



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

Thursday, October 23, 2025

MINUTES

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) held a joint public meeting on Thursday, October 23, 2025, at 10:30 a.m., at the Lecanto Government Building, 3600 W. Sovereign Path, Room 166, Lecanto, Florida. The meeting was publicly noticed on the Hernando County, Citrus County, and the Hernando/Citrus MPO websites.

BPAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Sherry Bechtel, Chair, City of Inverness
Bailey Grzyb, Vice Chair, Hernando County Parks and Recreation
Jim McLean, Citrus County Citizen-at-Large
Dennis Reiland, Citrus County Citizen-at-Large

BPAC MEMBERS ABSENT

Terri Moore, Citrus County Parks and Recreation, Alternate
Deputy Fischer, Non-Voting Citrus County Sheriff's Office
Sergeant Matt Lillibridge, Non-Voting Hernando County Sheriff's Office

CAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Karen Esty, Chair, City of Inverness
Ron Lawson, City of Brooksville
Ana Arias-Cáseres, Low Income and/or Minority Representative-Citrus County
Shannon Sokolowski, Ph.D., Low Income and/or Minority Representative-Hernando County

CAC MEMBERS ABSENT

Stephen Hohman, Vice Chair, Hernando County – Unincorporated
Scarlett Sharpe, Hernando County - Unincorporated
Jim Reynold, Citrus County – Unincorporated

OTHERS PRESENT

Mary Elwin, MPO Coordinator
Joy Turner, MPO Executive Assistant
Lashaundra Ellison, Hernando County Planning Department
Victoria Williams, CPM, FCCM, Liaison Administrator, Florida's Turnpike Enterprise
Rob Cursey, AICP, Transit and Transportation Group Manager, Benesch & Associates
Chris Keller, AICP, Senior Project Manager, Benesch & Associates

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

- Presiding Chair Esty (CAC) called the joint 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 for the CAC and for the BPAC.
- 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 Dr. Sokolowski to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lawson, and the motion passed 4-0.

BPAC Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Reiland to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. McLean, and the motion passed 4-0.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS JOINT MEETING MINUTES – MAY 22, 2025

CAC Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Lawson to approve the May 22, 2025, Minutes. The motion was seconded by Dr. Sokolowski, and the motion passed 4-0.

BPAC Motion: A motion was made by Mr. McLean to approve the May 22, 2025, Minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Bechtel, and the motion passed 4-0.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. **Review and Recommendation of Revision 4 of the Hernando-Citrus MPO's Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) for FY2025-FY2026 by Adoption of Resolution 2025-5 Amending PL Contract #G2V07 to Recognize additional funding**

Ms. Elwin reviewed the agenda item and staff recommendation. The additional funds will be recognized in the FY2026 UPWP under Task 5: Special Projects and are proposed to support the traffic count and Level-of-Service analysis requested by the MPO Board for Citrus County.

CAC Motion: A motion was made by Dr. Sokolowski to recommend the MPO Board approve Revision 4 and adopt Resolution 2025-5 amending the FY2025-FY2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to recognize \$20,172 in additional PL funding from FDOT into FY2026. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lawson and the motion passed 4-0.

BPAC Motion: A motion was made by Mr. McLean to recommend the MPO Board approve Revision 4 and adopt Resolution 2025-5 amending the FY2025-FY2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to recognize \$20,172 in additional PL funding from FDOT into FY2026. The motion was seconded by Mr. Reiland and the motion passed 4-0.

2. **Review and Recommendation of the Proposed 2026 Meeting Schedule for the Hernando-Citrus MPO Board and Committees**

Ms. Elwin reviewed the agenda item and staff recommendation.

CAC Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Lawson to recommend the MPO Board approve the proposed 2026 MPO Board/Committee Meeting Schedule. The motion was seconded by Dr. Sokolowski and the motion passed 4-0.

BPAC Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Reiland to recommend the MPO Board approve the proposed 2026 MPO Board/Committee Meeting Schedule. The motion was seconded by Vice Chair Grzyb and the motion passed 4-0.

3. **Review and Recommendation of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Bylaws Draft to Update Membership**

Ms. Elwin reviewed the agenda item and staff recommendation. Dr. Sokolowski inquired whether recruitment materials could include language encouraging public transit users to apply. She also asked whether, given the challenges associated with using public transit to attend cross-county meetings, public transit users could participate virtually. Ms. Elwin responded that the legislature has not enacted any changes permitting committee members to vote while attending meetings virtually. She further confirmed that, to her knowledge, the MPO office has never received a request for alternate transportation accommodations to support committee participation.

Dr. Sokolowski proposed a targeted marketing strategy, recommending the creation of a recruitment flyer to be displayed on public transit buses. The flyer would include a QR code linking to the MPO website with information on how to apply for a position on the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC). Mr. Lawson suggested expanding outreach efforts to include focused marketing at nursing homes and partnering with local radio stations to broadcast public service announcements about open committee positions. Discussion ensued.

CAC Motion: A motion was made by Dr. Sokolowski to recommend the Option 1 amendment, with the modification that the Public Transit User positions be updated to “Citrus County–Unincorporated or Public Transit User” and “Hernando County–Unincorporated or Public Transit User.” The motion also directed MPO staff to initiate a proactive outreach campaign targeting public transit users by distributing flyers with QR codes on buses. Mr. Lawson seconded the motion and requested that MPO staff provide a status update on recruitment efforts at the next joint meeting, scheduled for January 22, 2026. The motion passed unanimously, 4–0.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Presentation by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) on the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) 2050 Multi-Modal Unfunded Needs Plan

Ms. Elwin presented the agenda item and staff recommendation, followed by the committee’s review of a recorded presentation from Lori Kent, FDOT District 7 SIS Coordinator, regarding the SIS 2050 Multi-Modal Unfunded Needs Plan. There were no comments from the committees.

2. Presentation by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) on the Tentative Five-Year Work Program (FY2027-FY2031)

Suzanne Ziegler of the Florida Department of Transportation, District 7, delivered a presentation outlining programming strategies and the proposed FDOT Tentative Five-Year Work Program for FY2027-FY2031. A flyer detailing the public hearing process, provided by FDOT, was included in the meeting packets and is also available on the MPO’s website. Ms. Ziegler shared the web page for public comment, which is open from October 20, 2025, through November 3, 2025.

She noted that resurfacing projects are illustrated on a map within the presentation; however, she will provide a detailed list of these projects to MPO staff for distribution. Additionally, Ms. Ziegler addressed the Capacity project for SR 50/Cortez Boulevard from W of Buck Hope Road to W of Jefferson which has been deferred to FY2032. She emphasized that FDOT recognizes the need to rehabilitate this section prior to the lane addition project, and it is scheduled for resurfacing in FY2027 to maintain roadway conditions until the larger project begins.

3. Presentation by the Florida Turnpike Enterprise on the Tentative Five-Year Work Program (FY2027-FY2031)

Victoria Williams, Liaison Administrator, Florida’s Turnpike Enterprise (FTE), made a presentation on the proposed Tentative Five-Year Work Program for FY 2027–FY2031. Her presentation covered how projects are prioritized and funded within the program.

Dr. Sokolowski asked whether toll road revenue generated by FTE is retained and used locally or pooled and distributed statewide. Ms. Williams explained that, according to state statutes, toll revenue is collected in totality to first maintain the statewide system, with remaining funds allocated based on regional needs.

Chair Esty requested that FTE consider allocating a portion of funding to include amenities such as trees, benches, and water features along trails developed within the FTE system. Ms. Williams agreed to relay the suggestion but noted that FTE operates under restrictive covenants defined by state statutes, which limit where and how funds can be spent.

4. Presentation by the General Planning Consultant, Benesch & Associates, on the status of the Congestion Management Process (CMP) and Complete Streets Update

Rob Cursey, the MPO's General Planning Consultant with Benesch & Associates delivered a presentation detailing the upcoming activities, strategies, and objectives for updating the Congestion Management Process (CMP). He shared that a stakeholder group, primarily composed of members from the Henando-Citrus MPO's Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), is being assembled and there will be a workshop to gather initial input, coordination, and collaboration with this group on November 20, 2025, at the Hernando County Building Training Facility, 1661 Blaise Drive, Brooksville, Florida. The workshop will be noticed, and members of the public are welcome to attend.

Chris Keller, AICP, Senior Project Manager at Benesch & Associates, delivered a presentation outlining the goals, objectives, and current status of the Complete Streets update. During the discussion, Ms. Bechtel inquired about the source and reliability of the data being used. Mr. Keller explained that bicycle and pedestrian data is sourced from Signal4 Analytics. While acknowledging that the data may not be entirely accurate, he emphasized that it is actively reviewed and analyzed for trends to establish benchmarks and identify areas for improvement.

Dr. Sokolowski requested a brief overview of why the previous Complete Streets Policy was not adopted in 2020. In response, Mr. Keller and Ms. Ziegler noted that concerns at the time included potential unfunded mandates associated with implementing a standardized policy, compounded by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. They also pointed out that Hernando and Citrus counties were significantly smaller six years ago, which may have influenced the decision.

Ms. Ziegler concluded by encouraging the committee to provide input on the current update of the Complete Streets Plan, emphasizing that the counties' needs have evolved and are now distinctly different.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

- Mr. Lawson reported that during a recent Brooksville City Council meeting, the Council discussed proposals to install sidewalks along North Avenue in downtown Brooksville, extending from Hernando High School toward US 98.
- Mr. Lawson also raised a concern regarding a "No U-Turn" sign posted on westbound SR 50 near Mobley Road. He noted that the next legal U-turn is over a mile away, which has caused frustration among local business owners at Mountain Park Plaza due to its impact on customer access. Ms. Ziegler responded that she would request FDOT to review the signage and provide an update to the committee.

[Subsequent to the meeting, it was confirmed that the sign was not authorized for general traffic and would be removed. The signs have been removed. Thank you FDOT for their prompt response.]

- Mr. Lawson further inquired about the bicycle/pedestrian bridge over Cortez Boulevard (part of the Good Neighbor Trail), noting that it appears rusted and unpainted compared to the nearby bridge over Broad Street and the CSX tracks.

[Following the meeting, FDOT clarified that the Broad Street bridge replaced a historic structure, requiring the color to be selected and approved by the State Historic Preservation Officer. FDOT coordinated with the State Historic Preservation Office and the City of Brooksville to finalize the color. In contrast, there was no formal correspondence regarding the color of the Good Neighbor Trail bridge over Cortez Boulevard, aside from a public comment requesting a durable finish without concern for color.]

- Chair Esty suggested that committee recruitment announcements be shared during Board of County Commission meetings, as these are broadcast live and recorded, potentially reaching a broader audience.

Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)

- There were no further comments from the BPAC members.

MPO STAFF UPDATES

Ms. Elwin shared the following updates:

- Today's meeting presentations will be available on the MPO website.
- Following a review of upcoming agenda items, the CAC/BPAC meetings scheduled for November will likely be cancelled. However, the TAC meeting scheduled on November 20th will be used to conduct a Congestion Management & Complete Streets workshop with various TAC members and department representatives from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. (2 hours) at the Hernando County Building Training Facility. Staff will update the current Outlook meeting notices accordingly. The meeting is open to the public and the meeting notice will be posted on the MPO website.
- The poles for the traffic signal are up at Gospel Island and SR44. Resurfacing is underway and estimated completion is spring of 2026 (FDOT Project #448040-1-52-01 & 443981-1-52-01).
- On July 29, 2025, the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approved the installation of "No Thru Trucks-Local Delivery Only" signage along CR 48 at the Withlacoochee River Bridge (Citrus County side) and at the intersection of CR 48 and US 41. Sumter County has also implemented similar roadway signage. We extend our gratitude to our partners at FDOT, District 7, District 5, and Benesch & Associates for conducting this important study, and we appreciate Citrus County Commissioner Bays' support on this initiative.
- The Florida Turnpike Enterprise (FTE) formally kicked off the Suncoast Parkway at Centralia interchange study at the beginning of April. The study will go through the end of 2025. FTE is currently collecting preliminary information.

ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING

The next joint meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) is scheduled for Thursday, January 22, 2026, beginning at 10:30 a.m., in the Hernando County Building Training Facility, 1661 Blaise Drive, Brooksville, Florida.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:31 p.m.