

**CHARLOTTE COUNTY – PUNTA GORDA**

**METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

MINUTES OF THE MPO BOARD MEETING, DECEMBER 16, 2021

MURDOCK ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING

18500 MURDOCK CIRCLE, ROOM #119

PORT CHARLOTTE FL 33948

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

**Commissioner Joseph Tiseo,** Charlotte County Commissioner, MPO Chair

**Commissioner Christopher G. Constance,** MD, Charlotte County Commissioner, MPO Vice Chair

**Commissioner Stephen R. Deutsch,** Charlotte County Commissioner

**Commissioner James Herston**, Charlotte County Airport Authority, CCAA Chair

**Mayor Lynne Matthews**, Punta Gorda City Council

**ADVISORY**

##### **H. Wayne Gaither,** FDOT Southwest Area Office **(alternate for FDOT District One Secretary L.K Nandam)**

**STAFF PRESENT**

D’Juan Harris, MPO Director

Lakshmi N. Gurram, MPO Principal Planner

Betty-Ann Sherer, MPO Planner

Bekie Leslie, MPO Administrative Services Coordinator

Wendy Scott, MPO Planner

Stacey Bjordahl, Charlotte County Assistant Attorney (MPO Legal Services)

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Tanya Merkle, FDOT

Richard (OJ) Oujevolk, FDOT

Moe Lavasani, Charlotte County/CALTRAN Engineering Group, Inc.

Mark Mathes, FDOT

Steven Davis, FDOT

Charles Counsil, CAC Chair

Pauline Klein, BPAC Chair

Mitchell Austin, TAC Chair, City of Punta Gorda Urban Design

John Elias, Charlotte County Public Works

Ravi Kamarajugadda, Charlotte County Public Works – Transportation

**OTHERS PARTICIPATING VIRTUALLY**

Andrea McDonough, Charlotte County Transit

Christy Davis, Charlotte County Transit

Tony Conte, Charlotte County School Board

Mike Koenig, Charlotte County Community Services

​Lauren Brooks, FDOT (AECOM)

Matt Dockins, FDOT (RK&K)

​**1. Call to Order & Roll Call**

MPO Chair Tiseo called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. The roll call was taken, and all members were present.

**2. Invocation – Pastor Bill Frank**

Pastor Bill Frank was not present, so Commissioner Deutsch gave the invocation.

##### **3.** **Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

**4. Addition and/or Deletion to the Agenda**

D’Juan Harris gave a point of clarification on agenda item #11 to the Chair, noting that these were all presentations to be given by FDOT, and were separate from the other FDOT Report.

D’Juan Harris noted that Mayor Matthews had a previous commitment and was requesting that Agenda Items #11 A-C and #13 be reordered to just after Agenda Item #6 for discussion before her departure.

***Commissioner Constance*** *made a motion to approve the reordering of the Agenda.* ***Commissioner Deutsch*** *seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.*

**5. Public Comments on Agenda Items**

There were no public comments.

**6. Election of Officers**

Commissioner Tiseo turned over chairing the meeting to Stacy Bjordahl (MPO Legal Services) to receive nominations for 2022 MPO Officers.

***Mayor Matthews*** *nominated* ***Commissioner Constance*** *to serve as the MPO Board Chair.* ***Commissioner Herston*** *seconded the nomination.* ***Commissioner Deutsch*** *moved to close the nominations which was approved unanimously.* ***Commissioner Constance*** *was declared MPO Board Chair by a unanimous vote. He and former MPO Chair Tiseo switched seats.*

***Commissioner Herston*** *nominated* ***Commissioner Deutsch*** *for MPO Board Vice Chair.* ***Mayor Matthews*** *seconded the nomination.**There being no other nominations,* ***Commissioner Deutsch*** *was declared MPO Board Vice Chair by a unanimous vote.*

***Commissioner Deutsch*** *nominated* ***Commissioner Herston*** *to serve as the MPOAC Representative.* ***Mayor Matthews*** *seconded the nomination. There being no other nominations,* ***Commissioner Herston*** *was declared MPOAC Representative by a unanimous vote.*

***Commissioner Deutsch*** *nominated* ***Commissioner Tiseo*** *to serve as the MPOAC Alternate Representative.* ***Commissioner Constance*** *seconded the nomination. There being no additional nominations,* ***Commissioner Tiseo*** *was declared MPOAC Alternate Representative by a unanimous vote.*

Commissioner Constance began chairing the meeting.

*Next, item #11 A-C and #13 were addressed.*

**11. FDOT**

1. **FY 2023 Through FY 2027 FDOT Draft Tentative Work Program (DTWP) Discussion Charlotte County**

Wayne Gaither introduced the two video presentations related to this topic. MPO Chair Constance appeared in the second video, FDOT District One’s *The Story of Our Rides.*

The MPO Board and committees annually review FDOT’s Draft Tentative Work Program (DTWP). The DTWP (Attachment 1) covered available allocated funding for transportation projects consistent with FDOT plans and MPO priorities. The report included in the packet was based upon an October 21, 2021 snapshot of programmed transportation projects within Charlotte County from Fiscal Year 2023 through Fiscal Year 2027.

FDOT held public hearings congruent with release of the DTWP. This agenda item was an opportunity for the Board to review and comment for the record. No motion of endorsement was required.

On May 17, 2021, the MPO Board adopted its 2021 project priorities for this year (Attachment 2) and submitted the list to FDOT for inclusion in the FDOT Draft Tentative Work Program for consideration of funding to the greatest extent possible. The Draft Tentative Work Program will form the basis for the MPO’s next Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) to be adopted and submitted to FDOT by July 15, 2022. For federal funding

compliance, the MPO’s TIP, Long Range Transportation Plan and FDOT’s Work Program must be consistent for transparency and planning purposes.

Wayne Gaither noted that the item for construction of a SR 31 roundabout had been advanced from #26 to #25. He also introduced Tanya Merkle as the new FDOT liaison for Charlotte County. FDOT had been partnering with local governments on several projects, including (1) the programming of all Harbor View Road Right-of-Way (ROW) funding in 2023, and (2) Airport operational improvements for hangers and the terminal in 2025. He also described recent coordination efforts with the City of Punta Gorda to try to achieve stated goals. He noted that the final Tentative Work Program would be shared when it was received.

In summarizing, Wayne Gaither stated that FDOT wanted to be more than “just an engineering firm.” District One as a whole is seeing tremendous growth across the board. He noted that it takes a tremendous amount of coordination and cooperation. He appreciated the efforts put forth by the MPO Board Members and their staffs.

Commissioner Deutsch applauded the fact that the SR 31 project moved up the list, especially in light of a recent fatality on that roadway. He believed the action was only the beginning. He stressed that factors such as lack of roadway shoulders and a great deal of construction in the area involving heavy truck traffic meant that it was necessary to work hard to make SR 31 a priority. This was key since lives were at stake.

D’Juan Harris explained that shortly after the Draft Tentative Work Program snapshot was received, a comments letter was drafted and several meetings were held with FDOT. New comments were being added to the draft letter, which would be finalized post-meeting.

Commissioner Constance inquired about when the document would return to the MPO Board. Wayne Gaither stated that both the Legislature and the Governor’s office would review the document in draft form. It would be approved and distributed with adoption by July 1, 2022. Commissioner Constance appreciated the efforts made to advance the Harbor View Road project. He noted that with the County fronting $5 Million for the project, it was essentially shovel ready. He was glad that the FDOT understood the roadway’s importance. Regarding SR 31 and CR 74, he noted that at least there was now an intermediate traffic signal solution thanks to safety funding. He also expressed an understanding of how resurfacing needs had impacted the Work Program. He noted that Charlotte County had benefitted from the addition of a repaving section from US 41 to Cooper Street on US 17.

1. **Northbound Tamiami Trail (US 41) – William Street to Peace River Bridge**

Richard (OJ) Oujevolk gave a presentation on this project. The Northbound Tamiami Trail (US 41) Vision Study is a cooperative partnership between the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District One, and local governments to enhance an existing resurfacing project by focusing on safety for all corridor users and the Downtown Punta Gorda Community. The study concentrates on the northbound, three-lane, one-way section of Tamiami Trail (US 41) from William Street to the Peace River Bridge in Downtown Punta Gorda within Charlotte County, FL. This study combines multiple project phases, including

Planning, Project Development and Environment (PD&E), and Design to accelerate the project schedule and maximize the value of the project.

The FDOT conducted extensive outreach to obtain input on the top priorities and potential safety/operational improvements for the corridor. The outreach included meetings with elected/appointed officials, weekly meetings with City of Punta Gorda staff, presentations to the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Committees and Board, stakeholder focus group meetings, and one-on-one stakeholder discussions. The FDOT prepared a newsletter, website, and an online questionnaire to seek additional input from the general public. Based on all input received, the FDOT developed a draft concept for the subject corridor. The draft concept was presented to the Punta Gorda City Council on July 14, 2021, as well as the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO Committees in June and November 2021. It was also presented to the MPO Board on July 19, 2021. Key project stakeholders were also actively engaged and provided input on the proposed draft concept. As a result of further input received, the FDOT revised the concept and presented it to the Punta Gorda City Council on October 20, 2021; the Council voted unanimously to advance the recommended Dedicated Turn Lanes Concept into the FDOT project development process.

At the November 17, 2021 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)/Citizens’ Advisory Committee (CAC) meeting and at the November 18, 2021 Bike-Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) meeting, discussions took place regarding the various treatments that were proposed to accommodate the needs from the public and local entities. Several members of the Committees expressed their gratitude for the effort that the FDOT put into accommodating all modes of transportation.

For more information regarding the project update, please check the project website ( <http://swflroads.com/us41/tamiami-trail-vision-study/> ) for additional study information.

Mayor Matthews thanked Richard Oujevolk for making needed changes to his presentation. She requested that he return to brief the City Council given the recent addition of two new City Council Members. She noted that the only reason that the Council had approved the Vision Study was due to the treatment of left turn only lanes from Taylor Road to the NB US 41 Bridge. She stated that the Council still opposed the use of a roundabout. She noted that the Gettel car dealerships in the area were also opposed. She stated that this was the only section that the Council approved, since they were against the ones further south on US 41.

Richard Oujevolk observed that the study was still a work in progress. Commissioner Constance asked why the particular orientation had been selected. Richard Oujevolk stated that in the design of a roundabout speed is always a consideration, and it should be natural to the curve of the roadway. Commissioner Constance stated that a speed reduction could be achieved further back. He felt that two through lanes were needed both southbound and northbound, and adequate room was available. Richard Oujevolk stated that there would not be a speed reduction with that approach. Commissioner Constance expressed displeasure with the design, noting that it needed to be redone.

Commissioner Tiseo inquired if the roundabout was designed to handle rigs (large trucks). Richard Oujevolk stated that it could handle both big rigs and fire station equipment. He

noted that with every roundabout statewide, the design is vetted through a design team in Tallahassee. Commissioner Constance stated that two northbound lanes were needed in addition to the roundabout. As far as the dedicated turn lanes at each section, he observed that there was the need to consistently alternate these sections with opening and choking off portions. He also expressed his concerns with turn lanes in the area of the Punta Gorda hotels just south of the US 41 Northbound Bridge.

Mayor Matthews provided additional comments regarding the proposed roundabout and stated the City Council and Gettel car dealership concerns. Speeding in the area of the hotels was also mentioned. Richard Oujevolk pointed out that nothing was finalized until built.

Commissioner Tiseo believed that the roundabout concept could be useful as long as it did not adversely impact commerce. Commissioner Constance also favored the roundabout if altered. Richard Oujevolk that some roundabouts utilized an apron of pavers for use by large trucks. Commissioner Constance requested that the topic return to the MPO Board following the City’s review. As she departed the meeting, Mayor Matthews stated her displeasure with the current Baynard Street situation, but wished all a Merry Christmas *Mayor Matthews departed at 2:56 pm.*

1. **North Jones Loop Road – Feasibility Study**

Richard (OJ) Oujevolk gave a presentation on the study. During the development of the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) 2040 and 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), citizens identified North Jones Loop Road (CR 768) as one of the top roads for investment within Charlotte County given the growth occurring and expected to continue within this portion of the county. The following goals and objectives have been identified for this study:

* Increase capacity
* Improve area wide connectivity and local/regional mobility
* Support local economic development initiatives and planned area growth
* Enhance emergency evacuation response times
* Enhance access for freight and commuter traffic

The FDOT conducted extensive outreach to obtain input on the types of improvements to be considered along the corridor to support planned regional development within the vicinity of North Jones Loop Road and Punta Gorda Airport (PGD). The outreach included meetings/presentations with elected/appointed officials, City of Punta Gorda staff, Charlotte County staff, PGD staff, the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Committees and Board, and business stakeholders. The FDOT prepared a newsletter, website, and an online comment form to seek additional input from the general public. Based on all input received, FDOT developed and evaluated the feasibility of various control options at intersections along the corridor and preliminary draft alternatives that included pedestrian/bicycle accommodations to meet future transportation demand. The preliminary alternatives were discussed and shared with various local agency stakeholders for comment. FDOT was in the process of coordinating meetings with elected/appointed officials and business stakeholders to discuss concerns regarding the preliminary draft alternatives.

Once the coordination/revision of the alternatives is complete, a feasibility study report will be compiled to document the recommended alternatives.

At the November 17, 2021 TAC/CAC meeting and at the November 18, 2021 BPAC meeting, the members reviewed the Power Point presentation and expressed concern regarding the proposed design elements at various intersections. FDOT is anticipating additional comments from County Staff. The project website contains additional study information: [North Jones Loop Road (CR768) Feasibility Study from Burnt Store Road (CR 765) to Piper Road, Charlotte County (swflroads.com)](http://www.swflroads.com/cr768/njoneslooprd/)

Staff reviewed the history of project planning and funding in the area. Richard Oujevolk noted that the eastern portion in the area of the Punta Gorda Airport would receive priority as a Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) project. Lakshmi Gurram recommended that the project remain and receive an FM number, so that it could be revisited based upon future needs. Commissioner Tiseo concurred that the eastern portion, which included a roundabout, should remain for future consideration as the commercial activities in the airport area experienced continued growth. Richard Oujevolk pointed out that the project could be segmented out into eastern and western portions.

**13. Baynard Drive Discussion**

At the October 18, 2021, MPO Board Meeting, Members discussed several treatments to make Baynard Drive a safer, multi-modal roadway, to efficiently accommodate all modes of transportation. MPO staff met with FDOT & Charlotte County on December 6th, 2021 to discuss possible solutions and determine a path forward to this challenge. Recommendations discussed were: drainage, pavement width, pavement markings, signage and traffic signal timings at Aqui Esta Drive.

Baynard Drive is a Charlotte County narrow, two-lane roadway that is in poor condition. The City of Punta Gorda has requested that Charlotte County scrutinize Baynard Drive for improvements as it is expected to experience increased traffic once the US 41 median at Rio Villa Drive is altered.

John Elias stated that the County had done traffic counts twice and had seen increased numbers based upon restaurant traffic at Rio Villa. He stated that no parking signage would be reinstalled and work on drainage would be addressed. Pavement was done relatively recently in roughly the 2016 timeframe. Currently, County and City staffs were exploring which entity was responsible for Baynard Drive in light of past annexation of properties. John Elias stated that responsibility for roadway maintenance might not have been acquired during the annexation process. Charlotte County Public Works had handled maintenance up to the present time. Mitchell Austin noted that currently (despite 4-6 different annexations in the vicinity of Baynard Road), it would be necessary to analyze each one of the ordinances in place at the time of annexation. In reality, the City had maintained Baynard Drive from Aqui Esta Drive northward, and the County had maintained the southern portion. There were no pavement markings except at the intersections. Water flows from the swales as sheet flow, and it can be upwards of 2-4 inches deep during flooding events. Mitchell Austin defined all the businesses that are in the corporate limits of the City along Baynard Drive as well as those

that are in the County. Mitchell Austin noted that annexation language has changed over the years. Currently, the City could annex without annexing the ROW. Commissioner Tiseo

stated that legal analysis was needed before reaching a decision on Baynard Drive. Commissioner Herston raised a question regarding roadway drainage, and Mitchell Austin described how drainage was impacting the edges of the roadway to create a safety issue. Commissioner Herston wondered why the County and City couldn’t develop a joint agreement. John Elias stated that meetings with City staff and legal have been ongoing. Parking along the shoulders was the major problem. Commissioner Herston stated that an MSBU might address the issue. John Elias noted that the area was probably already in an MSBU. Commissioner Constance stated that it was helpful to attain these small corrections noted by John Elias immediately, and then address the larger issues.

**7. Chairs’ Reports:**

1. **MPO Board Chair’s Report**

Commissioner Constance had nothing to report.

1. **Citizens’ Advisory Committee (CAC) Chair’s Report**

CAC Chair Charles Counsil reviewed actions taken at the November 17, 2021 CAC Meeting.

He noted that he will continue as CAC Chair, and Dianne Quilty will serve as CAC Vice Chair. He was pleased to have had new MPO Director D’Juan Harris participate in the CAC Meeting. He noted that the CAC continued to have a West County representative vacancy.

Charles Counsil appreciated the willingness of the Sheriff’s Department to provide an officer to participate in the CAC. He was pleased to welcome Tanya Merkle as the new FDOT liaison for Charlotte County. He discussed the CAC’s review and unanimous recommendation of the Sun Trail study. Regarding Baynard Drive, he commented that there is growing concern regarding it because of the expectation of increased traffic due to the potential closure of a median on US 41 at Rio Villa Drive. Wayne Gaither stated that now due to FDOT’s analysis, the proposal is not to close the median, but rather to make it become directional with a northbound turn not allowed. He stated that FDOT’s proposal is to directionalize traffic by allowing traffic to move south and make a u-turn to head northbound. He stated that this was a safer solution, noting that FDOT has used this treatment throughout District One.

1. **Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Chair’s Report**

TAC Chair Mitchell Austin noted he had been absent from the November 17, 2021 TAC Meeting due to a scheduling conflict with the City Council Meeting. He stated that TAC Meeting details were provided in the MPO Board Meeting packet. He would be continuing as TAC Chair, and TAC Vice Chair Ravi Kamarajugadda also was reappointed. He thanks his peers for their confidence in him and wished everyone a happy holiday season and new year.

1. **Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) Chair’s Report**

Pauline Klein stated that she had been elected as the new BPAC Chair, and Court Nederveld had been elected BPAC Vice Chair. She reviewed actions taken at the November 18, 2021 BPAC Meeting, including the recommendation for approval of the Sun Trail Study. Since BPAC meetings often run long, the Sheriff’s Department representative would be presenting earlier in the meeting and then, have an opportunity to exit if need be.

Commissioner Constance stated that Pauline Klein had done an excellent job in her Chair’s report. He appreciated her volunteering her time to serve on the BPAC. He was also glad to see D’Juan at his first MPO Board Meeting.

**8. Local Government Reports:**

1. **Charlotte County Airport Authority**

Commissioner Herston, Charlotte County Airport Authority Chair, provided MPO Board Members with a detailed packet of information on Airport activities. He reviewed key items.

The Airport Authority had just met that morning. November and December data revealed record numbers. He discussed the development of the Air Center on Challenger Blvd. He praised the great assistance received from the FDOT on the project and stated that a new restaurant will be located there. He also described the new hanger, the upcoming placing of a runway out of service and the securing of Federal Aviation Authority (FAA) funding.

1. **City of Punta Gorda**

Mayor Matthews had provided the City of Punta Gorda report for the MPO Board agenda packet. Projects listed in the report were: City paving projects, the Historic City Hall renovation, proposed median opening changes on US 41 from Rio Villa to Payne Street, Gilchrist Park/Harborwalk Phase II project, and wayfinding signage in the downtown area.

1. **Charlotte County**

Commissioner Tiseo gave the County report on the following items including timelines:

* Burnt Store Road Phase 2 (Notre Dame to North of Zemel Road) – completed and open
* Olean Blvd Widening (from US 41 to Easy Street)
* Various Intersection Improvements
* Flamingo/Edgewater Widening

Commissioner Herston inquired about the construction delays on the Olean Blvd widening project. Commissioner Tiseo mentioned a host of utility delays, a great deal of necessary hand work as well as a communications cable issue. Additionally, the contractor had experienced difficulties including labor shortages.

**9. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Report**

Tanya Merkle was introduced as the new Charlotte County FDOT Liaison.

Tanya Merkle reviewed the listed projects:

**1. Update and discussion with FDOT on local issues**

**FDOT Led Discussion**

1. [**US 41 Designated Intersections**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/12%2016%202021%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/9%201A%20Attachment%20Harborview-Rd.jpg) **– (Harbor View Rd/Edgewater Dr.; Rio Villa Drive (Tanya Merkle/Wayne Gaither-FDOT)**

Commissioner Constance questioned why designated yellow sections weren’t being utilized. Every intersection study had a failure in increased accidents and/or fatalities. The information indicated that the technique was not safe from a safety aspect. He noted that the presentations with staff were excellent, and the exercise helped make him better informed. He appreciated the time that staff spent in these discussions.

*Later in the meeting, Commissioner Constance requested that this topic be removed from the next MPO Board agenda.*

1. [**SR 776 at Flamingo Blvd.**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/12%2016%202021%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/9%201B%20Attachment%20SR-776-at-Flamingo-Blvd.png) **(Tanya Merkle/Wayne Gaither -FDOT/ Robert Fakhri -Charlotte County)**

Tanya Merkle noted that FDOT had deferred this project and would be looking for the opportunity to bring the project forward when possible. Commissioner Constance stated that the County was moving forward on its Edgewater Drive project, and he wanted to see this title project as well as the Sports Park right turn project moving forward. He realized that County funding might have to be utilized in coordination with FDOT. He wanted to coordinate these road projects, and he would be raising the issue at an upcoming Board of County Commissioners (BCC) Meeting. Commissioner Tiseo interpreted Commissioner Constance’s remarks as a suggestion that the BCC should advance project funding and then seek FDOT reimbursement. Commissioner Constance noted that the County might have to fund the design project and then see about which agency would fund ROW. If these actions were not taken, he believed that an immature roadway would result.

Commissioner Tiseo asked if the FDOT understands that the project would need to be returned to the Work Program, hopefully by next year. Wayne Gaither stated that the project was deferred for now and FDOT would continue to have staff level discussions regarding it. He noted that advance funding with reimbursement was not preferable, since it ties up funding in later years. Commissioner Tiseo acknowledged that there may be delays, but FDOT might restore funding quickly. He commented that District One Secretary Nandam had told him that his intent was to bring the funding back as soon as possible (which would preserve local tax dollars). Commissioner Tiseo noted that 100% impact fees would have helped this situation. D’Juan Harris described his coordination with John Elias who indicated that 2027 was the County’s timeline. Commissioner Constance expected the Kolter Engineering situation would move faster. He was pushing hard to move the project forward which meant that the County may need to at least design it to establish main lanes. Wayne Gaither remarked that perhaps MPO staff could be appointed to pull discussions together quickly to establish a timeframe. Commissioner Constance noted that there is no design planned at this point.

1. [**SR 776 at the Charlotte Sports Park**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/12%2016%202021%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/9%201C%20Attachment%20SR-776-at-the-Charlotte-Sports-Park.png) **– Intersection Improvements (Tanya Merkle/Wayne Gaither -FDOT/ Robert Fakhri -Charlotte County)**

Tanya Merkle stated that construction is also deferred on this project. It was not deleted, but rather would move back into the Work Program once funding became available.

1. [**SR 31 Roundabout**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/12%2016%202021%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/9%201D%20Attachment%20SR%2031%20Roundabout.docx) **(Tanya Merkle/Wayne Gaither -FDOT/ Robert Fakhri -Charlotte County)**

Tanya Merkle reported construction had now been advanced to 2025 with ROW in 2023. Public outreach had been conducted.

1. [**I-75 Possible New Interchange North of Kings Hwy Interchange**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/12%2016%202021%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/9%201E%20Attachment%201e%20%20I-75-New%20Internchange-North-of-Kings-Hwy_New.png) **(Tanya Merkle/Wayne Gaither-FDOT)**

Tanya Merkle stated that the Interstate Connect staff will provide a status update at the Joint MPO Board Meeting with the Sarasota/Manatee MPO Board on January 24, 2022.

**Joint Local and FDOT Discussion**

1. [**Harbor View Road Combined Funding Study**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/12%2016%202021%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/9%20A%20Attachment%20Harborview-Rd.jpg) **(****Wayne Gaither-FDOT/John Elias/Robert Fakhri-Charlotte County)**

Coordination is occurring with staff, and the project is a priority.

1. [**US 41 SB @ Melbourne Street-**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/12%2016%202021%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/9%20B%20Attachment%20US%2041%20SB%20Melbourne.docx) **Signalization (Wayne Gaither-FDOT/John Elias/Robert Fakhri-Charlotte County)**

Ongoing discussion is occurring as part of the Corridor Vision Plan.

After requesting removal of Item 1.A from the FDOT Report list, Commissioner Constance

asked that an item be added to the list regarding the double right turn lanes onto US 41 at Olean Blvd. He noted that there would be lots of traffic along Caring Way behind the Ford dealership. He suggested that there may be a need to make the far right arrow a blinking yellow. Currently, no right turn on red was permitted there. The item would return after staff had researched the data.

Tanya Merkle wished everyone Happy Holidays.

**10. Consent Agenda:**

1. **Approval of Minutes: October 18, 2021 MPO Board Meeting**
2. **Citizens’ Advisory Committee Reappointments**

***Commissioner Tiseo*** *made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda.* ***Commissioner Herston*** *seconded the motion, and the motion carried unanimously.*

**12. SUN Trail Extension Feasibility Study – Final**

# Charlotte County received a SUN-Trail grant to conduct a Feasibility Study along the SR 776 corridor to link into Sarasota County. The Feasibility Study limits are from the Myakka River Forest in Gulf Cove along SR 776 to the intersection of US 41/Tamiami Trail in Port Charlotte. Moe Lavasani of CALTRAN Engineering Group, Inc. gave a presentation on behalf of Charlotte County. CALTRAN provided a summary of next steps and upcoming public engagement activities.

In the MPO’s Regional Bicycle-Pedestrian Master Plan adopted in 2018, the SUN Trail Extension is ranked as a Tier 2 project (2024–2029) with an estimated cost of $678,287. This alignment will connect the Myakka State Forest Trail to Murdock Circle in Charlotte County as part of the regional SUN Trail (10.92 miles total). CALTRAN Engineering, Inc performed a feasibility study to assess the existing conditions of the alignment. The assessment included field reviews, review of the regional trails network, design standards and operational and safety analyses.

Additionally, the study analyzed the feasibility of design and construction of a Shared Use Path (SUP) per Florida’s SUN Trail grant criteria. The areas analyzed for placement of the trail are between the Myakka State Forest and Murdock Circle in Charlotte County. ROW availability and anticipated demand as indicated from input received at public meetings were also considered. The construction of this project is feasible and recommended. The feasibility study also indicates the trail can be connected to the existing Statewide SUN Trail network and could also increase connectivity to regional non-Sun Trail facilities, such as the North Port Legacy Trail. The Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), Citizens’ Advisory Committee (CAC) and Bicycle- Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) had recommended the MPO Board adopt the SUN - Trail Feasibility Study – Final Update

Commissioner Herston inquired about traffic counts and the timeline (to be forwarded within the next 10 days).

***Commissioner Tiseo*** *made a**Motion to endorse the Study for future funding opportunities.* ***Commissioner Herston*** *seconded the motion, which was approved unanimously.*

**14. Public Comments**

There were no public comments.

**15. Staff Comments**

Commissioner Constance thanked D’Juan Harris for his early efforts on behalf of the MPO.

Mr. Harris gave his gratitude to Gary Harrell for agreeing to stay for a Director transfer week and to his staff for all their efforts. He wished all Happy Holidays.

**16. Member Comments**

Commissioner Deutsch had talked to Secretary Nandam about the signals at Cochran and Veterans Blvd, as well as Forrest Nelson at US 41. He also expressed concern about signal timing at the intersection of Flamingo Blvd and SR 776 where tremendous stacking occurs. He described the situation of drivers heading east on Harbor Blvd at US 41 where if the signal changes for westbound drivers one second before the eastbound driver’s arrival, it completely recycles. He stated that adjustments may need to be made at that location. He wished all a Merry Christmas.

Commissioner Constance stated that Commissioner Deutsch was correct with his assessment of signalization issues at Harbor Blvd and US 41.

Commissioner Herston inquired if Stacy Bjordahl had any comments. She had none. Commissioner Herston complimented her on chairing the MPO Election of Officers. He stated that he had retained his position as Airport Authority representative to the MPO Board. He wondered if a “right turn committee” of volunteers such as engineers could be established to rank intersection signal problems. Commissioner Constance stated that this effort could start with the CAC Members who could discuss common issues that they observe on the roadways. Commissioner Herston observed that signal stacking on Forrest Nelson at US 41 impacts three intersection signals feeding into the area due to conflicting left turns. He asked Wayne Gaither about what level of service (LOS) results in a level F classification. He wished all a Merry Christmas.

Commissioner Tiseo appreciated the MPO Board letting him serve as past Chair. He congratulated the new leadership. As promised, he joked with D’Juan Harris about having five FDOT Work Program projects deferred at his first MPO Board Meeting and hoped it wasn’t an indication of things to come. D’Juan Harris responded jokingly that as a good leader, even though it wasn’t his fault, he would accept the blame. Commissioner Constance noted that despite the “tongue in cheek” exchange, MPO Board Members were very glad that Mr. Harris was present. Commissioner Constance stated that what had occurred with the FDOT Work Program had happened because of budgetary issues. He noted that the MPO Board has an excellent relationship with FDOT, having had great communication early in the process in order to achieve improvements faster and better. He appreciated the FDOT staff responsiveness. Commissioner Tiseo agreed, describing the fact that District Secretary Nandam had made the effort to contact MPO Board Members individually. Additionally, he appreciated Secretary Nandam’s answering of all his questions. Commissioner Constance gave the example of Secretary Nandam’s excellent service as the region’s Multi-use Corridors of Regional Economic Significance (M-CORES) Chair, and he characterized him as an exceptional individual.

**17. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:48 pm. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the MPO Board will be held on Monday, January 24, 2022 as a joint meeting with the Sarasota/Manatee MPO Board, at 11:00 a.m. at the Venice Community Center, 326 Nokomis Avenue S, Venice, Florida. Additionally, a joint meeting with the Lee County MPO was scheduled for Friday, February 18, 2022, 11:00 a.m. at the Burnt Store Road Presbyterian Church, Stewart Hall, 11330 Burnt Store Road, Punta Gorda, Florida.

Additionally, a Monday, March 21, 2022 regular MPO Board Meeting at 2:00 p.m. was also planned at the Charlotte County Administration Center, Room 119, 18500 Murdock Circle.