



**Joint Meeting of the
CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) and
BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC)
OF THE HERNANDO/CITRUS METROPOLITAN PLANNING
ORGANIZATION (MPO)**

Thursday, May 23, 2024

MINUTES

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) held a joint meeting on Thursday, May 23, 2024, beginning at 10:30 a.m., at the Hernando County Building Training Facility, 1661 Blaise Drive, Brooksville, Florida. The meeting was publicly noticed on the Hernando County, Citrus County, and Hernando/Citrus MPO websites.

BPAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Sherry Bechtel, Vice Chair, City of Inverness
Jim McLean, Citrus County Citizen-at-Large
Steve Gouldman, City of Brooksville
Jenette Collins, City of Crystal River
James Lipsey, Hernando County School District
Manuel Coimbre, Citrus County Parks and Recreation
Bailey Forbes, Hernando County Parks and Recreation
Dennis Henize, Hernando County Citizen-at-Large
Sergeant Matt Lillibridge, Non-Voting Hernando County Sheriff's Office

BPAC MEMBERS ABSENT

Michael Dolan, Chair, Hernando County Citizen-at-Large
Chuck Dixon, Citrus County School District
Dennis Reiland, Citrus County Citizen-at-Large
Deputy Fischer, Non-Voting Citrus County Sheriff's Office

CAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Stephen Hohman, Chair, Hernando County – Unincorporated
Karen Esty, Vice Chair, City of Inverness
Scarlett Sharpe, Hernando County - Unincorporated
Shannon Sokolowski, Low Income and/or Minority Representative
Beverly Howard, Citrus County – Unincorporated

CAC MEMBERS ABSENT

Ron Lawson, City of Brooksville

OTHERS PRESENT

Bob Esposito, MPO Executive Director
Mary Elwin, MPO Coordinator
Joy Turner, MPO Administrative Assistant III
Suzanne Ziegler, Non-Voting Advisor, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7
Elisa Joyner, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7
Carly Hanson, Assistant Growth Management Director, City of Crystal River
Rob Cursey, Principal Associate, MPO General Planning Consultant, Benesch & Associates
Steve Infanti, Project Manager, MPO General Planning Consultant, Benesch & Associates
Marc Ispass, Deputy Project Manager, MPO General Planning Consultant, Kimley-Horn & Associates
Jonathan Roberson, Research Associate, Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR)

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

- Presiding Chair Hohman (CAC) called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. and led the Moment of Silence.
- The Pledge of Allegiance and the introductions of the Committee members and staff followed the Moment of Silence.
- A quorum was declared, and Ms. Turner noted for the record that the public notice for the meeting was posted in accordance with the adopted policies.

APPROVAL/MODIFICATION OF AGENDA

CAC Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Sharpe to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by CAC Vice Chair Esty, and the motion passed 5-0.

BPAC Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Henize to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. McLean and the motion passed 8-0.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF THE JOINT MEETING OF THE CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) AND BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC) MINUTES – MARCH 28, 2024

The minutes of the March 28, 2024, joint meeting of the CAC and BPAC were provided for review and approval.

CAC Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Sokolowski to approve the Minutes of the March 28, 2024, meeting of the CAC. The motion was seconded by Ms. Howard and the motion passed 5-0.

BPAC Motion: A motion was made by BPAC Vice Chair Bechtel to approve the Minutes of the March 28, 2024, meeting of the BPAC. The motion was seconded by Mr. McLean and the motion passed 8-0.

PRESENTATIONS

1. Presentation by the General Planning Consultant, Kimley-Horn & Associates, on the Goals and Objectives for the 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the 2050 Preliminary Needs Assessment

Mr. Esposito introduced Marc Ispass, Deputy Project Manager, MPO General Planning Consultant with Kimley-Horn & Associates. Mr. Ispass made a presentation on the status of the 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). CAC Chair Hohman asked what improvements would be made to the intersection of Ayers Road and Culbreath Road. Mr. Ispass responded intersection improvements would address operational needs and perhaps require an additional study; however, the project is too far out into the future that nothing has been finalized.

Mr. Henize commented that it was good to see future long-distance rail on the Hernando County Transit Needs map. Mr. Ispass relayed that historically, long-distance rail has been reflected in the region but to extend the SunRail through Orlando to Polk County would be in excess of one billion dollars. Mr. Henize asked if the State has acquired the right of way for rail. Mr. Esposito provided an overview on the minimum requirements to begin a long-distance rail project: a study would be conducted and if the federal government agreed, the federal government would sponsor 50% of the project, the State 25%, and local government 25% with a 30-year operation and maintenance agreement. Unfortunately, most local governments do not have a funding source for their 25% share and to support the 30-year operation and maintenance agreement.

Ms. Sharpe questioned the road shown east of US 41 near Southern Hills Plantation. Mr. Ispass clarified that the road was reflected in the 2040 LRTP. Mr. Gouldman clarified that it is Governor's Boulevard located from SR 50 to Powell Road. He noted that Hernando Oaks has approximately 95% of the right-of-way and the church is required to build the first section. It may or may not go all the way to Powell.

Mr. McLean noted the section at Pine Ridge Boulevard and CR 486 on the Citrus County Bike/Ped/Trail Needs map should connect to the *Paved Shoulder Needs* path directly north (designated by the orange line on the map). Ms. Elwin shared that during the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) meeting earlier today, the TAC suggested the maps should be updated to reflect priority projects contained in the Transportation Improvement Plan.

CAC Chair Hohman stated that consideration should be given to a bike path or multi-use trail for Croom Road (Hernando County) due to bicycle congestion that is less than one mile from the SunTrail, a 50-mph speed limit, and several hills that cause blind spots.

Ms. Sharpe asked for the deadline and where to submit comments. Mr. Esposito affirmed comments can be sent to MPO staff and the next phase (Cost Feasible Draft) of the 2050 LRTP plan will be completed early July.

CAC Vice Chair Esty advocated submitting an application now for the Independence Boulevard sidewalk (Citrus County) rather than waiting for the next application cycle late 2024.

Ms. Collins commented that there are not many east-to-west Bike/Ped/Trail routes in Citrus County. A bike path or multi-use trail from Crystal River to W. Venable Street would be beneficial especially if it connects to the *Park & Ride* at SR 44 and the Suncoast Parkway.

2. **Presentation by the General Planning Consultant, Benesch & Associates, on the Traffic Segment Studies in Citrus County (US 41 and SR 200) and Hernando County (US 41 and County Line Road)**

Steve Infanti, Project Manager with the MPO's General Planning Consultant, Benesch & Associates, made a presentation on the results of the Traffic Segment Studies in Citrus County and Hernando County. The study objectives were to assess the existing traffic conditions for each of the corridors by determining the general level of service, the severity of congestion, identify growth trends, and travel characteristics. CAC Chair Hohman asked if County Line Road in Hernando County was going to become a state versus county road. Mr. Esposito confirmed the State is not going to acquire County Line Road but is willing to assist Hernando and Pasco County find a solution to the congestion concerns on County Line Road.

3. **Presentation by the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) on the Hernando County FY 2025-FY 2034 Transit Development Plan (TDP)**

Jonathan Roberson, AICP, Research Associate for CUTR, made a presentation on the major update of the Hernando County Transit Development Plan (TDP) for FY 2025-FY 2034. Mr. Roberson informed the committees that public outreach events will continue during the development of the TDP. Committee members were encouraged to recommend additional public events CUTR could present to. CAC Chair Hohman suggested contacting You Thrive Florida and the Hernando County Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (TDLCB) along with the Rotary and Kiwanis clubs. Ms. Sokolowski suggested contacting the local United Way for their community partner meetings, the Chamber of Commerce Resident's Reception, and the Hernando County Back-to-School Bash held on July 27, 2024.

Ms. Lollie shared there are three fare options for *TheBus*; one-way passes (mobile or paper), tokens, or cash (exact change). Ms. Sokolowski expressed her appreciation for having more than one option to pay for bus fares noting that as a non-profit organization having only one option to pay for bus fares would be detrimental in their ability to serve citizens.

ACTION ITEMS

1. **Review and Recommendation on the Scope of Work for the Citrus County 10-Year Transit Development Plan (TDP) for FY 2026-FY 2035**

CAC Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Sharpe to recommend the MPO Board approve the Scope of Work for Benesch and Associates to complete the Citrus County Transit Development Plan (TDP) for FY 2026-FY 2035 in the amount of \$106,825. The motion was seconded by Ms. Howard and the motion passed 5-0.

BPAC Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Henize to recommend the MPO Board approve the Scope of Work for the Benesch and Associates to complete the Citrus County Transit Development Plan (TDP) for FY 2026-FY 2035 in the amount of \$106,825. The motion was seconded by Ms. Collins and the motion passed 8-0.

2. **Review and Recommendation of Draft FY 2025-FY 2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Ms. Elwin explained that the revised List of Priority Projects (LOPP), provided to the committees during the meeting, would be incorporated in the TIP.

CAC Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Sharpe to recommend the MPO Board approve the Draft FY 2025-FY 2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and incorporate and/or address any comments by the federal and state agencies. The motion was seconded by CAC Vice Chair Esty with the comment of the LOPP being incorporated into the TIP. The motion passed 5-0.

BPAC Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Collins to recommend the MPO Board approve the Draft FY 2025-FY 2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and incorporate and/or address any comments by the federal and state agencies. The motion was seconded by Mr. McLean and the motion passed 8-0.

3. **Review and Recommendation on Revision 3 of the FY 2023-FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)**

Ms. Elwin explained the transfer of trail counters to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is not reflected in the redlined documentation provided to the committee as staff is awaiting confirmation from the FDOT on how best to reflect the insurance proceeds received from the stolen trail counter. CAC Vice Chair Esty asked if there had been any other changes to the UPWP since last year. Ms. Elwin affirmed Revision 2 of the of UPWP was in 2023 and there have been no major changes to the UPWP. Revision 3 is to realign funds between work tasks versus a major change to the UPWP.

CAC Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Sokolowski to recommend the MPO Board approve Revision 3 of the FY 2023-FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The motion was seconded by Ms. Howard and the motion passed 5-0.

BPAC Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Henize to recommend the MPO Board approve Revision 3 of the FY 2023-FY 2024 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The motion was seconded by BPAC Vice Chair Bechtel, and the motion passed 8-0.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

There were no CAC Committee Member comments.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)

Mr. Henize shared that the May 22, 2024, ribbon-cutting ceremony for the Good Neighbor Trail (GNT) was a well-attended, fabulous event, and Mr. Esposito's predecessor, Steve Diez, was respectfully remembered.

MPO STAFF UPDATES

Mr. Esposito shared the following updates:

- Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) member, Karen Esty, has been advocating for a sidewalk on Independence Boulevard in Citrus County. In March 2024, Ms. Esty asked Citrus County Commissioners to file an application with the Hernando/Citrus Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) to build the sidewalk on Independence Boulevard from State Road 44 to US 41. Commissioners Jeff Kinnard and Ruthie Schlabach, the Citrus county's liaisons on the Hernando/Citrus MPO board, supported Ms. Esty's request.
- The FY2025-FY2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) was adopted by the MPO Board on May 2, 2024.
- As a reminder, the July 11, 2024, MPO Board meeting is canceled as the Hernando County Commission is scheduling a workshop that day. Necessary agenda items will be presented at the June or August meetings.
- The Good Neighbor Trail (GNT) ribbon cutting ceremony was May 22, 2024, at 10:00 a.m. in Tom Varn Park in Brooksville, Florida and was well-attended.
- Mr. Esposito attended the Transportation Planning Exchange (TransEx), May 7-8, 2024, in Saint Petersburg, Florida.
- Councilman Gene Davis, City of Inverness, attended the Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Committee (MPOAC) Weekend Institute training held May 17-18, 2024. Mr. Davis serves as an alternate MPO Board member.
- Mr. Esposito reviewed vacant committee positions and provided the CAC and BPAC members with a listing of the positions on the boards/committees administered by the Hernando/Citrus MPO.
- A list of the public engagement meetings associated with the 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) adoption was provided.

ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING

Presiding CAC Chair Hohman adjourned the meeting at 11:58 a.m. The next joint meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, July 25, 2024, at 10:30 a.m., in the Hernando County Building Training Facility, 1661 Blaise Drive, Brooksville, Florida.