



**Regular Public Meeting of the
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)
OF THE HERNANDO-CITRUS METROPOLITAN PLANNING
ORGANIZATION (MPO)**

Thursday, April 23, 2026

MINUTES

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) held a public meeting on Thursday, April 23, 2026, at the Lecanto Government Building, 3600 Sovereign Path, Room 166, Lecanto, Florida. The meeting was publicly noticed on the Hernando County, Citrus County, and Hernando-Citrus MPO websites.

TAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Scott Herring, Chair, County Engineer/Public Works Director, Hernando County Dept. of Public Works
Walt Eastmond, Vice Chair, County Engineer/Technical Services Director, Citrus County Public Works Dept.
Lashaundra Ellison, Hernando County Planning Department
Eric Landon, Citrus County Planning Department
Anthony Cavalier, Hernando County School District
Chuck Dixon, Citrus County School District
Carly Hanson, City of Crystal River
Darlene Lollie, Hernando County Transit
Joanne Granger, Citrus County Transit
Elisa Joyner, Non-Voting Advisor, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7

TAC MEMBERS ABSENT

Steve Gouldman, City of Brooksville
Chris Shoemaker, City of Inverness
John Walsh, Non-Voting Member, Hernando County Airport
Todd Regan, Non-Voting Member, Citrus County Aviation Section

OTHERS PRESENT

Bob Esposito, MPO Executive Director
Mary Elwin, MPO Coordinator
Joy Turner, MPO Executive Assistant
Holly Kowalczyk, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7
Loren Hughes, Florida's Turnpike Enterprise
Rob Cursey, AICP, Transit and Transportation Group Manager, Benesch & Associates
Rich Wilson, AICP, Project Manager, Benesch & Associates
William Roll, AICP, Project Manager, Kimley-Horn & Associates

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

- Mr. Herring called the meeting to order at 8:32 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

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Eastmond to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dixon and the motion passed 9-0.

REVIEW/APPROVAL OF PREVIOUS MEETING MINUTES

1. Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Regular Public Meeting Minutes – February 26, 2026
Mr. Eastmond noted that a correction to the Minutes was needed on page 3 of the Minutes, fourth paragraph, changing CR 498 to CR 495.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Eastmond to approve the Minutes of the Regular Public Meeting held on February 26, 2026, with the requested amendment. The motion was seconded by Ms. Granger and the motion passed 9-0.

2. Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Public Workshop for Stakeholder Discussion of CMP Strategies Update Meeting Minutes – February 26, 2026

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Lollie to approve the Minutes of the February 26, 2026, workshop. The motion was seconded by Ms. Granger and the motion passed 9-0.

PRESENTATION BY THE GENERAL PLANNING CONSULTANT, BENESCH & ASSOCIATES ON THE STATUS OF THE CONGESTION MANAGEMENT PROCESS

Rob Cursey, Vice President, with Benesch & Associates, and Rich Wilson, AICP, Project Manager at Benesch & Associates, provided an update on the Congestion Management Process (CMP) in progress. Mr. Wilson outlined the congestion screening methodology and provided mitigation strategies and recommendations for the top nine congestion 'Hot Spots.' He noted that Wiscon Road at SR 50/Cortez Boulevard in Hernando County and Dunnellon Road at US 19/US 98 in Citrus County have replaced two previously identified congestion hot spots, as upgrades in those earlier locations were recently completed and may positively affect congestion concerns (H-1 County Line Road from Holden Drive to Mariner Boulevard in Hernando County and C-5 Lecanto Highway from Novell Bryant Highway to Fennessy Lane in Citrus County). Mr. Cursey pointed out that for Hernando County Project ID #H-3 (Mariner Boulevard) from Northcliffe Boulevard to Linden Drive in Hernando County was a high crash area, and that H-8 (Wiscon Road) at SR 50/Cortez Boulevard and California Street may warrant a future traffic study. Additionally, he noted that in Citrus County, Project ID #C-8 (Dunnellon Road from US 19 to Chabaud Terrace) may need an evaluation for access management.

Mr. Cursey reviewed demand management and roadway capacity strategies but noted that traffic Operations Strategies are a focal point for mitigating congestion. He reviewed School Congestion Strategies to alleviate peak hour bottlenecks.

Mr. Rich Wilson with Benesch & Associates, reviewed the individual projects and potential strategies to mitigate congestion in the 'hot spot' areas.

The final draft CMP will be presented to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) during its regular public meeting on May 28, 2026, and subsequently brought to the MPO Board for approval on June 4, 2026.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Review and Recommendation of the Traffic Counts and Level of Service Analysis for Citrus County, as prepared by the General Planning Consultant, Kimley-Horn AND
2. Review and Recommendation of the Traffic Counts and Level of Service Analysis for Hernando County, as prepared by the General Planning Consultant, Kimley-Horn

William Roll, MPO General Planning Consultant with Kimley-Horn & Associates, provided an overview of Context Classification and the metrics used to determine Level of Service. He provided a Powerpoint Presentation reflecting both Hernando and Citrus counties. He also presented preliminary maps depicting the Context Classification designations and current Level of Service for roadways in Hernando and Citrus Counties and requested committee feedback.

Discussion ensued regarding the draft maps contained in the presentation. Needed clarification would occur after Mr. Roll met with representatives in each County in order to finalize the maps. The final Level of Service documentation and traffic counts will be presented to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) during its regular public meeting on May 28, 2026, and subsequently brought to the MPO Board for approval on June 4, 2026.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Eastmond to accept the preliminary findings of the Level of Service for Citrus County and Hernando County, pending clarification of the comments received from the committee. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dixon and the motion passed 9-0.

3. Review and Recommendation on the FY2027-FY2028 Adoption of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP)

Ms. Elwin presented the agenda item and staff recommendation. She specifically noted that the 30-day public review period began on April 3, 2026, and the MPO had not received any public comment leading up to this meeting. She noted that the Hernando County Transit System (TheBus) has requested the use of Section 5307 funding in the amount of \$375,000 specific for the use of Metropolitan Planning Funds to apply for Special Projects under Task 5 as follows:

- 1) Professional planning, engineering, and design services to support the continued expansion and enhancement of public transportation within Hernando County, including route development, transit infrastructure improvements, bus stop and shelter design, accessibility upgrades, and long-range transit service planning. \$200,000
- 2) Professional planning services to support the continued expansion and enhancement of public transportation within Hernando County, including route development, transit infrastructure improvements, accessibility upgrades, and long-range transit service planning. \$175,000

The Citrus County Transit system did not request the use of Section 5307 Metropolitan Planning Funds in their Section 5307 applications.

Comments received from the FDOT, Federal Highway Administration and the Federal Transit Administration have been addressed and reflected in the draft document.

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Lollie to recommend the MPO Board review and approve the FY2027-FY2028 adoption of the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) with the inclusion of the \$375,000 for use of Section 5307 Planning Funds by the Hernando County Transit system (TheBus) in Task 5, Special Projects, and subject to any required revisions based upon comments received from the Florida Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and the Federal Transit Administration. The motion was seconded by Mr. Eastmond and the motion passed 9-0.

4. Review and Recommendation on the Draft List of Priority Projects (LOPP)

Mr. Esposito presented the agenda item and staff recommendation and noted that the MPO's is proposing the following approach to the draft annual List of Priority Projects (LOPP):

- Maintain the current list without expanding it, while identifying cost-feasible, smaller-scale improvements that can be advanced (e.g., turn signals, adding turn lanes, intersection improvements), especially where roads connect with or cross State and US roadways.

- Move some larger, locally focused projects to a secondary list to position them for potential advancement if local and state funding becomes available.
- Reduce the number of projects on the Transportation Alternative (TA) list by removing items that will unlikely be able to receive TA funding noting that the Hernando-Citrus MPO annual approximation of TA funds from the FDOT is only \$500,000, cumulative for both counties.

Mr. Esposito noted that the Withlacoochee State Trail improvements in Citrus County consumed nearly 5 years of allocations and had some funding available and contributed by FDOT to finish the project.

Mr. Esposito emphasized that counties and municipalities should be receiving notifications from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) when projects enter the design phase, which is the appropriate time for local jurisdictions to provide input on additional needs or enhancements to projects in workflow. He reviewed the new format and consideration factors added to the LOPP, including the new "Project Ready to Receive Funding" column in the TA LOPP.

Mr. Esposito also acknowledged written comments on the Congestion Management and Transportation Alternatives LOPP submitted by Jim McLean, a member of the Hernando-Citrus Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee representing Citrus County.

Discussion ensued regarding the LOPP. Mr. Eastmond noted that Citrus County is working on the segment of CR 491 from Pine Ridge to north of Hampshire. Mr. Herring noted that design is currently being negotiated for Barclay Avenue – Phase II and III in Hernando County. Members concurred to moving Cardinal off the active LOPP and putting it onto the Anticipated Projects listing. Additionally, a signalization permit is to be issued for the intersection at SR 50 west at Evergreen Woods in Hernando County, Mr. Herring noted.

Ms. Elisa Joyner of the FDOT, noted the basic process that the Transportation Alternative (TA) projects go through involves a review of the TA projects, an application submitted by the jurisdiction, a feasibility process by the FDOT based upon the application, and a determination of the path forward for a project. She also noted for the record that the amount of allocation of TA funding for the counties is based upon population. FDOT may also supplement funding based upon available remaining funds if possible.

Ms. Lollie noted that the Hernando County bus system (TheBus) has a new route on Sunshine Grove Road providing for 'yes' on the transit proximity consideration factor column on that TA project.

Mr. Eastmond requested that Project #13 (an intersection improvement located on SR 44 at S. Otis Avenue) and Project #14 (an intersection improvement at US 41 at CR 491) be added to the Major Improvements and Congestion Management List for Citrus County.

After additional discussion, Mr. Herring noted that he would be in favor of funding the design only at this time for the North Independence Highway Sidewalk and changing its priority from #1 to #2 and recommending project #1 be the California Street Project instead of priority #4. He added that Sunshine Grove Road be listed as priority #3 and Three Sisters Springs be moved from #3 to priority #4. Members concurred.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Dixon to accept the draft List of Priority Projects (LOPP), incorporating the comments received from the Technical Advisory Committee, and to review an updated draft at the next regular public TAC meeting on May 28, 2026. The motion was seconded by Ms. Lollie and the motion passed 9-0.

CITIZENS COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

There were no further committee member comments.

MPO STAFF UPDATES

Mr. Esposito shared the following updates:

- The draft Letter of Understanding (LOU) provided by FDOT for County Line Road has been reviewed by Pasco County and is currently being reviewed by Hernando County.
- Mr. Esposito will be attending the Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC) meeting on Thursday, April 30, in Orlando.
- MPO staff will participate in the Florida Metropolitan Planning Partnership (FMPP) meeting on Wednesday, April 29, in Orlando.
- The Centralia Road Interchange Study being conducted by the Florida Turnpike Enterprise is still in progress and is expected to be completed by the end of April. The results will be shared as soon as they become available.
- An audible pedestrian signal (APS) has been warranted at SR 50/Cortez Boulevard and US 41/Broad Street. FDOT will coordinate with Hernando County regarding concurrence and implementation, as Hernando County is the maintaining agency. Currently, there are no APS installations in Hernando County, so this would be the first; both countywide and within the City of Brooksville.
- Mr. Esposito reminded committee members not to discuss committee business with other members by email or to copy members on such communications outside of a public meeting, as doing so would violate the Florida Sunshine Law.

ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, May 28, 2026, beginning at 9:00 a.m., in the Hernando County Building Division Training Facility, 1661 Blaise Drive, Brooksville, Florida.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Eastmond to adjourn the meeting and the motion passed 9-0.

Chair Herring adjourned the meeting at 10:04 a.m.