



A VISION FOR THE US 19 CORRIDOR

November 2015

Project Introduction

At its September Work Session, the Pinellas Planning Council/Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization (PPC/MPO) Board identified three priority emphasis areas: a vision for the US 19 corridor, enhancing beach access and a master plan for the Gateway area. US 19 is the backbone of Pinellas County. It extends from Tarpon Springs and Pasco County in the north to St. Petersburg and beyond in the south. Major redevelopment efforts are taking place on or near US 19 in St. Petersburg, Largo and Clearwater and it is within the Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) planning area in Lealman. There is also a planning area around US 19 in Palm Harbor.

In addition to the redevelopment planning efforts, sections of US 19 have been and soon will be experiencing a transformation of the roadway itself. Sections of the corridor have already been transformed into elevated intersections in a conversion to a partially controlled access freeway. Additional elevated intersections are planned in future years.

To date, there have been four US 19 Task Forces. These task forces have looked at a range of issues. From the 2000 task force led by Commissioner Seel, recommendations like shared driveway access, a connected sidewalk system and addressing & mile markers were put forth. Currently, the MPO is conducting a study with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority (PSTA) addressing transit access along the northern part of the corridor, focusing primarily on bicyclists and pedestrians. That study is anticipated to conclude in early 2016.

Moving forward, based on past efforts, evolving development patterns, changes in Pasco County, and the direction from the PPC/MPO Board, a vision for the US 19 Corridor needs to be developed. This vision will address the unique nature of the corridor and its role in Pinellas County, the economics around US 19, the role of transit, and desired outcomes to provide an overall story for the corridor.

Communications and Public Involvement

Throughout the project, maintaining clear and consistent communication is a priority. Key messages will be developed based on support data from current plans. A communications and education campaign will be used to share these messages and tell the story of the corridor, including characteristics, trends and issues/opportunities. A communications and outreach plan will be developed that will define key stakeholders/contacts, establish a coalition or advisory group (perhaps focused on different corridor segments), detail the engagement process and communications program, and include a “summit meeting” with Pasco County to ensure a regional approach to future corridor strategies.

Project Details

The project will begin with establishing context for the corridor. Existing plans and projects; trends, issues and opportunities; and functions of the corridor will be explored. A working vision map will be developed and further refined through analysis. The map will include defined corridor segments/districts, land use-transportation strategic objectives, and performance measures.



Once the context has been set, there will be a market assessment and economic profile. The assessment and profile will look at land use demand to understand market potential. It will also look at what is needed to attract and sustain quality development in the corridor.

Building off the work in the current FDOT/MPO/PSTA study, a transit concept plan will be developed. The concept plan will identify service markets, define a concept of operations that accounts for emerging technologies and establish service area and station/intermodal locations. As part of this process, intermodal integration needs will be identified, with emphasis on improved connections for people on foot, bicycles and those taking transit.

Once the profile is developed, assessment conducted, and the transit concept plan is complete, the next step will be to look at implications and outcomes. Scenarios will be analyzed and the preferred outcomes identified and selected.

Finally, the PPC/MPO will work with its partners to define policies, strategies and actions for the corridor to achieve the preferred vision and outcomes. The corridor vision map will be refined during this stage. The policy framework will be updated and modified. Priority actions will be developed, including those relating to capital projects, operating and branding/sense of place. The transportation funding program will be confirmed or adjusted, depending on the analysis and selection of preferred outcomes.

End Products/Results

At the end of the project, the story of the corridor will be created that reflects the overall vision for addressing the US 19 corridor's challenges and opportunities. The story will explain where the PPC/MPO and its partners want the corridor to develop and how to get there. This will be done with the project stakeholders, the communications and education efforts and through existing advisory committees.