). With a limited workforce living within the City, workforce commuting trips will be a factor in transportation planning for the City.

Table 7.5 - City of Punta Gorda's Seasonal Population (2010 – 2040)

Year	2010	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2030	2040
City of Punta Gorda	16,641	17,675	17,884	18,095	18,308	18,524	18,742	20,953	27,178
Charlotte County	143,337	149,466	151,096	152,744	154,410	156,094	157,796	175,004	180,036
Seasonal	35,195	36,771	37,175	37,584	37,998	38,416	38,838	43,031	45,587
County-wide Seasonal Total	195,173	203,912	206,155	208,423	210,716	213,034	215,376	238,988	252,801

Source: City of Punta Gorda Urban Design, US Census, 2040 Transportation Plan Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO, and Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council

Table 7.6 - City of Punta Gorda's Employment Projections (2010 – 2040)

Categories	2010	%	2020	%	2030	%	2040	%
Industrial Employees	956	6%	1,026	5%	1,096	5%	1,164	4%
Commercial Employees	3,273	20%	3,463	18%	3,653	17%	3,836	14%
Service Employees	8,099	49%	8,799	47%	9,499	45%	10,201	38%
Total Employees	12,328		13,288		14,248		15,201	
Population	16,641		18,742		20,953		27,178	

Source: Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO Traffic Analysis Zone Employment Data 2010 and 2040.

Modal Choice

Transportation is generally a derived demand. In an urban context people travel out of necessity. Travel is the means to go to work, school, the doctor or the store. Existing patterns of development influence travel mode selection. Areas that have a mix of land uses in close proximity to one another with adequate connectivity tend to offer increased modal choice. In many parts of Southwest Florida, modal choice is limited due to segregated land uses and poor connectivity of the street network. These factors limit the viability of walking, bicycling and transit as reasonably attractive modes of travel.

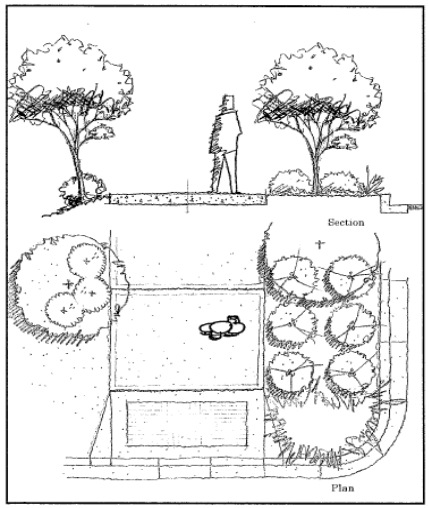
The practices of land use segregation and low density/low intensity automobile dependent design have resulted in wide-spread loss of open space; increased traffic congestion and air pollution; environmental degradation; increased housing, transportation and infrastructure costs; inadequate provision of schools and public services; increased rates of obesity; increased urban heat island effects and changed microclimates; decreased transportation choices; increased vulnerability of the local economy resulting from energy price spikes; and growing areas of declining property values, crime, and poverty. The resultant loss of community identity adds to these problems by discouraging citizen awareness of, and participation in, community affairs. The City seeks to ensure that infill development and redevelopment form an integral part of a community of functional, aesthetically appealing neighborhoods and retail centers.

One of the primary goals of the City is the strengthening of the downtown area as a "park once" environment, where bicycle and pedestrian movement is encouraged and auto vehicle travel is secondary to the movement of people. Multimodal planning is necessary to ensure the City provides facilities to adequately support this strategy. The City has worked hard to establish the current groundwork which encourages modal choice and balanced investment in the City's transportation infrastructure. Planning guidelines related to transportation and land use decisions and investment should continue to encourage walkable retail districts with significant office and residential components, as well as a complete streets strategy. A high degree of interconnectivity is included to facilitate the movement of people to and from desired destinations without having to rely exclusively on automobiles.

In addition to the downtown, the City's current Land Development Regulations permit and encourage the establishment of neighborhood nodes. These nodes of commercial and mixed use activity provide the opportunity for residents to meet their daily needs closer to home. This strategy offers the opportunity to reduce the number of vehicle miles traveled (VMT) by reducing automotive trip length and by making walking or bicycling more attractive modes for such trips.

Walking

Typically transportation planners will speak about "pedestrians" or "pedestrian movement", making it sound as if an alien species is invading the community. However, the "pedestrian" is just a person walking whether on two legs or with a cane, or in a wheel chair, a person traveling to get to a destination. Walking is the original mode of travel, unfortunately walking has been made more and more difficult by transportation planning that seeks only to accommodate more and more automobiles traveling faster and faster. The City of Punta Gorda began down a different transportation planning path over twenty years ago in the early 1990's with the development of a comprehensive City wide sidewalk improvement program.



Since that first sidewalk plan the City of Punta Gorda has sought to make the pedestrian environment a priority in the City's overall planning process. Spaces that are pedestrian in scale, safe and aesthetically pleasing are primary to the continued economical viable development and redevelopment of the City. Design standards are in place to assure new development takes into account goals of the City to allow people to take a walk for recreation or transportation.

Transportation choice is key within the built environment of Punta Gorda, and provisions herein attempt to make walking traffic as equally viable a transportation mode as automobile transportation. In the end modal choice in the transportation plan of the City is about empowering the residents and visitors with the freedom to choose the appropriate mode of travel for them based on their individual needs.

Land Use

Land uses shall promote the walk-ability of the City, creating a cohesive community with safe, purposeful walkways, green spaces, and multi-use paths, linking pedestrians to shops and services throughout Punta Gorda. Land use shall encourage increased walking traffic and allow for mixed use densities, linking people with services without generating unnecessary automobile trips. A more pedestrian friendly street configuration standard as well as wider sidewalks, parallel parking (where applicable) and building treatments such as arcades and porches, will encourage an environment where the person walking and the automobile coexist safely and seamlessly. Current land use in Punta Gorda is generally in line with this philosophy especially in the Community Redevelopment Area (Map #6); within the CRA a wide variety of existing land uses in a compact area in a well-connected grid street pattern encourage pedestrian activity. Additionally the existing Land Development Regulations (LDR) provide framework for a built environment that will further

encourage pedestrian activity including specific design standards for typical street configurations as illustrated.

Existing Facilities and Future Needs

The City of Punta Gorda has conducted inventory studies as well as needs assessment through the Alternative Transportation Plan and the ongoing sidewalk capital improvements program. Table 7.7 - Existing Sidewalk Network and Map #48 – Punta Gorda Existing Sidewalk Network, illustrate the existing system and Map #49 – Punta Gorda Existing Sidewalk Network and Future Needs, identifies the future needs in the context of the existing system.

The existing system is composed of the following major types of facilities:

1. Neighborhood sidewalks

These facilities provide connectivity in and around the various neighborhoods of the City; are typically only five (5) feet wide, and due to right of way constraints generally occur on only one side of the street.

2. Business district sidewalks

These sidewalks serve business oriented areas of the City; occur on both sides of the street; are separated from busy streets by parking or landscape buffer; and are typically wider than the five (5) foot minimum found on neighborhood sidewalks.

3. Punta Gorda Pathways

These pathways are a system of shared use paths that connect major commercial areas and neighborhoods; are a minimum of ten (10) feet in width; and are designed to minimize street crossings in order to accommodate longer trips safely. (Map # 42 – Punta Gorda Pathways)

4. Unincorporated County

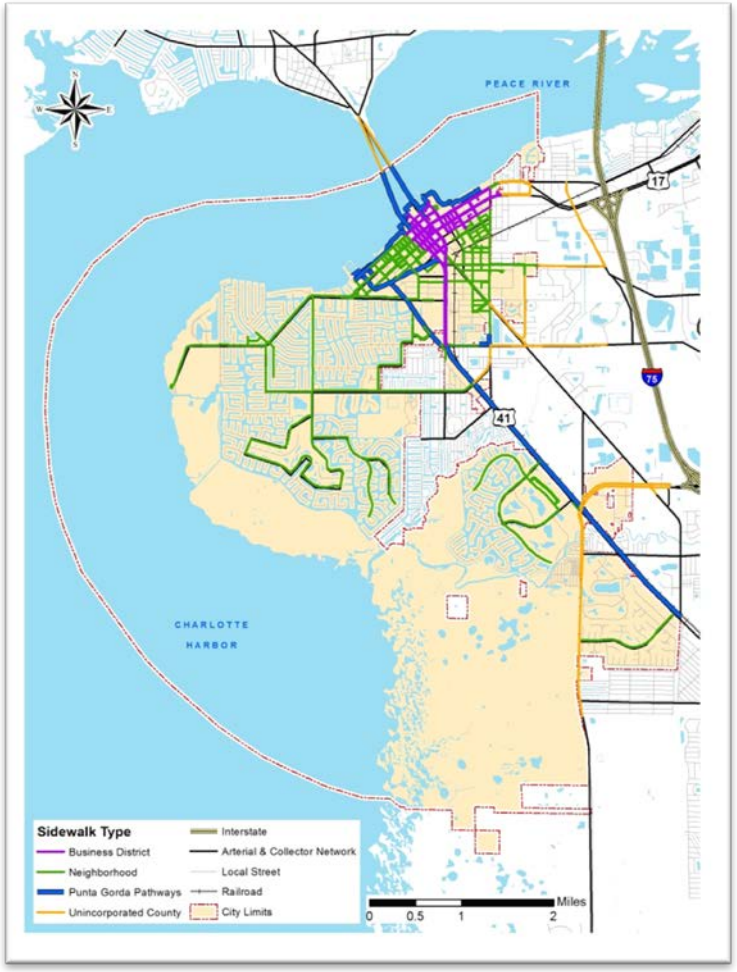
These sidewalks provide connectivity from various parts of the City to destinations immediately outside the City Limits; are typically only five (5) feet wide; and are maintained by the Florida Department of Transportation or Charlotte County.

Table 7.7 – Existing Sidewalk Network

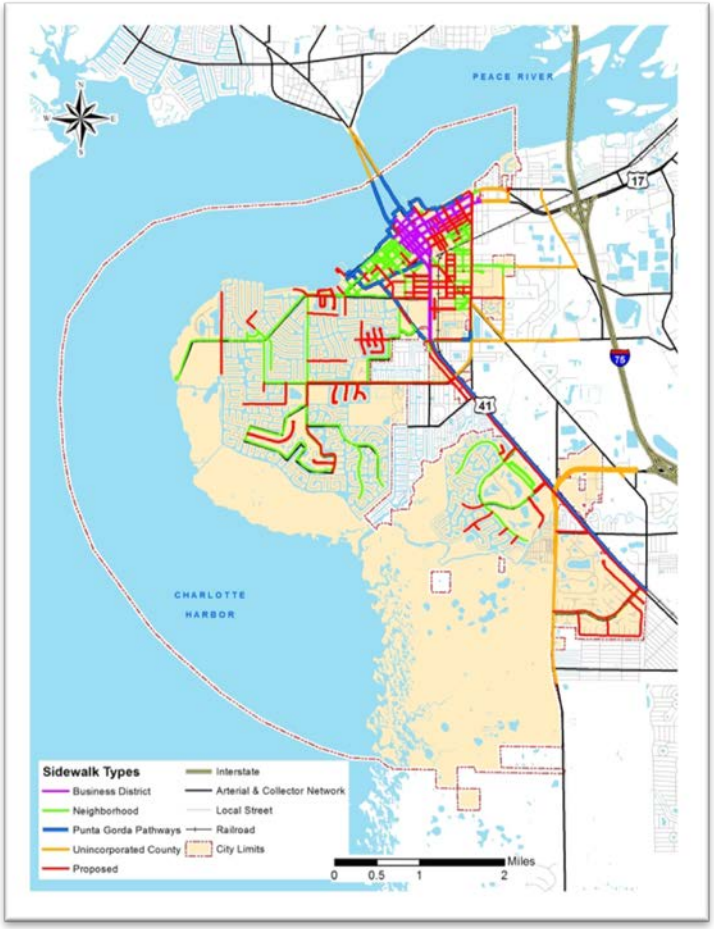
Sidewalk Type	Linear Feet	Miles
Neighborhood	237,764	45.03
Business District	88,592	16.78
Punta Gorda Pathways	46,280	8.77
Unincoporated County	67,982	12.88

Source: City of Punta Gorda Urban Design

Map #48 – Punta Gorda Existing Sidewalk Network



Map #49 – Punta Gorda Existing Sidewalk Network and Future Needs



Bicycling

Following national trends the use of bicycles as an alternate form of transportation has become more popular in Charlotte County in recent years. Increasing numbers of people have found this to be an attractive form of recreation and transportation. These trends have been evidenced locally through the growth of bicycle events, the Bicycle Loaner Program, and the TEAM Punta Gorda advocacy of a program of bicycle specific infrastructure.

Punta Gorda hosts two major bicycle events annually, Pedal & Play in Paradise and Wheels & Wings. Pedal and Play sees over 400 participants from across the state and around the country. Held in early April, this event is hosted by the 501c3 non-profit TEAM Punta Gorda and the Isles Yacht Club in conjunction with a plethora of local sponsors. Wheels & Wings is hosted by the Peace River Riders Bicycle Club in early July drawing hundreds of participants from around the state and across the country. These events both started about seven years ago and have continued to growth both in participation and growing from single day to multi-day events.

Punta Gorda due to the tireless efforts of TEAM Punta Gorda, local businesses, and individual donors and volunteers has the State of Florida's first free bicycle loaner program. In continuous operation since 2012, the system has grown to six (6) loaner locations with a total fleet of forty-four (44) bicycles. In the one year period ending May 31st, 2016 over 5,400 unique bicycle checkouts were documented. Enjoyed by residents and visitors the program continues to experience strong community-wide support.

Tying these recreational and transportation bicycle programs together is TEAM Punta Gorda (TEAM PG). TEAM PG has been heavily involved in advocating for policies, programs, activities, and infrastructure to make bicycling safer and more convenient since the 2005 Citizens Master Plan was accepted by City Council. In 2014 TEAM redoubled its efforts to assist the City in becoming a better place to ride a bicycle by establishing the Bicycle Friendly Community Committee after City Council adopted a Complete Streets Resolution. Since 2014 TEAM through this committee has worked with City staff including, Police, Fire, Public Works, and Urban Design to develop programs and policies based on the "5 E's" of creating a bicycle friendly community advocated by the League of American Bicyclist's Bicycle Friendly America Program. The 5 E's are:

- **Engineering:** Creating safe and convenient places to ride and park

- **Education:** Giving people of all ages and abilities the skills and confidence to ride
- **Encouragement**: Creating a strong bike culture that welcomes and celebrates bicycling
- **Enforcement:** Ensuring safe streets for all users
- **Evaluation and Planning:** Planning for bicycling as a safe and viable transportation option (source: http://bikeleague.org/content/5-es)

In October of 2015 the City Council affirmed the City's commitment to becoming more bicycle friendly and directed City Staff to develop a bicycle infrastructure proposal based on the City's adopted 2030 Alternative Transportation Plan.

Land Use

Land uses that typically promote improved walking as a travel mode also promote bicycle transport as well. Bicycle routes that are aesthetically pleasing and safe to travel based on compliance with development regulations, and land uses encourage bicycle traffic for short trips that might otherwise be made by an automobile. Commuter bicycle traffic is also encouraged to increase when businesses make bicycling to work an option for their employees by providing bicycle storage and other facilities for riders. Land use plays an important role in encouraging this with mixed use and higher density development, pulling origins and destinations closer together making short trips by bicycle more attractive.

Existing Facilities and Future Needs

The City of Punta Gorda has conducted inventory studies as well as needs assessment through the Alternative Transportation Plan and the ongoing bicycle infrastructure proposal. Table 7.8 - Existing Bicycle Facilities and Map #50 – Punta Gorda Existing Bicycle Facilities illustrate the existing system and a Map #51 – Punta Gorda Existing Bicycle Facilities and Future need identifies the future needs.

The existing system is composed of three major types of facilities:

Bicycle Boulevards

These facilities provide connectivity in and around the various neighborhoods of the City; are composed of sharrow marked travel lanes; and occur only on low volume, low speed roadway segments.

Bicycle Lanes

These facilities occur on higher volume higher speed roadways of the city; composed of conventional or buffered bicycle lanes; and are intended to connect major commercial and neighborhoods.

Punta Gorda Pathways

These pathways are a system of shared use paths that connect major commercial areas and neighborhoods; are a minimum of ten (10) feet in width; and are designed to minimize street

crossings in order to accommodate longer trips safely. (Map #42 – Punta Gorda Pathways)

Unincorporated County Facilities

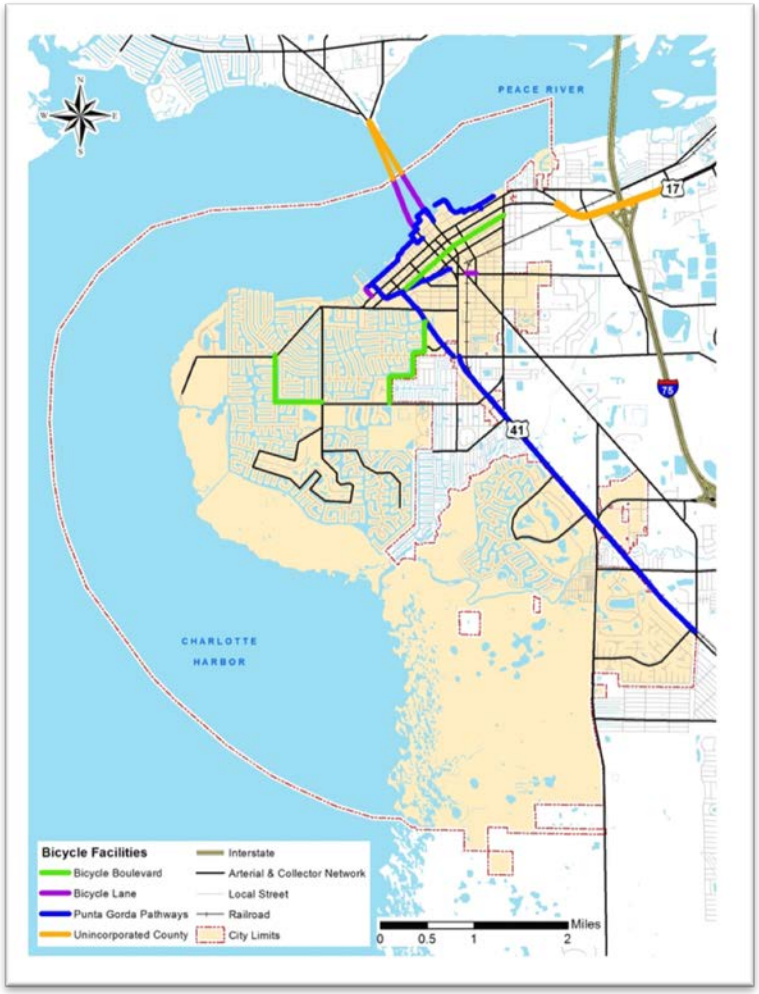
These facilities provide connectivity from various parts of the City to destinations immediately outside the City Limits and are maintained by the Florida Department of Transportation or Charlotte County.

Table 7.8 – Existing Bicycle Facilities

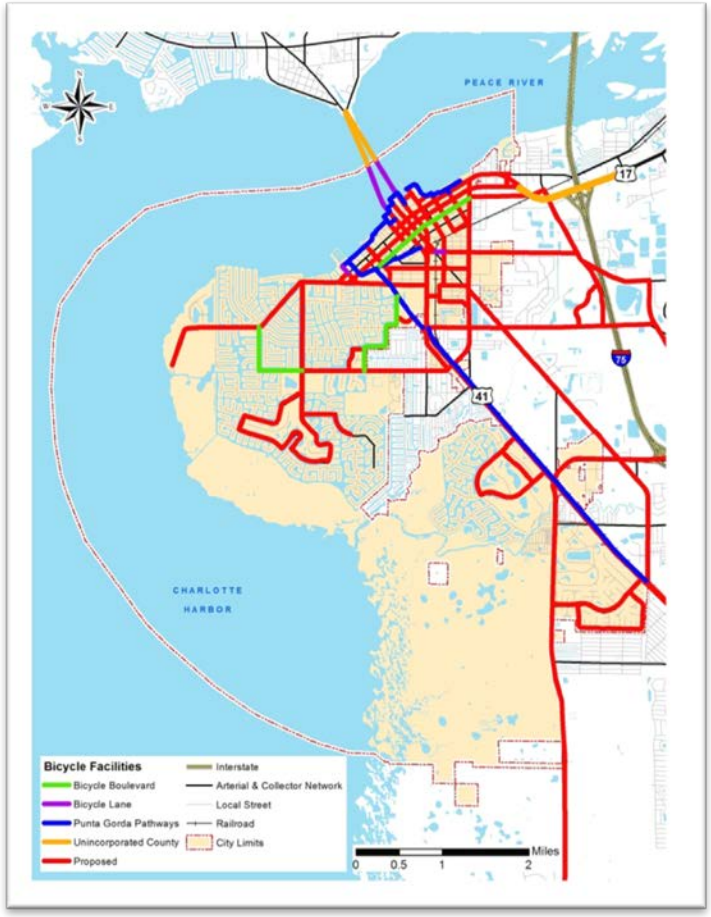
Sidewalk Type	Linear Feet	Miles
Bicycle Boulevard	18,832	3.57
Bicycle Lane*	6,791	1.29
Punta Gorda Pathways	46,280	8.77
Unincoporated County	18,373	3.48
Total	90,276	17.10

*Bicycle Lanes and Unincorporated County facilities are measured in lane miles all others in centerline miles
Source: City of Punta Gorda Urban Design

Map #50 – Punta Gorda Existing Bicycle Facilities



Map #51 – Punta Gorda Existing Bicycle Facilities and Future Needs



Transit

Source: 2005 Citizens Master Plan

As stated in the Comprehensive Plan in 2009, the City continues to have interest in a circulator transit program based on the long term goal of providing increased connectivity to and within the Community Redevelopment Area. Various business, public, and community interests could be served by a circulator system which links key destinations with available and periodically underutilized public and private parking facilities. Circulator transit would thus further the goal of creating a "park once" environment in the downtown enhancing and encouraging greater bicycle and pedestrian activity increasing economic vitality.

Tourism on two fronts of boating and air travel could greatly benefit from this type of targeted circulator transit. Punta Gorda with its marina's and mooring field is a regional boating destination. This targeted cohort of tourists requires easy pedestrian, bicycle, and transit connectivity in order to maximize

the destination experience and encourage repeat visits. Furthermore, the growth of commercial passenger air traffic and establishment of major distribution centers at the Punta Gorda Interstate Airport Park provides additional potential customers for a circulator transit system in the Punta Gorda area. Tourism and commuter needs alike could be met by this type of system, providing another modal choice available to those moving in and around Punta Gorda.

Land Use

The existing land use pattern, particularly in the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) (Map #6), is the most transit supportive in Charlotte County. With a relatively strong mix of commercial destinations, employers, and residential dwellings within a walkable and bikeable street grid, the CRA would likely be a key connection in any implementation of fixed route transit service. The 2040 Transportation Plan recognizes this within the needs plan which designates three of the four potential fixed routes traversing the CRA.

Existing Facilities and Future Needs

Public Transit in the City of Punta Gorda is provided by Charlotte County. Charlotte County, with no fixed route transit, exclusively operates paratransit advanced reservation bus system for the general public. The County also offers Transportation Disadvantaged service for those residents with physical disabilities, those aged sixty (60) and older, children-at-risk, qualified low-income residents, and those living in rural areas. These two services operate in a fully integrated fashion under the Charlotte County Transit banner. Both services operate a limited schedule six (6) days a week with no service on Sundays. In order to secure service riders must make a reservation by 1:00pm the business day prior to desired service.

Written in 2014 the *Charlotte Rides,* Charlotte County's Transit Development Plan, outlines a fairly innovative solution for creating a more comprehensive transit system. This system is, mirrored in the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO's 2040 Transportation Plan. This Plan, a federally Required Long Range Transportation Plan, identifies four fixed routes and four flex service zone as illustrated in Figure 7.1- Needs Plan Transit Projects, from the Long Range Transportation Plan.

The visitors and residents of Punta Gorda could benefit immensely with the implementation of a circulator transit route (trolley) within the Community Redevelopment Area. This circulator route could cover the downtown and its surrounding historic areas encompassing key destination points including the various marina facilities, Fisherman's Village and Bayfront Punta Gorda Hospital Area. This core system could also be linked to the Punta Gorda Airport and Charlotte Harbor CRA (north of Charlotte Harbor from Downtown Punta Gorda) providing additional modal choices to visitors and area residents alike. Depending on timing this circulator system could provide a catalyst to spark the implementation of the proposed fixed routes or could compliment those routes. In either scenario a Punta Gorda circulator could provide local service allowing the proposed fixed routes to operate more effectively as express routes connecting to Englewood Beach, Port Charlotte Town

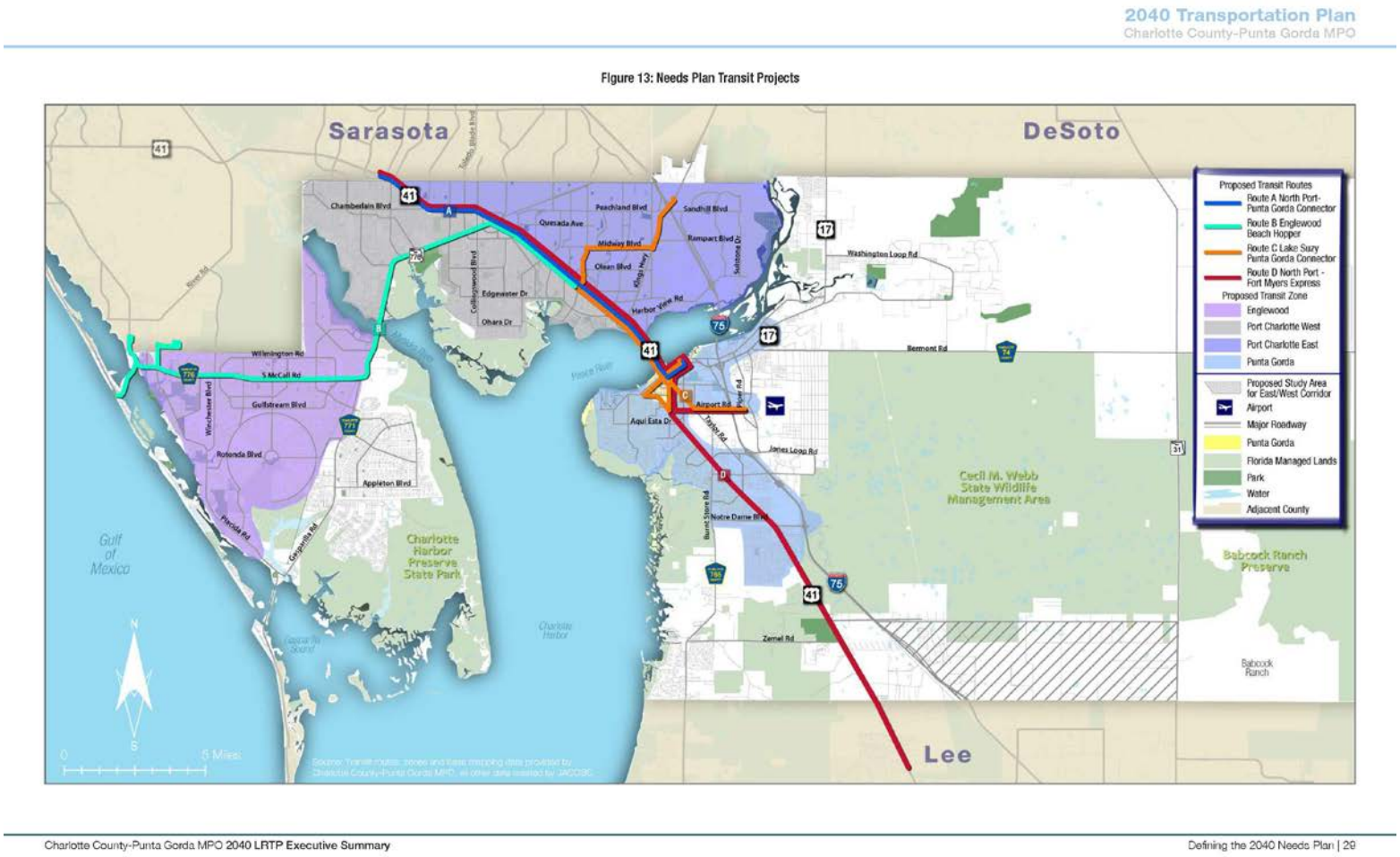


Figure 1 - Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO's 2040 Transportation Plan - Needs Plan Transit Projects

Center, and the Parkside area within the County. As identified in the *Charlotte Rides* plan, External links to Sarasota County Area Transit (SCAT) in North Port and Englewood; and Lee Tran in Fort Myers would also be possible.

Intermodal Facilities

Intermodal transportation refers to the movement of people or goods between specific origins and destinations by using two or more modes. Historically, the term intermodal has referred to the line-haul shipment of goods by rail, with door-to-door pick up by truck. Today, the term also includes passenger travel. An "intermodal transfer" is the practice of transporting commodities and/or passengers between two (2) modes. Depending on what transportation medium is used (i.e., land, water or air) the mode transfer could be rail, automotive vehicle, bicycle, transit, intercity bus, airplane, or boat. Map #52 – Intermodal Facilities – Parking, Marina, Rail, & Airport, identifies the intermodal facilities affecting the City.

Parking Facilities

Automotive parking facilities are not traditionally thought of as intermodal facilities; however, as Punta Gorda has focused on the redevelopment of the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) parking has become a critical consideration. The redevelopment strategy of the CRA is a "park once" environment, where bicycle and pedestrian movement is encouraged and auto vehicle travel is secondary to the movement of people.

Multimodal planning is necessary to ensure the City provides adequate facilities to adequately support this strategy. The City has worked hard to establish land development regulations that minimize parking requirements and encourage walkable retail districts. In addition to regulation the City engaged in a significant capital improvement program to provide ample public parking within the CRA. These public parking capital expenditures are based on the findings of the 2006 Downtown Parking and Traffic Circulation Study.

Source: 2006 parking and traffic circulation study

Map #52 – Intermodal Facilities - Parking, Marina, Rail, & Airport

The parking reduction and public investment in parking are designed to centralize parking into a few critical areas. These areas of high activity are then the focus for increased investment in infrastructure which accommodates walking and bicycling. This type of walkable environment is also highly transit supportive. In the future locations like the Herald Court Centre (parking garage) or the City Hall parking lot could be key stops in circulator and/or regional transit as well as being the intermodal transfer point from automotive to walking transportation modes.

Marinas

Within the City there are two major marinas, Fishermen's Village Marina & Laishley Municipal Marina and one minor marina the Isles Yacht Club (semi-private). All three facilities host visitors who arrive by boat and need to connect to other modes of transport in order to travel around the community. All three facilities offer bicycles through the Bicycle Loaner Program as well as connections to the sidewalk network of the City and automotive parking. Enhancing the positive aspects of the land transportation connections at these facilities is critical to ensuring that visitors become repeat visitors and possible future retirement residents of the City. Existing and future demand would also warrant consideration of these facilities for future fixed route bus transit stops.

Historically there were water taxi or ferry services in the Punta Gorda and Charlotte County area. These services generally ceased operation upon completion of various bridge facilities across Charlotte Harbor and out to Boca Grande. Interest has been expressed by private development and the Charlotte Harbor

Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) to initiate a water taxi service that would serve Downtown Punta Gorda, the Fisherman's Village, and Charlotte Harbor CRA. The natural landing points for this type of service would be the existing marinas. Location of water taxi service would strengthen the demand for fixed route transit connections at these locations. Currently ferry service to outer islands of Caya Costa, Cabbage Key, and Boca Grande is offered by a private provider at the Fishermen's Village Marina. There has been interest in the past to expand ferry services to Venice or other Gulf of Mexico beach locations.

Currently there are no plans to expand existing ferry services or provide new water taxi services. The City of Punta Gorda would encourage any private ventures to pursue the expansion and/or development of such services as a unique mode of transportation serving the nature and need of Punta Gorda.

Rail

The development of the City of Punta Gorda is directly linked to the railroad which arrived in 1886. In the 19th and early 20th century the rail line facilitated the movement of seasonal visitors to Southwest Florida. As the rail line terminus, until 1904, Punta Gorda served as the transfer point for passengers arriving by rail to ferry services bound for Fort Myers, Key West and other destinations. The rail line also afforded efficient shipment of citrus, timber, and fresh fish to markets in the north.

In the 1920's the last of Punta Gorda's three train stations was constructed. The Punta Gorda Train Depot, listed on the National Register of Historic Places, served both passenger and freight traffic. The long slow decline of rail service was harkened by the completion of the Tamiami Trail, now US 41, a roadway connecting Tampa to Miami. Passenger rail service ceased to Punta Gorda in the 1960's. However, the rail line is still operated by short line provider Seminole Gulf Railway which leases the rails from CSX.

Seminole Gulf Railway also offers an tourist excursion train which operates on the line from Fort Myers at Colonial Boulevard. Generally this excursion train goes out and back to the north of Fort Myers stopping well to the south of Punta Gorda. However, for the past few Christmas Seasons Seminole Gulf has offered a Christmas Rail-Boat excursion which utilizes the Punta Gorda Depot as the transfer point moving guests from rail to bus. By bus guest proceed to Fishermen's Village to take a boat tour of Christmas lights in the Punta Gorda Isles canal system.

Despite the unique use of the railway for tourist purposes the primary driver of rail traffic under Seminole Gulf Railway's management is regular freight service connection from just north of Naples in Collier County to Arcadia in Desoto County where the short line joins the national rail network at the CSX mainline.

In recent years there has been a regional effort to ensure that the rail line is preserved for future potential freight and passenger service. The City of Punta Gorda supports these efforts to ensure that the rail line is preserved for future regional transportation needs. The City has added model policies into this

comprehensive plan provided by the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council. These policies include:

- Designate the Seminole Gulf rail corridor as a strategic regional transportation corridor
- Encourage the Florida Department of Transportation to purchase the corridor
- Oppose any attempts at abandonment of the rail corridor

Punta Gorda Airport

The Punta Gorda Airport (PGD) is owned and operated by the Charlotte County Airport Authority and is located outside the current City Limits just east of Interstate 75. Long operated as a general aviation airport, commercial service was established in 2007. Since, 2007 commercial air traffic has grown at the Punta Gorda Airport. Now operating under the FLYPGD brand the Punta Gorda Airport has seen numerous changes in the 9 years since commercial service began. These changes include lengthening the primary runway, widening the taxiways and tarmac, building a new passenger terminal, adding air traffic control tower, parking lots, car rental facilities, and building an expanded passenger terminal. These projects have permitted the airport to grow passenger traffic to over 400,000 enplanements in 2015 with regular service to 30 cities in the United States.

Continued growth of commercial air traffic is anticipated by the Charlotte County Airport Authority in its Master Plan. This continued growth is expected to strengthen the demand for fixed route transit connections from the airport to key destinations within Charlotte County including the Downtown Punta Gorda area.

Streets

Maintaining appropriate levels of services on the existing and future roadway network along with managed growth within the City of Punta Gorda will continue to allow the City to reach its economic potential. By ensuring land use, roadway expansions will incorporate modal choice and meet the needs of all roadway users, the City seeks to retain its historic small town character while continuing to accommodate its share of regional growth and development.

Land Use

As a part of promoting Modal Choice, land use, and its relationship to roadways, is critical. Roadways serve the existing land uses so land use must control sprawl conditions. Higher residential densities and commercial intensities in the downtown area, and focused mixed use development providing goods and services in growing residential areas will shorten trip lengths, and promote alternative modes. Provisions for roadway design incorporating these alternative modes of transportation are outlined in the Alternative Transportation Plan, existing development regulations, and Complete Streets Resolution. By encouraging land uses and design standards that make walking and bicycling safe and efficient modes of travel these modes will become attractive.

Existing Street Network

US 41and US 17 are the two major highway facilities which serve the City of Punta Gorda. US 41 services traffic flowing north-south along the gulf coastline while US 17 services traffic flowing south from the inland areas of the State with both facilities providing linkage to the local street system. While these Federal Aid highways provide critical regional linkages these facilities within the City of Punta Gorda are key streets where a significant amount of economic activity occurs particularly within the Community Redevelopment Area. It is the City's goal to develop, construct and maintain a roadway network which serves the community in a manner consistent with the existing and future land use patterns. These patterns currently and within the context of existing code will strengthen the viability of alternative modes.

The City of Punta Gorda's existing street network is identified on Map #50 – Punta Gorda Existing Street Network. These streets fall into three functional classifications: arterial, collector, and local. The following classifications have been defined by the Florida Legislature in Section 334.03, Florida Statutes.

Arterial

A route provides service which is relatively continuous and is characterized by high traffic volume, long average trip length, high-operating speed, and high mobility importance. All US number routes (including US 41 and US 17) and interstate connector roads (N Jones Loop Road) are arterial roadways.

Map #53 – Punta Gorda Existing Street Network

Collector

A route providing service which is relatively of moderate average traffic volume, moderate average trip length, and moderate average operating speed. Collector roads collect and distribute traffic between local roads and arterial roads and serve as a linkage between land access and mobility needs. Taylor Road and Aqui Esta are good examples of a collector facility.

Local

A route providing service which is of relatively low average traffic volume, of short average trip length, has minimal through-traffic movements, and has a high degree of access for abutting property. Coronado and Gill Street are examples of local roads.

Maintenance Responsibility

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is responsible for maintenance of US 41 and US 17, while Charlotte County maintains N. Jones Loop Road and Burnt Store Road. The balance of the street network in the City of Punta Gorda is under the City's maintenance responsibility.

Existing Levels of Service

The City sets minimum levels of service standard which provides a guide for evaluating the relative quality of delivery for specific public services and facilities. Level of service criteria can also assist as a planning guideline for setting priorities when public resources are invested and development orders are approved.

The characteristics of streets operating at each Level of Service, is described below in an excerpt from the 2010 Highway Capacity Manual published by the Transportation Research Board. The concept of levels of service is defined as a qualitative measure describing operational conditions within a traffic stream, and their perceptions by motorists and/or passengers. A level of service definition generally describes these conditions in terms of such factors as speed and travel time, freedom to maneuver, traffic interruptions, comfort, convenience and safety. It must be noted that these factors do not take into account other roadway users such as people walking, bicycling or using transit.

Six (6) levels of service are defined for each type of facility for which analysis procedures are available. They are given letter designations from A to F, with Level of Service A representing free flow operating conditions and Level of Service F breakdown flow. In general, the various levels of service are defined as follows for uninterrupted flow facilities:

- Level of Service A represents free flow. Individual users are virtually unaffected by the presence of others in the traffic stream. Freedom to select desired speeds and to maneuver within the traffic stream is extremely high. The general level of comfort and convenience provided to the motorist, or passenger, is excellent.
- Level of Service B is the range of stable flow, but the presence of other users in the traffic stream which begins to be noticeable. Freedom to select desired speeds is relatively unaffected, but there is a slight decline in the freedom to maneuver within the traffic stream from LOS A. The level of

comfort and convenience provided is somewhat less than at LOS A, because the presence of others in the traffic stream begins to affect individual behavior.

- Level of Service C is in the range of stable flow, but marks the beginning of the range of flow in which the operation of individual users becomes significantly affected by interactions with others in the traffic stream. The selection of speed is not affected by the presence of others, and maneuvering within the traffic stream requires substantial vigilance on the part of the user. The general level of comfort and convenience declines noticeably at this level.
- Level of Service D represents high-density, but stable, flow. Speed and freedom to maneuver are severely restricted, and the driver experiences a generally poor level of comfort and convenience. Small increases in traffic flow will generally cause operational problems at this level.
- Level of Service E represents operating conditions at or near the capacity level. All speeds are reduced to low, but relatively uniform value. Freedom to maneuver within the traffic stream is extremely difficult, and it is generally accomplished by forcing a vehicle or pedestrian to "give way" to accommodate such maneuvers. Comfort and convenience levels are extremely poor, and driver frustration is generally high. Operations at this level are usually unstable, because small increases in flow or minor perturbations within the traffic stream will cause breakdowns.
- Level of Service F is used to define forced or breakdown flow. This condition exists wherever the amount of traffic approaching a point exceeds the amount which can traverse the point. Queues form behind such locations. Operations within the queue are characterized by stop-and-go waves, and they are extremely unstable. Vehicles may progress at reasonable speeds for several hundred feet or more, and then be required to stop in a cyclic fashion. Level of Service F is used to describe the operating conditions within the queue, as well as the point of the breakdown. It should be noted, however, that in many cases operating conditions of vehicles discharged from the queue may be quite good. Nevertheless, it is the point at which arrival flow exceeds discharge flow which causes the queue to form, and Level of Service F is an appropriate designation for such points.

The definitions above are general and apply primarily to roadway facilities having uninterrupted traffic flows, such as limited access facilities (freeways) or rural highways with limited intersection or connecting driveways. For each type of roadway facility, levels of service activities are based on one or more operational parameters or "measures of effectiveness". Basic measure of effectiveness used to define levels of service for different types of roadway facilities include: average travel speed; density; delay; and volume.

Within the context of this component, the levels of service described within this section are used to identify existing deficiencies and to project future needs based on projected population growth within the community. The City's currently acceptable Level of Service Standard is D.

Future Needs

The 2040 Transportation Plan of the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO analyzed the Level of Service (LOS) for all roadways in Charlotte County inclusive of the City of Punta Gorda. Using the Florida Department of Transportation approved transportation model this analysis identified no roadways within the corporate limits of the City which operate below the adopted LOS D minimum standard.

The existing travel demand was projected out to the plan horizon year of 2040 using University of Florida Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) employment and population projections. This data was allocated to traffic analysis zones using City and County adopted future land use maps. These 2040 population and employment projections as allocated to the traffic analysis zones were modeled on the existing plus committed (roadway projects funded in the current five year work program) roadway network. In this 2040 projection only two segments of the network operate at LOS E below the adopted LOS. As illustrated in Map #54 – Punta Gorda Existing and Committed Street network Level of Service – 2040, these segments are the US 41 bridges over Charlotte Harbor and a short segment of US 41 at the intersection of Burnt Store Road.

Hurricane Evacuation

The Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council (RPC) provides technical assistance to member governments on several key issues including hurricane evacuation. Current study published

Map #54 – Punta Gorda Existing and Committed Street Network Level of Service - 2040

by the RPC is the 2010 Evacuation Study. This document analyzes demographic and land use patterns, various hazards, behavioral trends, vulnerability, shelter, and transportation resources. This analysis provides a foundation for calculating the clearance times based upon:

- Regional evacuation transportation network;
- Storm intensity;
- Evacuation population; and
- Behavioral response.

This evacuation study dives deeply into the actual behavior observed from previous evacuation events to project realistic evacuation assumptions for evacuation rates, out of county trips, type of refuge and evacuation timing. This more realistic analysis provides a firmer foundation for determining actual transportation system demands in the event of an actual evacuation order. The critical planning figure in determining the effectiveness of the transportation network in accommodating an evacuation is called the 'clearance time' which is broken out into four categories:

1. Clearance time to shelter
2. In-county clearance time
3. Out of county clearance time
4. Regional clearance time

Evacuation clearance times are calculated for each of the five evacuation zones A thru E and for the 2010 base year and a 2015 projection year as illustrated in Table 7.9 - Clearance Times for Operational Scenarios for Charlotte County.

Table 7.9 – Clearance Times for Operational Scenarios for Charlotte County

	Evacuation Level				
	A	B	C	D	E
Clearance Time to Shelter					
2010	0.00	13.5	19.0	19.5	27.0
2015	10.0	13.0	20.0	30.0	20.0
In-County Clearance Time					
2010	0.0	14.0	25.0	33.0	51.0
2015	10.5	14.0	25.5	34.0	23.5
Out of County Clearance Time					
2010	12.5	14.5	25.0	33.0	51.0
2015	10.5	14.0	25.5	34.0	23.5
Regional Clearance Time					
2010	13.0	16.0	27.0	34.0	51.5
2015	12.0	16.5	26.0	35.0	31.5

Source: Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council 2010 Evacuation Study
Time listed in hours

As demonstrated by the regional clearance times in Table 7.9 - Clearance Times for Operational Scenarios for Charlotte County, Inter-county, county to county, loading is a significant factor in experienced evacuation clearance times. Due to the regional nature of hurricane impacts it is likely that any called evacuation will include more than one county. The need to evacuate larger regions proportional to the category storm approaching indicates that there should be as few artificial restrictions on inter county roadways as possible.

While the transportation network plays a major role in effective evacuation, the 2010 Evacuation study demonstrates that evacuation times for the larger region exceed acceptable levels. While recognizing evacuation needs, funding for major transportation improvements based on infrequent hurricane events is not a fiscally sustainable approach. It is therefore determined by the study improvements in hurricane evacuation planning including increased public shelter capacity, assistance to transit dependent persons, alternatives for evacuees with pets, special needs shelters, and other strategies are needed. (Map #35 – Punta Gorda Hurricane Evacuation Routes)

Future Needs

Traditionally, the automobile has been the primary method to satisfy the travel demand in and around the City of Punta Gorda. This demand is created by two distinct types of trips, local and regional. The locally based trips are generated by origins (residential land uses) and destinations (businesses, retail, shopping) that originate or end within the City. Regional trips are those trips that are generated by origins and/or destinations that begin and/or end outside the City.

The Transportation System within the City of Punta Gorda is part of a larger network of facilities that serve Charlotte County and southwest Florida. Much of the analysis of the existing system is based on standard auto dependent travel for the region as these facilities serve not only local travel, but regional through trips as well.

The City has been promoting a shift in local travel modes that would increase the emphasis on non-motorized travel for destinations within the city limits. Implementation of the park once concept and the enhancement of parking, bicycle and pedestrian facilities will likely improve the functionality of the transportation system for locally destined trips. However, the vast majority of trips utilizing the major facilities within the city are through and regional trips originating or destined for areas outside the city. Therefore in order for the City of Punta Gorda to fully capitalize the economic engine of the Downtown it will be necessary to look at the regional transportation system more closely to ensure that regional traffic needs can be accommodated on the regional network. Improvements to the regional transportation network such as Harborview Road (Melbourne Street to Interstate 75) and the Piper Road extension (Henry Street to US 17) could have a significant impact on the number of regional trips traversing the City.

Table 7.10 - Cost Feasible Plan Selected Road Projects lists all the projects within the Cost Feasible portion of the 2040 Transportation Plan of the Charlotte County Punta Gorda MPO that are within, adjacent to or could affect regional travel demand within the City of Punta Gorda

Table 7.10 - Cost Feasible Plan Selected Road Projects

Facility	From	To	Proposed Improvement	Projected Project Timeframe	Total Present Day Project Cost (millions)
Burnt Store Road	North of Zemel Road	Scham Road	Widening 2L to 4L	2021-2025	$ 41.77
Airport Road	US 41	Piper Road	Widening 2L to 4L	2031-2040	$ 12.30
Burnt Store Road	N Jones Loop Road	Florida Street	New 4L	2031-2040	$ 19.62
Harborview Road	Melbourne Street	I-75	Widening 2L to 4L	2020-2030	$ 34.37
I-75	N Jones Loop Road	US 17	Widening 4L to 6L	2021-2025	$ 56.00
N Jones Loop Road	Burnt Store Road	Piper Road	Widening 4L to 6L	2021-2030	$ 5.83
W Marion Avenue	Hibiscus Drive	W Henry Street	Diet 4L to 2L	2021-2030	$ 0.75
E Marion Avenue	US 41	Marlympia Avenue	Diet 3L to 2L	2021-2030	$ 0.79
E Olympia Avenue	US 41	Marlympia Avenue	Diet 3L to 2L	2021-2030	$ 2.70
Taylor Road	US 41 (southern terminus)	US 41 (northern terminus)	Widening 2L to 4L	2031-2040	$ 32.90
US 17	Copley Avenue	CR74	Widening 4L to 6L	2021-2030	$ 13.89
US 41	Notre Dame Boulevard	Burnt Store Road	Widening 4L to 6L	2021-2040	$ 36.92
Total					$ 257.84

Source: 2040 Transportation Plan Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO

Alternative Level of Service Methodologies

In order to prepare for the possibility that transportation funding may not keep pace with projects identified to achieve the minimum Level of Service, the City will study alternative transportation LOS strategies including but not limited to Transportation Concurrency Exemption Area, Transportation Concurrency Management Area, and Multi-Modal Transportation District.

Transportation Concurrency Exception Area

"A Transportation Concurrency Exemption Area (TCEA) is an urban area delineated by a local government where infill and redevelopment are encouraged, and where exceptions to the transportation concurrency requirement are made, providing that an alternative mode of transportation, land use mixes, urban design, connectivity, and funding are addressed. The primary purpose of a TCEA is to allow development to occur in urbanized areas where infrastructure already exists, thereby reducing urban sprawl. The TCEA concurrency exceptions apply to all land uses, development and types of facilities within the TCEA."

This strategy may be appropriate at some point in the future for the City of Punta Gorda as the transportation model predicts the bridges over Charlotte Harbor into the City will fall below the minimum LOS D by the 2040 planning horizon. At this time the City will begin documenting supporting elements, such as alternative modes of transportation, land use mixes, urban design and connectivity to support the adoption of a TCEA should the need arise within the 2040 planning horizon.

Transportation Concurrency Management Area

Another potential tool for managing travel demand is the establishment of a Transportation Concurrency Management Area (TCMA). A TCMA is recommended in compact geographic areas where multiple, viable alternative travel paths and/or modes are available for common trips. Typically, these are appropriate for areas where an existing grid of roadways is provided (i.e., the downtown area) and some roads exceed their adopted LOS standard while adjacent parallel roadways operate within their adopted LOS standard. For these areas, an area wide LOS can be adopted which averages operating conditions to demonstrate that there is available capacity to support continued infill and redevelopment in line with the existing land use plan and entitlements within the Community Redevelopment Area.

Multi-Modal Transportation

A Multi-Modal Transportation District (MMTD) is another alternative tool for meeting travel demand while accommodating appropriate infill and redevelopment. MMTDs are appropriate where the local government assigns secondary priority to motor vehicle mobility and primary priority to assuring a safe, comfortable, and attractive pedestrian and bicycling environment with convenient interconnection to transit. These districts must incorporate community design features in order to reduce the number of vehicle miles of travel supporting a multimodal system. MMTDs need an effective transit system with supporting design elements which encourage transit usage. The lack of active fixed route transit in Charlotte County at this time makes the establishment of a MMTD inappropriate. However, implementation of fixed route service with local circulators and county-wide express bus service with regional connections to Lee and Sarasota Counties would provide a solid foundation for the establishment of an MMTD.

Future Land Use Options

The City's land use plan options include making changes to the comprehensive plan to allow for land uses which inherently reduce automobile trips, such as mixed use of residential, retail and office uses. The changes to the comprehensive plan should be combined with the land development regulations that are supportive of mixed use developments and include urban design standards which improve livability of the area and improve the transportation system connectivity.

Implementation Strategies

The County's US 41 Concurrency Study detailed analysis identifies the available capacity along the U.S. 41 study area. It is anticipated that the future operating conditions along this corridor will drop below the current adopted LOS standard of D. The City will prepare for the eventual increases in congestion along U.S. 41 corridor by continuing to:

- Monitor level of service conditions within the downtown area to determine when TCMS, TCEA, or MMTD needs to be established;
- work with and support the County as they clarify acceptable conditions for U.S. 41 in the Comprehensive Plan;
- support the County's implementation of intersection improvements; and
- Initiate strategies to support TCMS, TCEA, or MMTD including: support of walking and bicycle transportation modes, continued mixing of land uses, implementation of urban design standards, and focus transportation system connectivity.

IV. GOALS, OBJECTIVES AND POLICIES

Goal 7.1: The City of Punta Gorda will closely coordinate Transportation, Future Land Use Plans and Land Development in order to support a safe, convenient, energy efficient multi-modal transportation system.

Objective 7.1.1: Punta Gorda will include sidewalk and bicycle facility needs and priorities in the transportation planning and capital programming process. Efforts to create a contiguous sidewalk and bicycle facility network will be a priority in order to address future development and redevelopment needs.

Policy 7.1.1.1: Punta Gorda will include sidewalk and bicycle facility needs in the development of capital improvement priorities for safety and congestion management.

Measurement: Presence of sidewalk and bicycle facility projects in capital improvements program.

Policy 7.1.1.2: Punta Gorda will include sidewalks and bicycle facilities which serve schools and parks as a funding priority over other facilities and will include sidewalks and bicycle facilities on collector and arterial streets serving commercial facilities as the next highest priority for provision of these facilities.

Measurement: Reflection of these priorities in the scheduling of sidewalk and bikeway projects in Punta Gorda.

Policy 7.1.1.3: Punta Gorda will include sidewalks and bicycle facilities in all roadway widening projects associated with urban area collector and arterial roadways as well as construction of any new roadways.

Measurement: Record of evaluation and/or inclusion of sidewalks and bicycle facilities in such widening projects.

Policy 7.1.1.4: Whenever roadway maintenance projects are undertaken, including resurfacing Punta Gorda will consider the inclusion/acceleration of sidewalk and bicycle facility projects where cost effective.

Measurement: Record of evaluation and/or inclusion of sidewalks and bicycle facilities in roadway maintenance projects.

Policy 7.1.1.5: The City will modify the future land use designations to include and support a mixture of land uses which provide for compact and contiguous growth patterns that will reduce

automobile trips and promote bicycling and walking as modes of transportation.

Measurement: Development of a mixed use future land use categories.

Objective 7.1.2: Punta Gorda shall adhere to design standards when designing or approving sidewalks and bicycle facilities to encourage use and improve accessibility and safety.

Policy 7.1.2.1: To enhance accessibility, Punta Gorda will incorporate curb ramps, pedestrian demand signals, audio and tactile pedestrian signal systems and other devices as required or recommend ensuring full compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards.

Measurement: Incorporation of such standards in design of sidewalk and other pedestrian improvements.

Policy 7.1.2.2: Punta Gorda shall limit intersection radii associated with bicycle/pedestrian facilities so as to reduce road crossing distances for pedestrians and to slow motor vehicle traffic for turns (10 to 20 mph). Where this policy contradicts freight policies, Punta Gorda will seek to accommodate all modes through the use of median refuges and other innovative techniques.

Measurement: Record of this consideration in design of such facilities.

Policy 7.1.2.3: Punta Gorda will incorporate raised medians to provide safe havens for pedestrians into the design of urban collector and arterial multi-lane roads.

Measurement: Record of this consideration in design of such facilities.

Objective 7.1.3: Parking facilities which promote intermodal access and increase modal choice will be a priority in Punta Gorda.

Policy 7.1.3.1: Alternative parking solutions such as valet parking, shared access parking, parking exemption zones, on street parking and other public parking investments will be made.

Measurement: Implementation of these parking strategies.

Policy 7.1.3.2: The City will use existing planning documents as guidance for the production of public parking to accommodate redevelopment and infill objectives within the CRA and other areas of the City.

Measurement: Number of capital projects which provide parking.

Policy 7.1.3.3: All parking facilities shall be required to serve the pedestrian by providing clear connections to adjacent destinations.

Measurement: Development of design requirements for parking facilities that encourage efficient pedestrian movement and access.

Policy 7.1.3.4: Alternative parking options including parallel parking, surface parking, shared on-site and off-site parking, Park Once strategies, valet parking, other innovative techniques, will be encouraged through the provisions of the Land Development Regulations for all new development and redevelopment.

Measurement: Existence of a variety of parking options within the Land Development Regulations.

Policy 7.1.3.5: Punta Gorda will require all parking facilities associated with new development and redevelopment adhere to the aesthetic and design standards outlined in the City's *Land Development Regulations*.

Measurement: Application of Land Development Regulations requiring aesthetic and design standards through the Development Review process.

Objective 7.1.4: The City will continue to implement its street tree program through planting and maintenance of street trees and maintaining requirements for street tree installation in association with private development.

Policy 7.1.4.1: Punta Gorda will seek out and apply for state and Federal funding, including grants for beautification of public streets.

Measurement: Beautification funding received by the city.

Policy 7.1.4.2: Punta Gorda will require the provision of street trees as part of all new development and redevelopment through the Development Review Committee process.

Measurement: Application of Land Development Regulations requiring street trees through the Development Review process

Policy 7.1.4.3: The City will require the use of drought-tolerant species and/or native species for use in street landscaping.

Measurement: Number of native and drought tolerant species in city's right of way landscaping.

Objective 7.1.5: Punta Gorda will acquire or otherwise

protect existing and future rights-of-way from building encroachment.

Policy 7.1.5.1: The City will include advanced right-of-way acquisition as a priority in capital budgeting.

Measurement: Right-of-way acquisition included in capital improvements program.

Policy 7.1.5.2: The City will continue to allow roadway impact fee credits in exchange for rights-of-way needed for future transportation improvements.

Measurement: Record of DRC (Development Review Committee) application review where such exchange was considered.

Policy 7.1.5.3: Punta Gorda will maintain appropriate building setbacks through Land Development Regulations for all new development and redevelopment.

Measurement: Record of application of setbacks for all new development and redevelopment.

Policy 7.1.5.4: The City will continue implementing best practices in access management standards for arterial, collector, and local streets to maintain an appropriate balance for site access and safe and efficient multi-modal transportation function through the planning and development review processes.

Measurement: Review and consideration of updating current access management standards.

Objective 7.1.6: Punta Gorda when considering annexations will ensure any such annexations support a safe, convenient, energy efficient multi-modal transportation system.

Policy 7.1.6.1: Punta Gorda will require right of way dedication as part of annexations that will require additional public roadways to facilitate any new development.

Measurement: Record of right of way dedications included as part of the annexation and land development processes.

Policy 7.1.6.2: Punta Gorda will require the upgrading of existing roadways to meet minimum design and aesthetic standards including sidewalks and bicycle facilities as part of any annexation that includes proposed increases in development densities and intensities over pre-annexation development rights.

Measurement: Record of right of way dedications and or capital improvements included as part of the annexation and land development processes.

Policy 7.1.6.3: Punta Gorda will consider transportation system safety and efficiency when considering any proposed annexation.

Measurement: Record of analysis of transportation safety and efficiency in the annexation process.

Goal 7.2: The long-term end toward which the City's transportation programs and activities are directed is the provision of a safe, convenient, energy efficient multi-modal transportation system.

Objective 7.2.1: Punta Gorda will design each component of the transportation network in coordination with other components to achieve convenience, efficiency, cost effectiveness, and safety.

Policy 7.2.1.1: Through coordination with the future land use map, planning will ensure that existing and proposed population densities, housing and employment patterns, and land uses are consistent with a full range of transportation modes and services.

Measurement: Future land use reflects modal choice.

Policy 7.2.1.2: Opportunities to provide facilities which provide more than one mode shall take funding priority over those that do not.

Measurement: Record that Punta Gorda has supported this prioritization of projects through the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) process.

Policy 7.2.1.3: Punta Gorda will incorporate sidewalks and bicycle facilities into road capacity improvement and maintenance projects for urban and transition area collector and arterial streets.

Measurement: Record of sidewalks incorporated into design of such facilities.

Policy 7.2.1.4: Punta Gorda will evaluate facilities which serve unique transportation functions (such as the airport, rail or transit terminals) for additional transportation functions and as intermodal terminals. Road and transit improvements will be coordinated with the future needs of intermodal terminals.

Measurement: Record of planning and construction of intermodal facilities.

Policy 7.2.1.5: Utilize the Florida Department of

Transportation approved transportation model to coordinate road and transit improvements with existing and proposed population densities, housing, employment patterns, and land uses.

Measurement: Coordination with the MPO in transportation modeling.

Policy 7.2.1.6: The City will develop strategies that support the potential implementation of alternative street level of service (LOS) strategies.

Measurement: Strategies developed which promote alternative modes of transportation, land use mixes, urban design and transportation system connectivity.

Objective 7.2.2: Punta Gorda will provide opportunities for modal choice in new public rights-of-way.

Policy 7.2.2.1: Punta Gorda will evaluate new transportation facilities based on provision of modal choice and not based solely on ability to relieve automobile congestion.

Measurement: Record of project evaluation according to modal choice opportunity, through the MPO process.

Policy 7.2.2.2: Right-of-way provisions existing in Punta Gorda's Land Development Regulations will be enforced to enhance the city's effort in maximizing modal choice opportunities.

Measurement: Evidence of facilitating additional transportation modes in the right-of-way provision on the Land Development Regulations.

Policy 7.2.2.3: The Alternative Transportation Plan will be updated to provide guidelines for the implementation of Complete Streets.

Measurement: Evidence of regular updates to the Alternative Transportation Plan.

Objective 7.2.3: Punta Gorda will support plans of the Charlotte County Airport Authority and the MPO to expand aviation and surface access facilities concurrently with service demand, by participating in the MPO's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

Policy 7.2.3.1: Playing an important role in the present and future economy of the City, Punta Gorda will assist and support efforts to expand aviation facilities, surface access, and land use compatibility on Development Authority Land.

Measurement: Record of participation by City representatives on MPO Board and

MPO-TAC on issues concerning aviation and intermodal facilities at the Charlotte County Airport.

Objective 7.2.4: Punta Gorda will promote safety at railroad crossings and explore alternative treatments and aesthetics consistent with the city's vision.

Policy 7.2.4.1: Railroad crossing improvements (signage, warnings, and pavement) will be included in City capital improvement priorities.

Measurement: Inclusion of railroad crossing improvement projects in projects evaluated for capital improvements programming.

Objective 7.2.5: Punta Gorda will incorporate opportunities to improve rail freight and passenger service into City planning programs.

Policy 7.2.5.1: Punta Gorda will continue to cooperate with existing or future passenger rail providers toward providing access to passenger rail service.

Measurement: Planning and development of an intermodal facility within the MPO area that provides access to passenger rail service.

Policy 7.2.5.2: Punta Gorda will participate in MPO and Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) studies evaluating improvements to freight rail service in Punta Gorda and Charlotte County. These improvements may include a regional facility to transfer goods between rail and truck and provision of industrial-zoned land with access to rail.

Measurement: Record of participation of Punta Gorda representatives on MPO Board and MPO-Technical Advisory Committee (TAC).

Objective 7.2.6: Punta Gorda will enhance movement of freight by identifying important freight routes to develop funding priorities in the transportation planning and capital improvement programming process.

Policy 7.2.6.1: Punta Gorda will evaluate intermodal connections, including surface transportation access to aviation, rail and seaport facilities.

Measurement: Record of planning and construction of intermodal facilities.

Policy 7.2.6.2: Punta Gorda will identify where residential use and freight traffic conflicts persist, to mitigate these conflicts through prohibition of truck traffic, designation of alternative truck

routes, or other means.

Measurement: Written evaluation of freight truck routes where these conflict with residential traffic and data, such as existing restrictions on trucks and crash data.

Policy 7.2.6.3: Punta Gorda will consider critical and designated truck routes when developing priorities for pavement and bridge maintenance. Load-limited bridges on critical and designated truck routes will be reviewed as an aspect of bridge maintenance priorities.

Measurement: Record of evaluation of these factors in establishing bridge and pavement maintenance priorities.

Objective 7.2.7: Punta Gorda will cooperate, subject to compliance with land development regulations, with private agencies which may provide port services in Punta Gorda by incorporating the comments of such agencies in waterfront development planning pursuant to the Conservation and Coastal Management Elements and other related policies.

Policy 7.2.7.1: The City of Punta Gorda will remain open to the development of privately owned and operated water dependant transportation services compliant with local land use and community visioning.

Measurement: Annual determination of whether any such developments or changes in use have occurred and whether such was reported to the MPO.

Objective 7.2.8: Punta Gorda when considering annexations will ensure any such annexations support waterfront development planning regarding safe, convenient, energy efficient multi-modal transportation system pursuant to the Conservation and Coastal Management Elements and other related policies.

Policy 7.2.8.1: Punta Gorda will review for water development planning opportunities which require right of way dedication as part of annexations that will require additional public roadways that facilitate any new development and increase transportation system safety and efficiency.

Measurement: Record of water development planning opportunities which require right of way dedications included as part of the annexation and land development processes.

Policy 7.2.8.2: Punta Gorda will require the upgrading of existing roadways and/or right of way dedication to meet minimum standards for modal

choice including waterfront development planning opportunities as part of any annexation that includes proposed increases in development densities and intensities over pre-annexation development rights.

Measurement: Record of right of way dedications and or capital improvements included as part of the annexation and land development processes.

Policy 7.2.8.3: Punta Gorda will consider transportation system safety and efficiency when considering waterfront development planning opportunities within proposed annexation areas.

Measurement: Record of waterfront development planning opportunities contained in the analysis of transportation safety and efficiency of the proposed annexation.

Goal 7.3: The City of Punta Gorda will integrate and coordinate its transportation plans and activities into the planning processes of the State of Florida, the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council (RPC), the Metropolitan Planning Organization, and Charlotte County.

Objective 7.3.1: Punta Gorda will coordinate transportation planning with the Future Land Use Map, the Comprehensive Plan, the Florida Transportation Plan, the Southwest Florida Regional Policy Plan, and the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO Long Range Transportation Plan.

Policy 7.3.1.1: The City will participate as a member of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) and Regional Planning Council (RPC) planning process for system-wide facility needs.

Measurement: Record of participation by City representatives on MPO Board and RPC.

Policy 7.3.1.2: The MPO Board shall consist of three County Commissioners, one City Council member, and one Airport Authority Commissioner, or as provided by an adopted revised MPO Apportionment Plan.

Measurement: Composition of MPO Board in accordance with policy.

Policy 7.3.1.3: Punta Gorda will provide staff time input to the MPO through the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

Measurement: Attendance at MPO meetings by Punta Gorda staff.

Policy 7.3.1.4: Punta Gorda will provide technical advice to the MPO Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC), the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC), and the MPO Board.

Measurement: Attendance at BPAC, CAC and MPO Board meetings by Punta Gorda staff.

Objective 7.3.2: Punta Gorda will work with the MPO and utilize its processes to guide long range transportation decisions by incorporating the currently adopted MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) components that relate to the City of Punta Gorda into its Comprehensive Plan promoting the multimodal vision and goals of the City.

Policy 7.3.2.1: Punta Gorda will consider the Federal, State and MPO planning guidance in local transportation planning.

Measurement: Record of evaluation of alternative transportation projects, through the MPO process.

Policy 7.3.2.2: Punta Gorda will coordinate with Charlotte County through the MPO, joint meetings, Interlocal agreements, and through coordination of comprehensive plan amendments, to ensure efficient planning that is consistent with the city's vision.

Measurement: The MPO and Punta Gorda will coordinate to enact consistent planning measures to achieve compact development facilitating multimodal transportation.

Objective 7.3.3: Punta Gorda will analyze the Transportation Management System's results during the development of Transportation Plan updates, including their financial components, for inclusion in the plans and the local, state, and federal capital plans.

Policy 7.3.3.1: Punta Gorda will provide data to the MPO concerning the Transportation Management System components: highway pavement condition, bridge condition, crash reports, traffic counts and congestion, transit facilities/equipment, and intermodal facilities.

Measurement: Reports to MPO by Punta Gorda staff or other entities containing data in the aforementioned subject areas.

Policy 7.3.3.2: Punta Gorda will include findings from the highway pavement, bridge, safety, congestion, public transportation, and intermodal management systems analysis in capital improvement priorities.

Measurement: Record of evaluation of the aforementioned factors in the annual capital improvements program process.

Policy 7.3.3.3: Punta Gorda will use life-cycle costs in the design and engineering of highway pavement and bridges, when such information is available.

Measurement: Record of evaluation of such data in choosing which design alternatives to support through the MPO process.

Policy 7.3.3.4: Punta Gorda will continue to coordinate with the MPO concerning the analysis of and need for Congestion Management Strategies.

Measurement: Utilization of the aforementioned measures to analyze mobility in Punta Gorda and a record of this analysis.

Policy 7.3.3.5: Punta Gorda will implement congestion management strategies to address transportation demand management (TDM), including commuter assistance, the county-wide traffic signal system, intersection improvements, possible para-transit improvements, sidewalks, bicycle facilities, access management, and growth management strategies.

Measurement: Implementation of TDM activities as measured by traffic signal timing, amendments to land development regulations, construction of sidewalks/bikeways, etc.

Objective 7.3.4: Punta Gorda will provide adequate road capacity levels of service to accommodate present and anticipated future vehicular travel demand, based on adopted Level of Service (LOS) and ensure the impacts of development approvals occur concurrently with adequate roads and that maximum safety, efficiency, and cost effectiveness are achieved.

Policy 7.3.4.1: The minimum acceptable level of service for all City classified roads is LOS "D".

Measurement: Annual reporting of traffic counts and LOS measurement.

Policy 7.3.4.2: Punta Gorda will maintain service levels for the Florida Intrastate Highway System (FIHS) and Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) at service levels adopted by the State of Florida, should the corporate boundaries of Punta Gorda be expanded to include any FIHS or SIS roads.

Measurement: Annual reporting of traffic counts and LOS measurement.

Policy 7.3.4.3: Punta Gorda will consider roadways which operate below adopted levels of service in capital improvement priorities.

Measurement: Record of consideration of such roadways in capital improvements program process.

Policy 7.3.4.4: Punta Gorda will ensure the impacts of development approvals occur concurrently with development approvals.

Measurement: Record of development review approvals.

Policy 7.3.4.5: The City will monitor level of service conditions to determine when implementation of alternative street level of service (LOS) strategies needs to be established.

Measurement: Annual reporting of the level of service condition as recorded by the County.

Objective 7.3.5: If Roadways drop below adopted LOS, Punta Gorda will consult with the Florida Department of Transportation through the MPO to evaluate alternative forms of measuring level of service so long as the method conforms to approved methods by FDOT, FHWA, or the Transportation Research Board.

Policy**7.3.5.1**: The City will utilize protocols from the 2010 Highway Capacity Manual, as updated and as appropriate.

Measurement: Methodology for LOS measurement.

Policy 7.3.5.2: When roadway LOS drops below adopted levels, Punta Gorda will consult with the Florida Department of Transportation through the MPO to establish alternative measures for levels of service may be utilized to confirm the level of service, so long as the alternative measures are recognized by FDOT, FHWA, or the Transportation Research Board and accepted by the County and City. Alternative methods may include speed and delay studies.

Measurement: Written evaluation of LOS alternative measurements when and where LOS failure is experienced.

Objective 7.3.6: Punta Gorda will select projects to be funded under the capital improvements program based on criteria which ensure that priority needs are met.

Policy 7.3.6.1: The City will maintain within its 5-year Capital Improvement Program transportation projects which have been identified as priority needs:

Measurement: Record of transportation priority projects in the Capital Improvements Program.

Objective 7.3.7: Punta Gorda will manage access for urban collectors and all arterials to preserve the capacity of these facilities.

Policy 7.3.7.1: When necessary and where they exist, Punta Gorda will acquire additional land for its urban collectors and all arterial roadways through acquisition of platted lots for future rights-of-way.

Measurement: Number of lots acquired for ROW.

Policy 7.3.7.2: Where appropriate, urban collector and arterial roadway facilities will be designed with medians.

Measurement: Inclusion of medians in design plans for such facilities. Facilities with an approved Corridor Access Management Plan will adhere to requirements within the management plan.

Policy 7.3.7.3: Promote pedestrian and bicycle safety through use of access management strategy.

Measurement: Demonstrated use of access management standards that promote pedestrian and bicycle safety for roadway projects.

Objective 7.3.8: Capacity improvements will be designed to serve neighborhoods, not degrade them.

Policy 7.3.8.1: Roadway widening projects, on local streets and residential collector roads, will be avoided, unless alternative solutions are determined to be worse overall because of their relative impact on other policies, such as natural resource protection.

Measurement: Extent of residential development on roadways that are widened.

Policy 7.3.8.2: The City will limit functionally classified roads other than Florida Intrastate Highway System (FIHS) and Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) roadways to a maximum of four (4) through lanes.

Measurement: Number of lanes on roads.

Policy 7.3.8.3: The City will control access onto state roads in accordance with standards in land development regulations and will coordinate appropriately with the Florida Department of Transportation, through the MPO.

Measurement: DRC (Development Review Committee) application reviews involving proposed projects with access on state roads.

Objective 7.3.9: Punta Gorda will work through the MPO to provide adequate access into the City from I-75 and support its regional integrity.

Policy 7.3.9.1: Punta Gorda will participate as a member of the MPO in the development of I-75 to address the balance between access and movement.

Measurement: Record of participation by City representatives on MPO Board and MPO-TAC.

Policy 7.3.9.2: Punta Gorda will participate with regional, state, and federal efforts to address projected I-75 level of service problems, including efforts to increase Florida's share of Federal revenue.

Measurement: Record of participation by City representatives on MPO Board and MPO-TAC.

Objective 7.3.10: The City will provide improvements to hurricane evacuation corridors in the City.

Policy 7.3.10.1: U. S. 17 will be maintained as an important evacuation route for City residents.

Measurement: Improvements to U. S. 17 in MPO work program and City capital improvements program that enhance the hurricane evacuation function.

Policy 7.3.10.2: Other routes, not designated as hurricane evacuation routes in the Transportation Element, may be considered for improvement for hurricane evacuation purposes.

Measurement: Improvements to other designated routes in MPO work program and City capital improvements program that enhance the hurricane evacuation function.

Policy 7.3.10.3: Consideration of hurricane evacuation corridor improvements on the following criteria:

- The roadway heads inland and not along the coast
- The roadway rises quickly out of areas affected by storm surge
- Water crossings are minimized
- The roadway follows ridge-lines
- The roadway provides a direct route to high ground and shelter
- The roadway is not affected by rainfall flooding
- Constrained roadways are improved

Measurement: Record of consideration of aforementioned criteria in evaluation of hurricane evacuation corridor improvements.

Objective 7.3.11: Punta Gorda will limit transportation

impacts within sensitive habitats, wetlands, listed species habitat, and undisturbed uplands.

Policy 7.3.11.1: New transportation facilities will be sited to avoid sensitive habitats to the maximum extent feasible.

Measurement: Record of consideration of alternatives that minimize environmental effects of proposed transportation projects.

Policy 7.3.11.2: Alternatives which avoid sensitive habitats will be selected when possible, and mitigation of impacts will be pursued when avoidance is not feasible.

Measurement: Record of consideration of alternatives that minimize effects on sensitive habitats and/or the inclusion of mitigation plans of proposed transportation projects.

Policy 7.3.11.3: Projects which have environmental benefits (examples include air quality improvements, wildlife under crossings, and water quality improvements), will be given preference through the project selection criteria.

Measurement: Record of positive impacts environmental impacts for alternatives of all proposed transportation projects.

Objective 7.3.12: Through the MPO, Punta Gorda will support the preservation of the Seminole Gulf rail corridor as a transportation corridor.

Policy 7.3.12.1: The Seminole Gulf rail corridor, as shown on Map 7.7 and is hereby designated as a strategic regional transportation corridor. This designation recommended by the cities and counties along the rail corridor to recognize the regional nature of this asset and jointly commit to efforts to protect it in its entirety. This designation includes the rail corridor as a "transportation corridor" pursuant to F.S. 337.273.

Measurement: City support of the rail corridor and transportation corridor designations.

Policy 7.3.12.2: Encourage Florida DOT to purchase the real estate interests in the entire rail corridor from Arcadia to north Naples from its current owner, CSX Transportation Inc. to enhance future federal and state funding opportunities.

Measurement: City support of the purchase of the rail corridor.

Policy 7.3.12.3: Support efforts of the cities and counties along the corridor to enhance freight capability for the entire rail corridor and to add

capability for other multi-modal options in the corridor.

Measurement: City support of freight and multi-modal options along the entire rail corridor.

Policy 7.3.12.4: Transportation Element Objectives 7.1.1, 7.1.2 and 7.1.3 demonstrates the City of Punta Gorda's commitment to multi-modal options including sidewalks and bicycle facilities throughout the City.

Measurement: Retention of policies that encourage multi-modal options.

Policy 7.3.12.5: The City of Punta Gorda will formally oppose any attempts at abandonment of the rail corridor before the U.S. Surface Transportation Board, and will support use of federal rails-to-trails authority to railbank the corridor, if abandonment ever succeeds, in order to preserve the corridor for possible future rail service.

Measurement: City opposition to any attempt to abandon the rail corridor.

Objective 7.3.13: Through the MPO, Punta Gorda will continue providing a coordinated and comprehensive approach to planning, developing, and meeting transportation service needs of transportation disadvantaged persons.

Policy 7.3.13.1: The City supports and will continue to help fund through County tax dollars the Transportation Disadvantaged Program.

Measurement: County tax dollars from City residents going toward the Transportation Disadvantaged Program.

Objective 7.3.14: Punta Gorda will implement actions consistent with the recommendations of the Charlotte County Transit Development Plan (TDP) as adopted by the MPO to provide alternative transportation modes.

Policy 7.3.14.1: Punta Gorda will maintain consistency with the TDP.

Measurement: Projects built fulfilling the planned transit goals of the City.

Policy 7.3.14.2: The City of Punta Gorda will remain open to providing the public framework to facilitate a privately owned and operated water taxi or expanded water ferry services.

Measurement: Negotiations and/or execution of agreements for public/private cooperation on transportation projects.

Policy 7.3.14.3: Punta Gorda will explore ways to

achieve its transit goals including but not limited to public-private partnerships..

Measurement: Existence of a transit circulator.

Policy 7.3.14.4: Punta Gorda will support the existing transit system by requiring appropriate facilities as needed for new development.

Measurement: Requirements for transit system accommodation in new development projects.

Objective 7.3.15: Punta Gorda will base development of the capital improvements plan in coordination with the Long Range Transportation Plan Cost Feasible Plan.

Policy 7.3.15.1: Punta Gorda will utilize the needs assessment to guide development of the capital improvements program when the cost-feasible projects are implemented.

Measurement: Prioritization of Capital Improvement Program based on the needs assessment.

Policy 7.3.15.2: Punta Gorda will utilize the needs assessment to guide right-of-way protection and acquisition.

Measurement: Right-of-way acquisition and right-of-way protection based on needs assessment.

Objective 7.3.16: Punta Gorda will continue to pursue multi-jurisdictional funding sources for shared facilities and will continue to seek funding for transportation facilities from a diversity of Federal, State and local sources.

Policy 7.3.16.1: Punta Gorda will support interlocal agreements between the City and the County for shared maintenance responsibilities on selected roadways.

Measurement: Funds spent by Punta Gorda for maintenance on roadways where there is a shared maintenance responsibility.

Policy 7.3.16.2: Punta Gorda will work cooperatively with, MPO, and County to secure available and appropriate State and Federal grants.

Measurement: Grant applications, resolutions, staff assistance, and presentations at hearings.

Objective 7.2.17: Punta Gorda when considering annexations will integrate and coordinate its transportation plans and activities into the planning processes of the State of Florida, the Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council, the Metropolitan Planning

Organization, and Charlotte County in order to ensure that such annexations support a safe, convenient, energy efficient multi-modal transportation system.

Policy 7.1.17.1: Punta Gorda will coordinate with the appropriate agencies when right of way dedication as part of annexations will require additional public roadways that facilitate any new development and enhance the function of the regional transportation network.

Measurement: Record of coordination with appropriate agencies of right of way dedications included as part of the annexation and land development processes.

Policy 7.1.17.2: Punta Gorda will coordinate with the appropriate agencies when the upgrading of existing roadways and/or right of way dedication to meet minimum standards for modal choice as part of any annexation that affects the regional transportation network.

Measurement: Record of coordination of appropriate agencies of right of way dedications and or capital improvements included as part of the annexation and land development processes.

Policy 7.1.17.3: Punta Gorda will coordinate with the appropriate agencies in consideration of transportation system safety and efficiency issues included in proposed annexations affecting the regional transportation network.

- Measurement: Record of coordination with appropriate agencies regarding analysis of transportation safety and efficiency in the