



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

Thursday, February 26, 2026

MINUTES

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) held a joint public meeting on Thursday, February 26, 2026, at 10:30 a.m., at the Hernando County Building Division 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

Bailey Grzyb, Vice Chair, Hernando County Parks and Recreation
Jim McLean, Citrus County Citizen-at-Large

BPAC MEMBERS ABSENT

Sherry Bechtel, Chair, City of Inverness
Terri Moore, Citrus County Parks and Recreation, Alternate
Dennis Reiland, Citrus County Citizen-at-Large
Deputy Fischer, Non-Voting Citrus County Sheriff's Office
Sergeant Matt Lillibridge, Non-Voting Hernando County Sheriff's Office

CAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Scarlett Sharpe, Hernando County - Unincorporated
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
Karen Esty, Chair, City of Inverness
Jim Reynold, Citrus County – Unincorporated

OTHERS PRESENT

Bob Esposito, MPO Executive Director
Mary Elwin, MPO Coordinator
Joy Turner, MPO Executive Assistant
Elisa Joyner, Non-Voting Advisor, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7
Loren Hughes, Florida's Turnpike Enterprise
Darlene Lollie, Hernando County Transit
Jonathan Roberson, AICP, Research Associate for the Center for Urban Transportation (CUTR)
Rob Cursey, AICP, Transit and Transportation Group Manager, Benesch & Associates
Chris Keller, AICP, Senior Project Manager, Benesch & Associates
William Roll, AICP, Project Manager, Kimley-Horn & Associates

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

Mr. Esposito, MPO Executive Director, called the joint meeting to order at 10:38 a.m. He noted that Karen Esty, CAC Chair, was scheduled to preside; however, neither Ms. Esty nor CAC Vice Chair Steve Hohman were able to attend. He then opened the floor for nominations for an Acting Chair

CAC Motion: A motion was made by Dr. Sokolowski to nominate Ron Lawson as Acting Chair for the meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sharpe, and the motion passed 4-0.

- The Pledge of Allegiance and the introductions of the Committee members and staff followed the Moment of Silence.
- A quorum was established for the CAC. A quorum for the BPAC could not be established, as at least five members must be present. Mr. Esposito noted that now that most trails in Hernando and Citrus counties have been completed, recruiting new BPAC members has become increasingly difficult. He anticipates that quorum issues will continue and explained that to preserve the valuable input of current BPAC members, bicycle and pedestrian representation will soon be incorporated into the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and the BPAC may be dissolved at a future date.
- 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 modify the agenda by placing Item E (Presentations) before Item D (Review and approval of Minutes). The motion was seconded by Dr. Sokolowski, and the motion passed 4-0.

The BPAC did not have a quorum, but members in attendance were in consensus.

ANNUAL ELECTION OF THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR 2026

CAC Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Sharpe to approve Shannon Sokolowski as CAC Chair for 2026. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lawson, and the motion passed 4-0.

Ms. Turner noted that attendees had a copy of an email from Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) member Karen Esty expressing her interest in serving as CAC Vice Chair for 2026. Ms. Arias-Cáseres also stated her interest in the CAC Vice Chair position for 2026.

CAC Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Sharpe to approve Ana Arias-Cáseres as CAC Vice Chair for 2026. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sokolowski, and the motion passed 4-0.

The BPAC did not have a quorum and will conduct its election at the next meeting.

CAC Chair for 2026, Shannon Sokolowski, administrated the balance of the meeting.

PRESENTATIONS:

1. Presentation by the MPO's General Planning Consultant, Rob Cursey with Benesch & Associates on the Congestion Management Process (CMP) Update

Rob Cursey presented the preliminary results from the November 20, 2025, workshop. He clarified that the purpose of the Congestion Management Process (CMP) is to identify short-term strategies and projects to address current issues on the road network, while the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) focuses on longer-term needs over a 6- to 20- or 25-year horizon.

He reviewed the methodology and primary data sources used to identify 26 potential congestion "hot spots" during the Tier 1 screening. That list was then narrowed to 9 Priority Locations through the Tier 2 screening process, which will undergo more detailed analysis. He reported that during the earlier Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) workshop, Vice Chair Eastmond noted that Location C-5 (Lecanto Highway from Novell Bryant Highway to Fennessy Lane) was completed on December 2, 2025. He also informed the committee that if the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), in coordination with Hernando and Pasco counties, advances the widening of County Line Road, adjustments to the 9 Priority Locations may be necessary. However, if the widening does not occur within the next five

years, it may be worthwhile to evaluate whether interim improvements could enhance sections of County Line Road.

Mr. Cursey explained that federal guidance for developing a CMP identifies three major categories of strategies for addressing congestion: Demand Management, Traffic Operations, and Roadway Capacity. For Hernando and Citrus counties, he noted that the primary focus will be on Traffic Operations strategies.

He asked committee members to review the CMP hot spot maps and lists and to provide any updates or additional areas of concern to MPO staff by the end of March. A final presentation on the CMP will be given to the committees on April 23, 2026, and then presented to the MPO Board for final approval on May 7, 2026.

2. Presentation by the MPO's General Planning Consultant, Chris Keller with Benesch & Associates on the Complete Streets (CS) Update

Chris Keller explained that although there is no single, formal definition of a *Complete Streets* project, the term generally refers to roadway designs that safely and efficiently accommodate all users. He outlined how Complete Streets policies have evolved at both the state and federal levels, noting that while Florida is moving away from the term, federal guidance continues to use it and requires that 2.5% of PL funds be allocated to Complete Streets planning activities.

He also reviewed the methodology and primary data sources being used for the update, along with potential performance measures for tracking the implementation of Complete Streets elements. Mr. Keller emphasized that the purpose of this update is to establish baseline metrics tied to context-based Complete Streets solutions, identify future activities that could satisfy federal requirements, and provide tools to help prioritize non-motorized facilities such as sidewalk and bicycle network gaps.

3. Presentation by the Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) on the Annual Update for the Hernando County FY2025-FY2024 Transit Development Plan (TDP)

Jonathan Roberson, AICP, Research Associate at CUTR, presented the Annual Update for the Hernando County Transit Development Plan (TDP) for FY2025-FY2034, highlighting progress made since the plan's adoption. He noted that the County has maintained existing service levels and expanded its network by adding four fixed routes along with the required ¾-mile ADA paratransit service. Over the past year, Hernando County also purchased new vehicles to support these routes, modernized its scheduling system for both ADA paratransit and fixed-route services, and prepared to install real-time information screens on its larger buses.

Looking ahead to FY2026-FY2027, the County plans to introduce two additional fixed routes. Route 10 will operate along Anderson Snow Boulevard, Barclay Avenue, and Sunshine Grove Road, while Route 11 will run along US 19 to the Citrus County line, where it will connect with Citrus County Transit's Orange Line. In FY2029 or later, the County anticipates adding another zonal route similar to the downtown Brooksville service, though the specific location has not yet been identified.

Several major capital priorities will continue into FY2026 and beyond, including ongoing bus stop improvements and development of a new maintenance and operations facility. The County will also procure design and engineering services for bus stop upgrades, construct additional shelters, and continue purchasing new and replacement vehicles.

Another key initiative over the next few years is a comprehensive marketing update. This effort will include refreshed route schedules, improved route information, a redesigned website, and expanded outreach. The County also plans to secure additional support for planning, design, and engineering activities associated with its capital program.

Within the next five years, a new transfer facility could significantly reshape system operations. If constructed, the facility would likely require a redesign of the overall route network to optimize connections and improve efficiency.

The TDP is updated every five years, with annual progress reports completed in the interim. It guides decisions about project selection and prioritization within the Hernando-Citrus MPO's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) and must remain consistent with local government comprehensive plans and the MPO's Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

In response to Mr. McLean's question, Mr. Roberson and Ms. Lollie explained that there is no fixed bus route to D.S. Parrott Middle School from Cobb Road because the school is the only destination in that area and there are no surrounding residential neighborhoods to serve. Ms. Elwin also noted that committee members were given a document provided by James Lipsey, AICP-C, Hernando County School Planner, outlining the transportation modalities for each school.

In response to Chair Sokolowski's inquiry, Mr. Roberson clarified that "ridership" refers to individual one-way trips rather than individual people.

REVIEW AND APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS JOINT MEETING MINUTES – OCTOBER 23, 2025

CAC Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Lawson to approve the October 23, 2025, Minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sharpe, and the motion passed 4-0.

The BPAC did not have a quorum and will approve the minutes at the next meeting.

ACTION ITEM

Review and Recommendation of the Draft 2026 List of Priority Projects (LOPP)

Mr. Esposito reviewed the agenda item and staff recommendation. The MPO is proposing to maintain the current project list without expanding it, while identifying cost-feasible, smaller improvements that can move forward more quickly. The goal is to focus on modest projects, such as intersection upgrades, particularly where county or city roads connect to state roads.

Mr. Esposito provided several examples:

- US 41/Broad Street Resurfacing: The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is planning a resurfacing project on US 41/Broad Street. Hernando County requested a dedicated right-turn lane from westbound Ayers Road to northbound US 41, and FDOT has agreed to include the improvement at its own expense.
- CR 491 and US 41 Intersection: This intersection previously lacked dedicated signals. After conducting a study, FDOT determined that signals were warranted in two directions, and the installation has already produced significant improvements.

Mr. Esposito noted that the LOPP currently includes several very expensive projects that consume many years of available funding. As a result, progress has been slow because so many of the listed projects are large and costly. Additionally, Mr. Esposito suggested moving some of the very large road projects, such as Rock Crusher, Venable, and CR 498 in Citrus County, to an alternative page. This would ensure they remain documented without occupying space on the LOPP.

Mr. Esposito then reviewed projects listed on the Congestion Management LOPP and provided updates on their status. He indicated that the MPO staff will gather and review input from counties and cities regarding their top two (counties) and top one (cities) small congestion-management projects.

Mr. McLean noted that during a conversation with Walt Eastmond, Citrus County Engineer/Technical Services Director, Mr. Eastmond indicated that Citrus County is considering shifting its priority and future funding from Cardinal Street to CR 491.

Mr. Esposito reviewed the Transportation Alternatives (TA) List of Priority Projects (LOPP) and explained that new category columns have been added, including Miles in Proximity to Schools, Commercial Areas, Public Transit, and Other. He explained that Hernando County receives approximately \$350,000 per year in TA funds, while Citrus County receives approximately \$170,000 per year. He also highlighted that Hernando County does not provide school bus service within a two-mile radius of a school, and some of the county commissioners have expressed interest in prioritizing sidewalk projects that improve connections to schools. Finally, he stated that any projects determined to be ineligible for TA funding will be removed from the TA LOPP. He asked committee members to carefully review the TA LOPP to ensure that no completed projects remain on the list and that there is no duplication with other county initiatives, and to confirm if the list contains the priorities for each county.

Mr. McLean recommended that TA Project #35, Ft. Island Trail, be removed as it would have been a six-million-dollar project back in 2018.

Mr. Esposito stated that the Florida Department of Transportation solicits input and recommendations during scoping meetings, and he noted that during the earlier meeting with the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), he encouraged members to participate in that process.

Ms. Elwin subsequently read into the record the email submitted by Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) member Karen Esty outlining her thoughts and comments on the List of Priority Projects (LOPP). A copy of the email was also provided to committee members.

Staff will coordinate with the committees for additional feedback during the March and/or April committee meetings prior to presenting the LOPP to the MPO Board for approval in May.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)

- Mr. Lawson expressed his thanks and appreciation to Suzanne Ziegler of the Florida Department of Transportation, District 7, for her assistance in having the “No U-Turn” sign removed on westbound SR 50/Cortez near Mobley Road and for providing background information on the paint color for the Good Neighbor Bridge. He also noted that he heard the City of Brooksville is reviewing the acquisition of right-of-way and engineering drawings for the North Avenue sidewalk project (TA Project #32).

Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)

- Mr. McLean asked if there was any update on rehabilitating the portion of the Good Neighbor Trail that may have been damaged during construction of the Duke Energy Substation located at Jasmine Drive and Mondon Hill Road in Brooksville. Ms. Elwin noted that she believed about six months ago Duke Energy had responded to the City and committed to making any necessary repairs to rectify any damage they caused. *[Subsequent to the meeting, Mr. Lawson visited the area adjacent to the Duke Energy Substation at Jasmine Drive and Mondon Hill Road. He traveled a portion of the trail in both directions and found no areas of concern regarding potential damage caused by Duke Energy, noting that several areas had been repaved. He suggested that a BPAC member ride that section of the trail by bicycle to further confirm its condition. He also indicated that the locations were likely within the City of Brooksville limits or under Hernando County’s jurisdiction, depending on the exact location.]*

MPO STAFF UPDATES

Mr. Esposito shared the following updates:

- The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and Pasco County attorneys are currently reviewing FDOT’s draft Letter of Understanding (LOU) for County Line Road. Mr. Esposito will provide an update once the legal reviews are complete.

- Work has begun on the new two-year Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), which will outline MPO projects and activities for FY2027-FY2028.
- Traffic counts and level-of-service analysis for both Citrus and Hernando are in progress.
- Mr. Esposito attended the Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC) meeting on Wednesday, January 28, in Orlando.
- Ms. Elwin and Mr. Esposito participated in the Florida Metropolitan Planning Partnership (FMPP) meeting on Thursday, January 29, in Orlando, which was well attended by Florida MPOs.
- The Centralia Road Interchange Study on the Suncoast Parkway, being conducted by the Florida Turnpike Enterprise, is expected to be available at the end of April.
- On January 5, 2026, the City of Brooksville adopted Resolution 2026-01, authorizing a Roadway Transfer Agreement with the Florida Department of Transportation. This action enables the transfer of the downtown “One-Way Pairs” from the State Highway System to city jurisdiction.
- In addition to the MPO staff’s standard committee recruitment efforts, Hernando and Citrus County Transit have agreed to share and post the recruitment flyer included in your handouts. WWJB Radio has also begun airing a Public Service Announcement (PSA) at no cost, using the script printed on the back of the flyer.

Ms. Sharpe asked whether the Level of Service analysis was reviewing all signalized intersections in Hernando County. Mr. Roll, the MPO General Planning Consultant with Kimley-Horn, stated that it was only a length analysis.

ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING

The next joint meeting of the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) is scheduled for Thursday, March 26, 2026, beginning at 10:30 a.m., in the Lecanto Government Building, 3600 W. Sovereign Path, Room 166, Lecanto, Florida.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:08 p.m.