Emerald Coast Regional
Pedestrian & Bicycle Working Group Summary
June 23, 2020 from 10:30 am
Virtual via GoToMeeting

In Attendance
Joy Hancock          Bike Florida, Executive Director
Gene Buchanan       Scenic Highway Foundation
Doug Turner         Citizen
Christy Andreasen   Jackson County TDC Executive Director
Britney Moore       Greenways & Trails DEP
Jennifer Waters     Citizen
Terri Malone        Escambia County
Zakkiyyah Osuiqwe   Santa Rosa County
Mike Kilmer         Citizen
Erin Simmons        Citizen
Tom Robinson        Citizen
David Forte         City of Pensacola
Heather Lopez       Director of Washington Co. TDC
Maria Showalter     FDOT
Olen Pettis         FDOT
Robin Birdsong      FDOT
Christy Johnson     FDOT
Hannah Reynolds     FDOT
Caitlin Cerame      ECRC
Brittany Ellers     ECRC
Gabrielle Merritt   ECRC
Mary Jo Gustave     ECRC
Tiffany Bates       ECRC
Cameron Smith       ECRC
Howard Vanseloc     ECRC
Mary Beth Washnock  ECRC
Anthony Vallee      McWhorter Vallee Design, Scenic Walton Board member

Caitlin Cerame with the Emerald Coast Regional Council gave a brief introduction to the group and attendees introduced themselves. She emphasized the purpose of the group is for regional collaboration with a focus on trail systems of regional significance. Those that typically are multi-jurisdictional or connect to larger statewide trail systems.
Joy Hancock from Bike Florida Association gave a presentation on Bike Florida and the changes in bicycle tourism. Ms. Hancock gave a brief background on Bike Florida and discussed the effects that the Covid-19 pandemic has had on the Bicycle Tourism industry. Ms. Hancock discussed micro tourism and the shift in bicycle needs. Ms. Hancock presented an interactive map that includes popular routes in the panhandle and overlaid them with popular bicycle routes to see where they align. She stated that she also is planning to create an app that would help bicyclists and tourist find local routes and trails.

Ms. Cerame discussed the Interactive Regional Network Map. Ms. Cerame went through the public comments received via the interactive map. She stated that there were a few comments about getting a separate path on Soundside drive and that there were also a few comments about the trail going through Breakfast Point. Ms. Erin Simmons stated that she was concerned with the trail going directly through the Breakfast Point neighborhood. She stated that the map shows a trail that does not follow any existing trail and that she did not understand why the trail did not go north around the Breakfast Point Community. Ms. Cerame stated that she would get with the City of Panama City Beach to look at alternative routes and realignment.

Mr. Tom Robinson discussed a plan to modify the PCB Planned Route for Trail and road for Bay County and the City of Panama City Beach to divert around private property and along Panama City Beach sanctioned corridors. Mr. Robinson stated that he wanted to make it a general rule that there are no conceptual pictures showing bike trails going through private property.

Ms. Cerame discussed the FDOT Future Construction Project Spreadsheet and stated that it was created to help determine what part of the regional ped/bike networks are currently being studied by FDOT.

Ms. Cerame stated that she plans to hold a workshop in the fall to update the TPOs’ respective bicycle and pedestrian plans with the Regional Shared-Use Network map discussed at today's meeting, once the realignments have been made. An update was given on the OW TPO long range transportation plan (LRTP) amendment to include the Santa Rosa Island Bridget to Bridge Multi-Use Path. The project is currently being incorporated into the LRTP Needs and Cost Feasible plan.

Ms. Cerame stated that ECRC applied for a DEO Community Planning Technical Assistance Grant for the US 90 Corridor Master Plan. The study area includes US 90 and potential alternative routes in Escambia, Santa Rosa, and Okaloosa Counties. The plan would help identify current gaps in the regional network and develop strategies and implementation recommendations to help complete connection for a shared-use path throughout the three counties.
Mike Kilmer, a citizen from the Brownsville community in Pensacola, discussed a rails to trails project through the Brownsville area. It is not a regional project but could potentially connect to the regional trail system. Ms. Cerame said the focus of the group is regional, but she will take a look at the map.