



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

Thursday, April 24, 2025

MINUTES

The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) held a public meeting on Thursday, April 24, 2025, 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.

TAC MEMBERS PRESENT

Scott Herring, Chair, County Engineer/Public Works Director, Hernando County Department of Public Works
Walt Eastmond, Vice Chair, County Engineer/Technical Services Director, Citrus County Public Works Dept.
Michelle Miller, Hernando County Planning Department, Alternate
Joe Hochadel, Citrus County Planning Department, Alternate
James Lipsey, Hernando County School District
Steve Gouldman, City of Brooksville
Chris Shoemaker, City of Inverness
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

Chuck Dixon, Citrus County School District
Valerie Pianta, 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
George Popovich, Grants Administrator, City of Brooksville

MEETING CALLED TO ORDER

- Chair Herring called the meeting to order at 9:00 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 Vice Chair Eastmond to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Ms. Granger and the motion passed 10-0.

ANNUAL ELECTION OF THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR FOR 2025

Ms. Granger and Mr. Shoemaker nominated Walt Eastmond as Chair for 2025.

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Lollie to approve Walt Eastmond as Chair for 2025. The motion was seconded by Ms. Miller and the motion passed 10-0.

TAC Chair for 2025, Walt Eastmond, administrated the balance of the meeting.

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Lollie to approve Scott Herring as Vice Chair for 2025. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lipsey and the motion passed 10-0.

REVIEW/APPROVAL OF THE MINUTES – NOVEMBER 21, 2024, TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC) REGULAR PUBLIC MEETING

Motion: A motion was made by Vice Chair Herring to approve the Minutes of the November 21, 2024, meeting. The motion was seconded by Ms. Lollie and the motion passed 10-0.

REVIEW OF THE 2055 FLORIDA TRANSPORTATION PLAN PERFORMANCE REPORT

Mr. Esposito provided an overview of the five-year rolling average for the Hernando/Citrus MPO safety performance measures (PM1), as outlined in the 2055 Florida Transportation Plan's Performance Report which was provided to the Committee in their agenda packet. He also reviewed the Performance Targets for 2025 for PM2 (Percent of NHS Bridges in Poor Condition), and PM3 (System Preservation Travel Time Reliability). These targets were adopted by the Hernando/Citrus MPO Board on February 6, 2025.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Annual Review and Recommendation on the draft List of Priority Projects (LOPP)

Mr. Esposito reviewed the agenda item noting two major updates proposed were requested by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 7. The first update was to add Project #8, Barclay Avenue in Hernando County, to the Major Improvement and Congestion Management list. Mr. Herring noted that the *Agency* associated with Barclay Avenue should be updated from FDOT to Hernando County. The second update requested by the FDOT was to add Project #9, US 98/US 41/SR 700/SR50A (FPID 452924-1), to the *In Production* portion of the priority list, as it is funded through construction.

Chair Eastmond questioned whether the sidewalk that is on the TA list for W. Cardinal Street (Project #13) could be accomplished when Cardinal Street is being improved from 4 lanes to 6 lanes as shown on the Congestion Management/Major Improvements List at #10.

[Subsequent to the meeting, FDOT indicated that sidewalk improvements are placed in scopes for State facilities and until further direction should remain on the list separately.]

Motion: A motion was made by Ms. Miller to recommend the MPO Board approve the draft List of Priority Projects (LOPP) with noted *Agency* update from FDOT to Hernando for the Barclay project. The motion was seconded by Ms. Lollie and the motion passed 10-0.

2. Review and Recommendation of the MPO Public Participation Plan (PPP) update

Mr. Esposito reviewed the major updates to the Public Participation Plan (PPP). Ms. Elwin mentioned that several updates were made to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Handbook in 2024, which are included in the revised PPP. Mr. Herring recommended the map on page 5 of the PPP be changed from Gulf of Mexico to Gulf of America.

Ms. Miller noted that the Hernando County Comprehensive Plan will be updated in 2026, and she will be reaching out to the MPO to coordinate communication regarding these updates. Ms. Elwin emphasized the importance of ensuring alignment between the 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and the Comprehensive Plan of the local jurisdictions.

Motion: A motion was made by Vice Chair Herring to recommend the MPO Board approve the Public Participation Plan (PPP) update with noted change to the map on Page 5 from Gulf of Mexico to the Gulf of America. The motion was seconded by Ms. Miller and the motion passed 10-0.

3. Review and Recommendation of Revision 1 of the FY2025-FY2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to move Consultant Services Funds to Salaries and Fringe Benefits for activities performed by MPO staff, and minor adjustments to Direct Expenses for FY2025

Mr. Esposito reviewed the agenda item and staff recommendation.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Shoemaker to recommend the MPO Board approve Revision 1 of the FY2025-FY2026 Unified Planning Work Program to move Consultant Services Funds to Salaries and Fringe Benefits for activities performed by MPO staff, and minor adjustments to Direct Expenses for FY2025. The motion was seconded by Ms. Granger and the motion passed 10-0.

4. Review and Recommendation of Revision 2 of the FY2025-FY2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to recognize eligible roll-forward funds from the previous contract G2774 into FY2026

Mr. Esposito reviewed the agenda item and staff recommendation. In response to Mr. Herring's question, Ms. Elwin noted the roll-forward funds of \$659,798 would allow for funding purchase orders to consultants for the Congestion Management Program Update, Complete Streets Update, Traffic Counts in Hernando and Citrus counties, a Level of Service (LOS) Evaluation pursuant to the adoption of the 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) and other projects outlined in the agenda item. Pursuant to the revised UPWP approved by the MPO Board, the MPO staff will proceed to secure purchase orders after July 1, 2025, once authorized by FDOT.

Motion: A motion was made by Mr. Herring to recommend the MPO Board approve Revision 2 of the FY2025-FY2026 Unified Planning Work Program to adjust the budget and recognize eligible roll-forward funds from the previous PL contract G2774 by amending PL Contract G2V07 for FY2026 for the additional funding. The motion was seconded by Ms. Lollie and the motion passed 10-0.

CITIZEN COMMENTS

George Popovich, the City of Brooksville Grants Administrator, commended Hernando County Transit (TheBus) and the Hernando County Community Transportation Coordinator (You Thrive) for their valuable services to the community.

COMMITTEE MEMBER COMMENTS

- Ms. Miller expressed her happiness to return to the TAC rotation team representing the Hernando County Planning Department.
- Ms. Lollie announced two fixed routes for the transit system (TheBus) were added. Route 5 will provide service along SR50, connecting Walmart on US 41 to US 301. She indicated the color naming of routes was being changed to route numbers as they were running out of colors. Route 6 is a new micro transit route that operates within the downtown Brooksville area. Both routes will feature a Demand Response Service, which is a complementary ADA service that assists riders whose starting and ending locations are within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile of the fixed-route system. The additional routes should reduce the burden on the Community Transportation Coordinator (You Thrive FL).

MPO STAFF UPDATES

Mr. Esposito shared the following updates:

- Grant applications for Safe Streets for All have to be submitted by June 26, 2025, at 5:00 p.m. and require a Safety Action Plan. The MPO may be able to aid with creating Safety Action Plans. Chair Eastmond mentioned Citrus County was not LAP certified and thus ineligible. Elisa Joyner, FDOT District 7 liaison will investigate and confirm.
- Justin Hall was named the FDOT District 7 Secretary replacing David Gwynn who is retiring at the end of April 2025.
- Discussions continue with Pasco County, Hernando County, and FDOT regarding the widening of County Line Road. Mr. Esposito noted that consideration should be given to prepare for either a six-lane or four-lane widening of the road. Mr. Herring pointed out that expanding to six lanes would necessitate purchasing homes as part of the right-of-way-acquisition. The current timeframe for construction is FY2033. Mr. Esposito thanked FDOT for funding half of the construction costs.
- The Withlacoochee State Trail was repaired and repaved in several areas in or near the City of Inverness and the Hernando area in Citrus County. Design began in May 2024, construction began August 14, 2024, and the project was accepted by the contractor as completed as of Monday, February 3, 2025.
- Citrus County:
 - US41 and CR491 in Citrus County, the eastbound phase on CR491 left-turn signal has been added. Chair Eastmond and Ms. Granger expressed their gratitude for the left-turn signal and Ms. Granger compared it to "*the greatest thing since sliced bread.*"
 - Gospel Island and SR44 will get a traffic signal during the resurfacing that is currently underway (estimated completion is spring of 2026, FDOT Project #448040-1-52-01 & 443981-1-52-01).
- Hernando County:
 - A dedicated right-turn lane will be added at Ayers and US41 when the resurfacing project begins (summer 2026, FDOT Project #447935-1-52-01).
 - Turnpike is conducting a study of Spring Hill Drive and SR 50 regarding the request for additional northbound left turn lanes. The study will be completed in July.
 - Turnpike 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.
- Mr. Esposito thanked the MPO's partners at FDOT and Turnpike (FTE).
- Subsequent to the last TAC meeting, Mr. Esposito met with Senator DiCeglie and State Senator Ed Hooper to advocate for rural arterial funds for Hernando and Citrus Counties.
- Mr. Esposito provided an update to the TAC on the MPO Board membership.

ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING

The next regular meeting of the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) is scheduled for Thursday, May 22, 2025, beginning at 9:00 a.m., in the Lecanto Government Building, 3600 W. Sovereign Path, Room 166, Lecanto, Florida.

Chair Eastmond adjourned the meeting at 9:45 a.m.