



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

**Wednesday, September 27, 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  
Sherry Bechtel, City of Inverness  
James Lipsey, Hernando County School District  
Bailey Forbes, Hernando County Parks and Recreation  
Francine Nobles, Citrus County Parks and Recreation  
Dennis Reiland, Citrus County Citizen-at-Large  
Michael Dolan, Vice Chair, Hernando County Citizen-at-Large

**BPAC MEMBERS ABSENT**

Steve Gouldman, City of Brooksville  
Jenette Collins, City of Crystal River  
Chuck Dixon, Citrus County School District  
Dennis Henize, Hernando 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  
Beverly Howard, Citrus County – Unincorporated  
Ron Lawson, City of Brooksville  
Scarlett Sharpe, Hernando County - Unincorporated  
Karen Esty, City of Inverness  
Shannon Sokolowski, Low Income and/or Minority Representative

**CAC MEMBERS ABSENT**

Stephen Hohman, Hernando County – Unincorporated

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Bob Esposito, MPO Executive Director  
Mary Elwin, MPO Coordinator  
Joy Turner, MPO Administrative Assistant III  
Siaosi Fine, Florida Turnpike Enterprise (FTE)

**MEETING CALLED TO ORDER**

- BPAC Chair McLean 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 why time slots were listed on the agenda as he has not seen time slots on past agendas. He wanted clarification on the meaning of the time slots. Ms. Turner explained time slots were introduced to the agenda due to the time that the meeting space is available. CAC Chair Wade asked what happens if time for an item runs over because of concerns of a board member. Mr. Esposito noted time slots are listed as a guide to expedite the meeting versus a hard stop on a topic. CAC Chair Wade acknowledged that staff would control the meeting, as necessary.

*[It is noted for the record that Scarlett Sharpe, member representing Hernando County-Unincorporated, arrived at the meeting.]*

BPAC Chair McLean asked if there were modifications to the agenda from the BPAC. There were no modifications requested.

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

BPAC Chair McLean asked if there were modifications to the agenda from the CAC. There were no modifications requested.

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

*[It is noted for the record that member Hernando County School District, James Lipsey, arrived at the meeting.]*

## **REVIEW/APPROVAL OF THE CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) MINUTES – JULY 26, 2023**

BPAC Chair McLean asked for a motion to approve the CAC minutes from the July 26, 2023, meeting.

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

## **REVIEW/APPROVAL OF THE BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC) MINUTES – JULY 26, 2023**

BPAC Chair McLean asked for a motion to approve the BPAC minutes from the July 26, 2023, meeting.

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

## **JOINT COMMITTEE MEETINGS – AFFIRMATION BY COMMITTEES**

BPAC Chair McLean stated that during the March 22, 2023, meeting of the BPAC, it was affirmed by the BPAC to conduct joint meetings with the CAC. Chair McLean asked the BPAC for a motion to approve conducting joint meetings with the CAC.

**BPAC Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. Lipsey to approve conducting joint meetings with the CAC. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dolan and passed unanimously.

BPAC Chair McLean stated that during the July 26, 2023, meeting of the CAC and BPAC, it was noted the CAC wanted the opportunity to conduct a vote on the decision to conduct joint meetings with the BPAC. Chair McLean asked the CAC for a motion to approve conducting joint meetings with the BPAC. CAC Chair Wade, asked for a motion to not conduct joint meetings with the BPAC. No motion was made.

Chair McLean asked the CAC for a motion to approve conducting joint meetings with the BPAC.

**CAC Motion:** A motion was made by Ms. Sokolowski to approve conducting joint meetings with the BPAC. The motion was seconded by Ms. Sharpe and passed 5-1 with Chair Wade dissenting.

Mr. Esposito shared the Public Participation Plan (PPP), and committee bylaws are being updated and copies of the current bylaws are available upon request. Ms. Elwin noted a draft version of the PPP and bylaws will be shared during a future meeting for committee for consideration and approval.

## **REVIEW AND RECOMMEND 2024 MPO MEETING SCHEDULE**

Mr. Esposito explained that committee meetings are being moved from Wednesday to Thursday in 2024 due to available meeting space. Ms. Elwin noted the challenges of securing meeting space which is why the meeting schedule is drafted in advance. Mr. Esposito explained that committee meetings are scheduled each month to ensure availability of meeting space and while the CAC and BPAC are required to meet four times per year, it is unlikely there will be 12 meetings in 2024.

BPAC Chair McLean asked the BPAC for a motion to approve and recommend the MPO Board approve the 2024 MPO Meeting Schedule.

**BPAC Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. Reiland to recommend approval of the 2024 MPO Meeting Schedule to the MPO Board. The motion was seconded by Mr. Dolan and passed unanimously.

BPAC Chair McLean asked the CAC for a motion to approve and recommend the MPO Board approve the 2024 MPO Meeting Schedule.

**CAC Motion:** A motion was made by Ms. Esty to recommend approval of the 2024 MPO Meeting Schedule to the MPO Board. The motion was seconded by Mr. Lawson and passed unanimously.

### **VULNERABILITY AND RISK ASSESSMENT (RESILIENCE STUDY) FOR TRANSPORTATION INFRASTRUCTURE PRESENTATION OF FINAL REPORT**

Mr. Esposito reviewed a presentation from General Planning Consultant Benesch & Associates. Benesch was assigned the task of preparing a Vulnerability and Risk Assessment Study to identify vulnerable transportation infrastructure assets and develop recommendations and mitigation strategies that promote system resilience. Benesch & Associates has completed the study and will present the final report to the MPO Board on October 5, 2023. Mr. Esposito added the strategies and recommendations from this Study will be incorporated into the 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), List of Priority Projects (LOPP), and Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

CAC Chair Wade complimented the thoroughness of the report and noted the following items:

1. On Page 37 of the agenda packet, Mr. Wade noted that the firehouse in Holder is not active and that the two additional firehouses listed may be inactive. He also highlighted two locations identified as utilities and a well for Floral City should be confirmed.
2. On Page 65 of the agenda packet Mr. Wade believed the Suncoast Parkway extension into Citrus should be included as a Major Arterial roadway or greater.
3. On Page 69 of the agenda packet Mr. Wade identified two facilities that may be inactive and should be confirmed.
4. On Page 71 of the agenda packet Mr. Wade identified two utilities that may not exist and a well for Floral City that is not listed.
5. Appendix B: Mr. Wade suggested adding a chart legend that identifies the significance of the colored shading.

Mr. Esposito thanked Mr. Wade and will follow up with the General Planning Consultant. Ms. Esty stated her concern that as roads are improved, density and development increase, and aquifer recharge areas are diminished. She asked how roads facilitate minimizing flooding as density/development increase. Ms. Elwin acknowledged the importance to incorporate the information from this Study in Local Mitigation Strategies (LMS) to guide policy maker decisions. Ms. Esty asked if the recommendations contained in the report are enforceable and Ms. Elwin affirmed the study lists recommendations, but the ultimate authority to approve or not resides ultimately with the jurisdictions. Ms. Esty suggested adding emphasis to key recommendations such as "strongly recommends."

BPAC Chair McLean asked the BPAC for a motion to approve and recommend the MPO Board accept the Vulnerability and Risk Assessment Final Report.

**BPAC Motion:** A motion was made by Mr. Reiland to approve and recommend the MPO Board accept the Vulnerability and Risk Assessment Final Report with the adjustments/clarifications noted by CAC Chair Wade. The motion was seconded by Ms. Forbes and passed unanimously.

BPAC Chair McLean asked the CAC for a motion to approve and recommend the MPO Board accept the Vulnerability and Risk Assessment Final Report, as amended.

**CAC Motion:** A motion was made to approve and recommend the MPO Board accept the Vulnerability and Risk Assessment Final Report with the adjustments/clarifications noted by CAC Chair Wade, if necessary. The motion was seconded by Ms. Esty and passed unanimously.

#### **BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE DISCUSSION OF THE GOOD NEIGHBOR TRAIL ON THE TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES LIST OF PRIORITY PROJECTS (LOPP)**

Mr. Esposito shared that BPAC committee member, Mr. Dolan, inquired if Item #16 of the Transportation Alternatives (TA) List of Priority Projects (LOPP), a resurfacing project for the Good Neighbor Trail (GNT), could be moved on the list as a higher priority. Mr. Esposito also informed the committees that all TA monies are currently committed to the Withlacoochee Trail. BPAC Chair McLean mentioned work is being done on the Withlacoochee Trail using Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) funds and the trail may not use all the TA funds. Mr. Dolan stated the application to resurface this section of the trail (Item #16) was submitted in 2016. Mr. Dolan discussed the concerns for the GNT are twofold, 1) the completion of Florida's Coast-to-Coast Trail (C2C) in the next three to four years and, 2) the GNT extension being worked on today will be complete in 2025 which will promote the GNT as a tourist activity. Mr. Dolan mentioned the benefit to the community to ensure the trail is in better condition.

The GNT trail is managed by three entities: the City of Brooksville, Hernando County, and the Florida Forest Service. The Brooksville GNT Advisory Committee is pursuing additional grant funding for the GNT and having a higher priority on the TA LOPP affords an advantage in the grant process.

Mr. Esposito recommended LOPP items be limited to projects that could be funded through the MPO. The committees discussed maintenance/improvement, ownership, and alternate funding opportunities that could be pursued. The LOPP will be updated later this year or early 2024 as part of the annual Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) process.

**CITIZEN COMMENTS** – There were no citizen comments.

#### **COMMITTEE COMMENTS**

- There were no comments from the BPAC.
- Comments from the CAC included:
  - Ms. Esty shared comments received from concerned parents on not having a blinking light for the traffic signal at SR44 and SR41 to turn into the middle school. Mr. Esposito shared there are planned intersection improvements for this location.
  - Mr. Esposito clarified that information discussed during a recent Community Traffic Safety Teams (CTST) meeting to widen SR41 but not widen the bridge was incorrect. The bridge will be widened as part of the next phase. BPAC Chair McLean will share this correction during the next CTST meeting.
  - At the request of Ms. Esty, staff will forward the list of projects associated with *Moving Florida Forward*.
  - Ms. Howard will forward the Citrus County Chronicle article for the Halls River Road multi-use path project that the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) will manage and implement.
  - Mr. Lawson asked for an update on the one-way pairs in Brooksville and Mr. Esposito stated a meeting with the City and FDOT is scheduled for October 2.
- BPAC member, Mr. Reiland, asked if multi-modal trails and sidewalks were being considered as part of the Vulnerability and Risk Assessment Studies. Mr. Esposito will put forth an inquiry but affirmed the current study is vehicle concentric.

#### **MPO STAFF UPDATES**

Mr. Esposito shared the following updates:

- The Vulnerability and Risk Assessment Study is complete.
- Work on the 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is progressing as expected.
- The Apportionment Plan, which governs the size of the MPO Board, will be presented at the October 25 committee meetings.

#### **ADJOURNMENT AND NEXT MEETING**

BPAC Chair McLean adjourned the meeting at 11:40 a.m. The next joint meeting of the Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) and Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) is tentatively scheduled for Wednesday, October 25, 2023, beginning at 10:30 a.m., in the Lecanto Government Building, 3600 W. Sovereign Path, Room 166, Lecanto, Florida.