



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

**Wednesday, October 25, 2023**

**MINUTES**

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) held a joint meeting beginning at 10:30 a.m. at the Lecanto Government Building, 3600 W. Sovereign Path, Room 166, Lecanto, Florida. The meeting was advertised in the Hernando Sun and Citrus Chronicle newspapers and the agenda was available on the Hernando/Citrus MPO website.

**BPAC MEMBERS PRESENT**

Jim McLean, Chair, Citrus County Citizen-at-Large  
Michael Dolan, Vice Chair, Hernando County Citizen-at-Large  
Sherry Bechtel, City of Inverness  
David Peters, City of Brooksville  
James Lipsey, Hernando County School District  
Bailey Forbes, Hernando County Parks and Recreation  
Francine Nobles, Citrus County Parks and Recreation  
Dennis Henize, Hernando County Citizen-at-Large

**BPAC MEMBERS ABSENT**

Jenette Collins, City of Crystal River  
Chuck Dixon, Citrus County School District  
Dennis Reiland, Citrus County Citizen-at-Large  
Sergeant Matt Lillbridge, Non-Voting Hernando County Sheriff's Office  
Deputy Fischer, Non-Voting Citrus County Sheriff's Office

**CAC MEMBERS PRESENT**

John Wade, Chair, Citrus County – Unincorporated  
Ron Lawson, Vice Chair, City of Brooksville  
Beverly Howard, Citrus County – Unincorporated  
Stephen Hohman, Hernando County – Unincorporated  
Karen Esty, City of Inverness  
Shannon Sokolowski, Low Income and/or Minority Representative

**CAC MEMBERS ABSENT**

Scarlett Sharpe, Hernando County - Unincorporated

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Bob Esposito, MPO Executive Director  
Mary Elwin, MPO Coordinator  
Joy Turner, MPO Administrative Assistant III  
Suzanne Monk, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7  
Carol Scott, Florida Turnpike Enterprise (FTE)

## **MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

- CAC Chair Wade 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 Committees and staff followed the Moment of Silence.
- A quorum for the CAC was declared.
- A quorum for the BPAC was declared.
- Affidavits of advertisement were read into the record.

## **APPROVAL/MODIFICATION OF AGENDA**

CAC Chair Wade asked the CAC members if there were modifications to the meeting agenda. There were no modifications requested.

**CAC Motion:** A motion was made by Ms. Esty to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lawson and passed unanimously.

CAC Chair Wade asked the BPAC members if there were modifications to the meeting agenda. There were no modifications requested.

**BPAC Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. Dolan to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. McClean and passed unanimously.

## **REVIEW/APPROVAL OF THE CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 27, 2023**

CAC Chair Wade asked for an update on the items that he mentioned on the Vulnerability and Risk Assessment Study during the September 27, 2023, meeting. Mr. Esposito affirmed the items Chair Wade noted were included in the final report that was approved by the MPO Board on October 5, 2023. CAC Chair Wade asked for a motion to approve the CAC minutes from the September 27, 2023, meeting.

**CAC Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. Lawson to approve the Minutes. The motion was seconded by Ms. Esty and passed unanimously.

*[It is noted for the record that Francine Nobles, member representing Citrus County Parks and Recreation, arrived at the meeting.]*

## **REVIEW/APPROVAL OF THE BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC) MINUTES – SEPTEMBER 27, 2023**

CAC Chair Wade asked for a motion to approve the BPAC minutes from the September 27, 2023, meeting.

**BPAC Motion:** A motion was made by Ms. Bechtel to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dolan and passed unanimously.

## **REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE HERNANDO/CITRUS MPO APPORTIONMENT PLAN**

Mr. Esposito reviewed the Apportionment Plan requirements. In conclusion he shared that the Apportionment Plan is prepared based upon the decennial (2020) census and no changes in the structure of the MPO Board are being recommended.

CAC Chair Wade asked if there were any questions from either committee. Ms. Sokolowski asked if there was a size threshold where a MPO cannot be combined with other counties. Mr. Esposito affirmed the desire is for MPOs to comprise larger geographic areas. Ms. Esty asked if the MPO Apportionment Plan presented today was consistent to the Apportionment Plan information shared during the July 26, 2023, meeting. Mr. Esposito affirmed the information was consistent. CAC Chair Wade noted that on agenda packet page 28, the joint meeting of the CAC and BPAC will be conducted on the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of the month which he wanted to discuss later in the meeting.

CAC Chair Wade asked the CAC for a motion to recommend the MPO Board approve the Apportionment Plan.

**CAC Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. Lawson to recommend the MPO Board approve the Hernando/Citrus MPO Apportionment Plan. The motion was seconded by Ms. Esty and passed unanimously.

CAC Chair Wade asked the BPAC for a motion to recommend the MPO Board approve the Apportionment Plan.

**BPAC Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. Henize to recommend the MPO Board approve the Hernando/Citrus Apportionment Plan. The motion was seconded by Mr. McLean and passed unanimously.

#### **REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE MPO PUBLIC PARTICIPATION PLAN (PPP) UPDATE**

CAC Chair Wade asked if there were any questions from either committee. CAC Chair Wade asked the CAC for a motion to recommend the MPO Board approve the MPO Public Participation Plan Update.

**CAC Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. Hohman to recommend the MPO Board approve the MPO Public Participation Plan (PPP) Update. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sokolowski and passed unanimously.

CAC Chair Wade asked the BPAC for a motion to recommend the MPO Board approve the MPO Public Participation Plan Update.

**BPAC Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. Peters to recommend the MPO Board approve the MPO Public Participation Plan Update. The motion was seconded by Mr. Henize and passed unanimously.

#### **REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC) BYLAWS UPDATE**

CAC Chair Wade asked if there were any comments from the BPAC. BPAC Chair McLean noted that on agenda packet page 103, Item 6, the reference to TAC member should be corrected to BPAC member.

CAC Chair Wade asked the BPAC for a motion to recommend the MPO Board approve the Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) Bylaws Update.

**BPAC Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. Dolan to recommend the MPO Board approve the BPAC Bylaws Update with the correction to Page 103, Item 6 as noted by BPAC Chair McLean. The motion was seconded by Mr. Henize and passed unanimously.

#### **REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) BYLAWS UPDATE**

Mr. Esposito reviewed the update.

CAC Chair Wade asked if there were any comments from the CAC. Mr. Hohman asked for clarification on Item E1 and the CAC meeting on a quarterly basis. Mr. Esposito explained that meetings are scheduled monthly to ensure meeting space is reserved and meetings will only be held during months where there is business to conduct but no less than four times per year (quarterly). Ms. Elwin noted that there may be the need to have more meetings in 2024 to complete the 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan adoption process by October 3, 2024. Mr. Hohman acknowledged to plan on monthly meetings, but quarterly meetings are required. He noted that the Bylaws use "generally meets" so we need to be careful what is committed.

The CAC discussed the updates to the Bylaws and requested the following items have a well-defined description and/or review prior to approving:

Item C1 – Membership: “CAC shall be comprised of 11 appointed citizens...”; should this read “CAC shall be comprised of up to 11 appointed citizens...”? Currently there are 7 filled positions. Should a minimum/maximum membership requirement be added to not be ‘out of compliance’ with Florida Statutes?

Item D4 – Officers: “Chair shall preside at all meetings...”; is it necessary to add a procedural statement that when conducting joint meetings to assign a single Chair of one of the committees (on an alternating basis) to preside over such joint meeting for efficiency?

Item F – Amendments: “Recommended changes in the Bylaws require a vote of the majority of the current CAC members...”; if the Committee serves at the pleasure of the MPO Board, are Bylaws approved by the Committee or the MPO Board or both?

Ms. Elwin agreed it would be meritorious for the CAC committee to table the review and approval of the CAC Bylaws Update after the County Attorney addresses their questions.

**CAC Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. Hohman to table the update to the CAC bylaws to allow the County Attorney to respond to the questions. The motion was seconded by Ms. Esty and passed unanimously.

#### **REVIEW AND RECOMMENDATION OF THE FY 2024-FY 2028 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) AMENDMENT ADDING EASTERN FEDERAL LANDS**

CAC Chair Wade asked if there were any questions from either committee. Chair Wade requested further clarification on the projects being added and Ms. Monk from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) explained there were two Eastern Federal Lands grant projects: 1) Crystal River National Wildlife Refuse (NRW) headquarters bypass road; and 2) Crystal River NRW to replace a dock.

CAC Chair Wade asked the CAC for a motion to recommend the MPO Board approve the FY 2024-FY 2028 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment adding Eastern Federal Lands.

**CAC Motion:** A motion was made by Ms. Esty to recommend the MPO Board approve the FY 2024-FY 2028 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment adding Eastern Federal Lands. The motion was seconded by Ms. Howard and passed unanimously.

CAC Chair Wade asked the BPAC for a motion to recommend the MPO Board approve the FY 2024-FY 2028 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment adding Eastern Federal Lands.

**BPAC Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. Peters to recommend the MPO Board approve the FY 2024-FY 2028 Transportation Improvement Program Amendment adding Eastern Federal Lands. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lipsey and passed unanimously.

#### **PRESENTATIONS**

#### **FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION TENTATIVE FIVE-YEAR WORK PROGRAM (FY 2025-FY 2029) PRESENTATION**

Suzanne Monk, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 7 Government Liaison for Hernando/Citrus MPO, provided an update on programming strategies and the proposed changes to the new Tentative Five-Year Work Program for FY 2025-FY 2029. Ms. Monk shared no plans have been developed for the additional sidewalk gap funding, but construction funding was added for both Hernando and Citrus counties so work could be programmed and would be on-going. Ms. Monk provided the web page for the public comment period which will be open through November 13, 2023.

Ms. Esty questioned how funding could be obtained for Project #2 (N. Independence Highway sidewalk) on the Transportation Alternative List of Priority Projects (LOPP). Mr. Esposito suggested Ms. Esty contact Walt Eastmond, Director of Citrus County Public Works, and/or the Citrus County Commissioners to determine if the County can fund this work. If the County cannot fund the project, then Citrus County will need to apply to

FDOT to request funding. Ms. Monk noted if historical data on safety concerns existed for this area, it could support the County making this project a higher priority. Due to the recent flooding caused by Hurricane Idalia in Crystal River, CAC Chair Wade asked if there were plans by either the State of Florida or FDOT to improve US 19 through Crystal River. Ms. Monk affirmed US 19 is a Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) roadway and no plan is currently programmed. Mr. Esposito noted that US 19 was part of the Vulnerability and Risk Assessment Study that will be incorporated into the 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan.

### **FLORIDA TURNPIKE ENTERPRISE TENTATIVE FIVE-YEAR WORK PROGRAM (FY 2025-FY 2029) PRESENTATION**

Carol Scott from Florida Turnpike Enterprises (FTE) made a presentation on how FTE projects are funded, prioritized, and an update on the proposed changes to the new Tentative Five-Year Work Program. Mr. Esposito and the MPO Board thanked FTE for expediting the expansion of the Suncoast Parkway. Ms. Sokolowski asked if there was signage on the Suncoast Parkway for the *\*347 Call Florida Highway Patrol & Road Rangers*. Ms. Scott will check with and/or take the suggestion to FTE.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS** – There were no citizens present in the audience.

### **BPAC COMMITTEE COMMENTS**

- Ms. Bechtel questioned whether the recently opened trail on US 19 from the Hernando/Citrus County Line north to Crystal River had been named. Ms. Monk from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) will investigate and report back to the committee.

### **CAC COMMITTEE COMMENTS**

- Mr. Lawson raised concerns on the impact to holiday activities scheduled in the City of Brooksville and the current level of construction including three existing detours. Ms. Monk will inquire and report back on the results of the October 16, 2023, meeting between Brooksville's Mayor Bell and Anna Geismar from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) so the city can prepare accordingly.

### **MPO STAFF UPDATES**

Mr. Esposito shared the following updates:

- FDOT Project #257165-3 (US 41 from SR 44 to S of Withlacoochee Trail Bridge): CST started October 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023 (anticipated to last 2 years) and there will be a groundbreaking ceremony November 30, 2023.
- FDOT Safety Liaison will give a presentation at the November 2, 2023, meeting. As a reminder, annual grant applications are due in February 2024.
- Vulnerability and Risk Assessment (Resilience Study) is complete and was approved by the MPO Board October 5, 2023. The Study will be incorporated into the 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) which is in progress.
- 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) – Scope A was completed, and Scope B is underway. The final scopes, C and D, will need to be issued immediately after the new GPC contracts are approved by the MPO Board which is tentatively schedule for the November 2, 2023.
- Traffic Segment Studies in Citrus County (US41 and SR 200) and Hernando County (County Line Road and US 41) will commence upon the approval of new GPC contracts (anticipated Nov/Dec).
- A multi-agency Interlocal Agreement for improvements to County Line Road was approved by the Hernando/Citrus MPO Board on October 5, 2023, and approved by the Pasco MPO Board on October 12, 2023, however, further discussions will need to occur before proceeding.
- To avoid future quorum issues, MPO Staff will begin sending email calendar invites for future committee meetings.

**ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING**

CAC Chair Wade adjourned the meeting at 11:54 a.m. The next joint meeting of the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) and Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, January 25, 2024, beginning at 10:30 a.m. in the Hernando County Building Training Facility, 1661 Blaise Drive, Brooksville, Florida.