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Public input sought for Bikeways and Trails plan

Michael D. Bates Jan 19, 2018



Fred Abeles and his wife Ann, both snowbirds from Maryland who winter in Inverness, bike along the Withlacoochee State Trail on the afternoon of Jan. 5, 2017. The trail, one of Florida's longest, winds through the Withlacoochee Forest and plenty of scenes of Old Florida. "The reason we are here is because of this trail," Ann said.

AMBER SIGMAN/For the Chronicle

LECANTO — A consultant for the Hernando- Citrus Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is putting together the first-ever Bikeways and Trails Master Plan for the area and is seeking input from the public.

Jennifer Bartlett, with Tindale Oliver, on Thursday asked members of the Bicycle-Pedestrian Advisory Committee what they would like the master plan to address. Comments ranged from having more multi-use paths on both sides of major highways, to having "green boxes" installed at traffic lights to give bikers a safe area to wait for the light to change, to connectivity of hiking and biking trails in the two counties.

Bartlett will be soliciting comments from the other two advisory committees of the MPO next week and a broader discussion of the plan is expected at an upcoming MPO board meeting.

A public workshop on the plan will be held from 5 to 7 p.m. Wednesday, Jan. 31, at the Citrus County Transit Center, 1300 County Road 491, Lecanto. And for more information about the Bikeways and Trails Master Plan, visit: www.hernandocitrusbikettrailplan.com.

The MPO's Technical Advisory Committee and Citizens Advisory Committee will meet Wednesday, Jan. 24, at the Citrus Transit Center in Lecanto. The TAC meets at 10 a.m. and the CAC at 1 p.m.

Also Thursday, the BPAC board selected its new officers for 2018. They are Chairman Scarlett Sharpe, representing Hernando County, and James McLean, representing Citrus County.

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