

**CHARLOTTE COUNTY – PUNTA GORDA**

**METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

MINUTES OF THE MPO BOARD MEETING

MONDAY, MAY 15, 2023

CHARLOTTE COUNTY ADMINISTRATION CENTER

18500 MURDOCK CIRCLE, ROOM #119

PORT CHARLOTTE FL 33948

**MEMBERS PRESENT**

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

**Commissioner Stephen R. Deutsch,** Charlotte County Commissioner, MPO Vice Chair

**Commissioner Joseph Tiseo,** Charlotte County Commissioner

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

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

**ADVISORY**

**John Kubler,** FDOT District One Interim Secretary

**STAFF PRESENT**

D’Juan Harris, MPO Director

Bekie Leslie, Administrative Services Coordinator

Lakshmi N. Gurram, MPO Principal Planner

Betty-Ann Sherer, MPO Planner

Wendy Scott, MPO Planner

Janette Knowlton, County Attorney (MPO Legal Services)

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Commissioner Ken Doherty, BCC

Pastor Jim Chandler, Englewood Christian Church

Wayne Gaither, FDOT

Victoria Peters, FDOT

Pamela Barr, FDOT

William Roll, Kimley Horn & Associates

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

DeWayne Nodine, City of Punta Gorda Urban Design

Steven Hurt, CAC Vice Chair

Rick Kirchhoff, CAC

Mary Ellen Kiss, CAC

Richard Russell, CAC candidate

Ravi Kamarajugadda, Charlotte County Public Works, TAC Vice-Chair

John Elias, Charlotte County Public Works

Robert Fakhri, Charlotte County Public Works

##### **1. Call to Order & Roll Call**

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

**2. Invocation – Pastor Jim Chandler**

Pastor Jim Chandler delivered the invocation.

**3. Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

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

There were no additions or deletions to the agenda.

***Commissioner Deutsch*** *made a motion to approve the agenda as shown.* ***Commissioner Herston***

*seconded the motion.*

**5. Public Comments on Agenda Items**

No one from the public appeared to speak.

**6. PUBLIC MEETING:** [**Final Draft FY 2024 – FY 2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/05%2015%202023%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/6%20AGENDA%20ITEM%20TIP%20FY%202023%20Laks%20DH.doc)

Laks Gurram provided a briefing regarding the Draft FY 2023/2024 - FY 2027/2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) which satisfies the Federal and State legislative requirements to adopt a 5-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The TIP outlines federal and state capital improvements for transportation and is a staged, multi-year, intermodal program of transportation projects that is consistent with the MPO Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

The Draft Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO TIP for FY 2023/2024 - FY 2027/2028 is located in Attachment 1. The TIP contains summary pages for each programmed project and the project summaries may be found on pages 74 through 106. Projects are categorized into Highways, Aviation, Transit, Miscellaneous, Maintenance and MPO planning funds. These categories are color-coded in this iteration of the TIP for easy reference.

The following summary provides major highlights of the FY 2023/2024 - FY 2027/2028 Draft TIP:

* The FDOT Draft Tentative Work Program (FY 2024 to FY 2028), lists a total of 67 projects, grant programs and ongoing maintenance activities programmed for funding totaling $231,211,891. Breakdown by funding source is as follows:

o $85.8 million State (37%)

o $109.4 million Federal (47%)

o $35.8 million Local (16%)

* Performance-Based Planning: FDOT provided updates on performance-based planning and performance measures found on pages 23 through 68. The four core measures include: Safety, Pavement and Bridge Condition, System Performance, and Transit Asset Management/Transit Safety
* The public review period was from April 14, 2023, to May 14, 2023.

Commissioner Deutsch inquired about the location of the TIP cover photograph. Laks Gurram answered that it was taken at the intersection of Edgewater Drive and Lakeview Blvd. Commissioner Herston commented on the eight airport projects. Commissioner Constance referenced the 2022 Hwy Project Priorities seeking information on the Harbor View Road entire project segment. Laks Gurram responded to all of his questions.

***Commissioner Constance*** *opened the public meeting.*

Dr. Mary Ellen Kiss, a Burnt Store Lakes resident, Burnt Store Corridor Coalition representative, MPO Citizens’ Advisory Committee member and MSBU representative spoke. She expressed thanks to Commissioner Constance and Mr. D’Juan Harris for attending a Town Hall Meeting on Saturday, April 15, 2023, regarding Burnt Store Road widening from Van Buren in Lee County to one-quarter mile within Charlotte County. The purpose of the meeting was to allow residents of Burnt Store Marina and Burnt Store Lakes to express their concerns regarding ingress and egress into their mutual communities, especially off Vincent Avenue. Since the project is entering the Design phase in the next fiscal year, engagement by all parties is crucial. The jurisdictional status of the Lee County portion of Vincent Avenue still needs to be determined.

***Commissioner Tiseo*** *made a motion to close the Public Meeting.* ***Commissioner Deutsch*** *seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.*

***Commissioner Tiseo*** *made a motion to adopt the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO’s*

*TIP for FY 2023/2024 – FY 2027/2028 and authorize the MPO Chair to sign the Authorizing*

*Resolution and transmit the document to FDOT. The motion allows the staff to make minor*

*changes and adjustments based on comments and input received.* ***Commissioner***

***Deutsch*** *seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously.*

**6.A PUBLIC MEETING**[**:** **FY 2022/2023 – FY 2026/2027 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/05%2015%202023%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/6A%20AGENDA%20ITEM%20TIP%20Amendments%20Laks.doc)

D’Juan Harris praised Laks Gurram for the TIP document’s clarity. Mr. Harris then presented information on the TIP Amendment. FDOT Staff had requested that the Charlotte County – Punta Gorda Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) approve the STIP/TIP Amendments to the FY 2022/23 – FY 2026/27 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP). The amendment is required when a new project is added to the TIP document. The proposed TIP amendment projects were shown in Attachment 1.

* 452242-1 Project Description: SWRS-STATEWIDE RUMBLE STRIPS (ON-SYSTEM SOUTH) This is a new project to be included in your MPO’s TIP and will include funding for the Design phase in FY23. It was programmed as a “District Wide” project for the Southern Counties and was not specifically reflected in individual MPO areas and must now be amended into your MPO’s TIP for consistency and transparency purposes. To receive federal funds for this project, these changes are required to be amended into the Charlotte MPO’s FY2022/2023 through FY2026/2027 TIP.

Commissioner Constance had a question on the statement of Dr. Mary Ellen Kiss regarding the southern half of Vincent Avenue located in Lee County. John Elias reviewed the history of that segment stating that it was repaved by the Burnt Store Marina roughly 20 years ago and was likely the first repaving. Lee County had not accepted maintenance of the roadway nor was there a Municipal Service Benefit Unit (MSBU) present as there was in Charlotte County. John Elias stated that further meetings will occur on the matter. Commissioner Constance requested that elected officials and staff be kept informed on the results of those meetings.

***Commissioner Constance*** *opened the public meeting. No one wished to speak.*

***Commissioner Tiseo*** *made a motion to close the Public Meeting.* ***Commissioner Deutsch*** *seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.*

***Commissioner Tiseo*** *made a motion to approve the amendment to the Charlotte County-Punta*

*Gorda MPO’s TIP for FY 2022/2023 – FY 2026/2027.* ***Commissioner Deutsch*** *seconded the*

*motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously.*

**7.** [**Chairs’ Reports**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/05%2015%202023%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/7%20AGENDA%20ITEM%20CHAIRS%20REPORTS-BL%20DH.doc)**:**

1. **[MPO Board Chair’s Report](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/05%2015%202023%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/7A%20AGENDA%20ITEM%20MPO%20Board%20CHAIR%20REPORT-BL%20DH.doc)**

Chair Constance had attended the April 15, 2023 Town Hall meeting along with Commissioner Kevin Ruane, Lee County MPO Director Don Scott and Mr. Harris. He noted that Commissioner Ruane’s district was hit hard by Hurricane Ian. The individuals at the meeting worked well together, utilizing a team approach. As John Elias had stated, it will take time to figure out a solution. Commissioner Constance described an issue of a Lee County 2021 resolution declaring that from the Lee County Line South no northbound left turns are allowed. This situation could be problematic. A signal or roundabout might make more sense at that location, and speed is an issue. Many residents are concerned about having to make a U-turn so that they may head north. Mayor Matthews concurred with Commissioner Constance regarding

speeding on Burnt Store Road. She noted that the Punta Gorda City Council receives accident reports regarding the roadway. She stated that there had been recent ridiculous accidents along it, particularly at Acline Road and at Royal Poinciana, and she confirmed that this issue needed to be fixed.

1. [**Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) Chair’s Report**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/05%2015%202023%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/7B%20AGENDA%20ITEM%20CAC%20CHAIR%20REPORT-BL%20DH.docx)

CAC Vice Chair Steven Hurt was elected after the previous Vice Chair assumed the role of CAC Chair. Steven Hurt reviewed April 26, 2023 CAC Meeting highlights:

* Officer Robert Conant from the Charlotte County Sheriff’s Department reporting on Bermont Road dangerous speeding/CAC Members appreciated recent speed limit reductions.
* DeWayne Nodine providing a City of Punta Gorda update on behalf of Mitchell Austin.
* FDOT discussions including upcoming speed management workshops/Project Priorities accelerations/new FDOT Liaison for Charlotte County announcement.

Laks Gurram had presented the TIP and Project Priorities to the CAC Members, and they had recommended MPO Board approval. The RAISE grant for Harbor View Road also had been discussed in order to promote the consolidation of the two project segments into one. Public comments had been received regarding traffic flow around Fisherman’s Village, and referral to the City of Punta Gorda was recommended. Also discussed were the Peggy Walters Award nominations due by June 30, 2023 and in-person only participation at CAC meetings. Gratitude to participants at the Burnt Store Town Hall Meeting was given by Mary Ellen Kiss. Steve Schoff commented on West County traffic concerns on SR 776 at Sunnybrook Blvd. and Winchester Blvd.

 **C. [Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Chair’s Report](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/05%2015%202023%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/7C%20AGENDA%20ITEM%20TAC%20CHAIR%20REPORT%20bas%20DH.docx)**

TAC Chair Mitchell Austin stated that actions accomplished at the TAC Meeting echoed those discussed by CAC Vice Chair Steven Hurt regarding the CAC Meeting, including TIP and Project Priorities recommendations. Moving forward, the TAC also was requiring in-person only attendance for member voting.

Commissioner Constance inquired if Mitchell Austin had much interaction with his Lee County staff counterparts. Mr. Austin responded that he had once worked in that area and knew some of them. Commissioner Constance stressed the importance of staff interaction. D’Juan Harris noted that a robust meeting will occur between staff of both Charlotte and Lee Counties.

**8.** [**Local Government Reports**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/05%2015%202023%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/8%20AGENDA%20ITEM%20Local%20Government%20REPORTS-BL%20DH.doc)

1. [**Charlotte County Airport Authority**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/05%2015%202023%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/8A%20AGENDA%20ITEM%20Airport%20Authority%20REPORT-BL%20DH.docx)

Commissioner Herston, Charlotte County Airport Authority Vice Chairman, provided MPO Board Members with an abbreviated packet of information on Airport activities. It included a graph and figures for the *Total Passengers CY 2015 through CY 2023,* as well as the Airport’s *Capital Improvement Program Report, May 11, 2023.*

Commissioner Herston noted that the second highest March passenger count on record occurred in 2023 (with March 2022 being the highest.). He noted that all Punta Gorda Airport projects may be seen on the [www.flypgd.com](http://www.flypgd.com) website. Discussion followed among MPO Board Members regarding potential options for needed terminal expansion, including the possibility of adding jetways. Mayor Matthews expressed her gratitude to the Airport Authority and Staff for the hospitality shown to a recent military Honor Flight. She encouraged everyone to attend a welcome of future Honor Flights.

1. [**City of Punta Gorda**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/05%2015%202023%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/8B%20AGENDA%20ITEM%20City%20of%20Punta%20REPORT-BL%20DH.docx)

Mayor Matthews had provided the City of Punta Gorda report for the MPO Board agenda packet. Projects listed in the report were:

* The city will be utilizing the Gulf Theater at the Military Museum for City Council and all Board and Committee meetings for the foreseeable future while City Hall renovations are in progress.
* Gilchrist Park/Harborwalk Phase II project: Construction is complete except for a few punch list items.
* The city is receiving complaints from residents about the closure of the crossover median at U.S. 41 and Rio Villa Dr. There has been a substantial increase in traffic exiting Baynard Drive onto Aqui Esta Blvd, in order to exit at the traffic light on Aqui Esta Blvd to go northbound on U.S. 41, as predicted.
* The city sent a letter to FDOT requesting they consider doing U.S. 41 repairs and resurfacing during evening hours, due to enormous amount of traffic backups happening with their lane closures during business hours.
* The city is in restoration mode since Hurricane Ian. Many City offices have been relocated due to damage. The City Manager’s staff are in the Laishley Park Community Room. The Urban Design, Code, Zoning and Planning staff are currently in the old City Council Chamber and outside the building in two remote trailers until new office space becomes available. Waiting on FEMA approval to begin restorations.
* Canal debris cleanup with the state of Florida contractor is mostly done. Crews are going back through to pick up items reported from residents. Yard and C&D debris collection is complete. Wayfinding signs that were damaged from the storm are in the process of being replaced. Many sidewalks still need to be replaced due to uprooted trees that damaged them.
* The City approved three contracts for the City seawall system for the 7.25 miles of seawall that needs to be replaced. Contractors will have 20 days to get staged and begin the restorations. The city is working closely with FEMA to ensure appropriate reimbursements will be forthcoming.
* The City Hall renovation project is still in design and engineering, and the City Council reviewed 60% plans at the meeting in April. Updated 90% plans are forthcoming in early June and construction is expected to begin early fall 2023. The Urban Design Department will be relocating in the near future to facilitate the construction project. Repairs to the City Hall Annex building are going out to bid shortly. The Laishley Park Playground installation is on hold until the contractor provides proper paperwork, or it will need to be rebid.
* Public works and utilities continue to receive comments on the 90% plans for the Boca Grande drainage project. The project area is bound by Taylor Road to the north, Cooper St. to the east, Palmera Drive to the south and the Seminole Gulf Railway ditch to the west. The area encompasses about 105 acres of which approximately 25 acres are commercial with the remaining 80 acres consisting of low density residential. This is a master drainage plan for water quality and drainage improvements to include installation of stormwater piping and inlets installation, swale improvements and construction of a stormwater management area. Construction is planned to begin in 2023

Mayor Matthews noted that most report items were related to Hurricane Ian restoration with total restoration costs estimated at $11 Million dollars. In the coming week, City Council Members would be establishing a committee to address needs in the replacement of the Bayfront Building along the waterfront, since it must be demolished. Stakeholder organizations that rented or leased space there would be included on the committee.

Three seawall contractors have been contracted with 20 days to stage and start projects. Mayor Matthews reported that the small tooth sawfish permit finally had been obtained after discussions with FDOT. It will accompany seawall replacement of 7.25 miles in Punta Gorda Isles and Burnt Store Isles. Per a previous study, concrete would be utilized with panels made at the City Public Works complex at a rate of 100 per week.

Mayor Matthews expressed her gratitude to John Kubler for his assistance regarding the timing of hours for ongoing FDOT US 41 repairs and resurfacing work in Punta Gorda. City Council had sent a letter requesting this shift to evening hours during the busy seasonal period when life threatening accidents resulted in daytime traffic gridlock. Commissioner Constance and Mayor Matthews discussed ongoing issues in the area of Baynard Drive and Aqui Esta Blvd. including the many complaints received from residents. Mayor Matthews thanked FDOT for extending the northbound U.S. 41 left turn lane onto Aqui Esta Drive. Wayne Gaither confirmed that the US 41 roadwork in Punta Gorda would take approximately one year to complete. Commissioner Constance also asked about the South Fork Alligator Creek Pedestrian Bridge crossing. D’Juan Harris noted that the Design Phase begins in FY 2025. With a larger waterway span than the City’s North Fork Project in prior years, the project will be more costly. Discussion of the jurisdictional limits of the project followed. Laks Gurram displayed a Charlotte County GIS map of the location. The City Council decided unanimously not to fund the bridge project, since it appeared that it was not located in the City’s jurisdiction, and the City lacked the needed oversight capability. The new Sea Grass housing development of 240 single family homes is adjacent and not located in the City. The County also may not be interested in handling the project, but County Staff disliked losing this FDOT project funding opportunity. John Elias agreed with D’Juan Harris that the jurisdictional location of the project is complex, and Mr. Elias was happy to discuss the issue further with local and FDOT staff. Commissioner Tiseo asked Mayor Matthews if the City Council had entertained the action of taking over Baynard Drive, and she responded that the City Council had not discussed it to date.

1. [**Charlotte County**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/05%2015%202023%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/8C%20AGENDA%20ITEM%20County%20REPORT-BL%20DH.docx)

Commissioner Tiseo gave the County report on the following items:

**Various Intersection Improvements:**

* County staff have reviewed and provided comments on 60% design plans for Veterans Blvd at Yorkshire intersection.
* Veterans Blvd at Cochran Blvd intersection 90% plans are due for review.
* Cochran Boulevard @ Quesada Avenue – Northbound right turn on Quesada Avenue (completed)
* Murdock Circle @ US Highway 41 – Eastbound right turn lane on Murdock Circle (completed)

Design Development Forecast Completion Date: December 13th, 2023

**Flamingo Blvd/Edgewater Drive Widening:**

* 90% of field survey work has been completed.
* Protected species and wetlands evaluation in process.
* 90% of geotechnical field work has been completed.
* Design considerations have been presented to the BOCC, and with their direction, the 30% plans have been reviewed.
* 60% roadway plans are being designed.
* 30% bridge plans are in process.
* 30% utility plans are in process.

Design Development Forecast Completion Date: September 1st, 2024

**Charlotte Harbor CRA – Parmely Street Road Widening and Sidewalk:**

Project Description:

This project includes the design and construction of Parmely Street from U.S. 41 to Bayshore Road.

Latest Updates:

30% design plans have been reviewed by County staff and comments are being sent back to consultant.

Design Development Forecast Completion Date: January 8th, 2024

**Kings Highway Widening:**

Project Description:

This project is to widen Kings Highway from Sandhill Boulevard to the DeSoto County line. This design and construction is to replace the existing roadway with a new 4 lane divided roadway with protected turn lanes. The design also includes utility infrastructure, street lighting and pedestrian sidewalks.

Latest Updates:

This project is currently in the beginning of the design phase. The survey contractor has started gathering all the site data to start the design layout.

Design Development Forecast Completion Date: May 13th, 2024

Commissioner Herston commented on the project at US 41 and Parmely Street, asking if Charlotte County needed to approach the new plumbing business owner regarding a property purchase. He noted that the Charlotte Harbor CRA had reviewed the situation there thoroughly. John Elias stated that work at that location would be better termed as improvements rather than widening. The County was trying to use existing property and just add some pedestrian amenities. Commissioner Herston stated that his firm would send a conceptual plan to staff.

Commissioner Constance addressed the issue of Kings Hwy widening into DeSoto County as it involves a northbound turn lane into Kingsway Circle. New developments there may be generating impact fees. John Elias attended a DeSoto County Town Hall on this matter. Charlotte County Public Works Staff has had ongoing discussions, including one with DeSoto County Administrator Mandy Hines. DeSoto County is requesting funding from FDOT. Commissioner Constance advocated FDOT making funding available to DeSoto County to assist this effort which is contained in the MPO’s urban planning boundary. He stated that assistance to that constrained County could prevent issues in the future such as those currently seen at the Lee County Line on Burnt Store Road. Wayne Gaither reported that FDOT has been in negotiations with Mandy Hines, DeSoto County Administrator. They have assisted with design funding, and there may be grants that DeSoto County can pursue or legislative earmarks. All options are being analyzed. Commissioner Tiseo stated that unfortunately, at this time, Charlotte County may have to taper the four lanes down to the DeSoto County Line.

**9.** [**Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Report**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/05%2015%202023%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/9%20AGENDA%20ITEM%20FDOT%20REPORT%20%20with%20map%20links.doc)

Victoria Peters introduced Pamela Barr, the new FDOT District One Liaison to Charlotte County, and provided a description of her past career experience. Commissioner Constance welcomed Ms. Barr.

Victoria Peters provided updates on various projects:

**FDOT Led Discussion**

**A. US 41 at Olean Boulevard (Victoria Peters/Wayne Gaither-FDOT/Robert Fakhri-Charlotte County)**

FDOT Structures Staff Members (Stephen Davis and Mark Mathes) have developed a conceptual plan to make modifications to the existing mast arm (to allow a permissive right turn from the outside right lane when no pedestrian call is made) and add an additional new mast arm to meet current design requirements. A task work order is being negotiated to produce a set of plans to meet the new design standards. The estimated timeline is 6 months for Design and up to 10 more months of material acquisition and construction. Staff is working to address Chair Constance’s right turn lane concerns. There is $50K for the Design Phase, $150K for

Construction and potential extra material costs could be another $100K, so total costs would be approximately $200-300K. An update by FDOT Structures Staff will be at a future MPO Board Meeting in early Fall.

**B. SR 776 at Flamingo Boulevard (Victoria Peters/Wayne Gaither -FDOT/ Robert Fakhri -Charlotte County)**

The Design Phase is ongoing between FDOT and Charlotte County.

**C. SR 776 at the Charlotte Sports Park – Intersection Improvements (Victoria Peters/Wayne Gaither -FDOT/ Robert Fakhri -Charlotte County)**

County Staff is working on revising the Scope and the Design. The left turn lane into the Sports Park will be extended, and two right turn lanes will be added (one into the Sports Park and one into the Fairgrounds). Commissioner Tiseo asked if having two left turn lanes into the Sports Park was an option. John Elias stated that having two left turn lanes would require a signal at that location, so only a one lane extension was being pursued. Commissioner Tiseo used the example of the additional hashed marked lane for future use approach found at the Race Trac area (SR 775 and Toledo Blade Blvd.) Robert Fakhri stated that the situation could be examined during the Design Phase. Commissioner Tiseo asked about the possibility of using a hash marked lane for game/event times only. Robert Fakhri noted that additional Sheriff staff would be required. Commissioner Tiseo hoped that the lanes would be substantial enough to accommodate the vehicle back up onto SR 776. Commissioner Constance stated that double capacity was inefficient except during events when stacking occurs.

**D. I-75 Possible New Interchange North of Kings Hwy Interchange (Victoria Peters/Wayne Gaither-FDOT)**

Talks were still ongoing, so there was nothing new to report.

**E. Harbor View Road and US 41 – Lane Modification Updates (Victoria Peters/Wayne Gaither-FDOT)**

Design was moving forward in Section 2 and Construction is currently unfunded. Right-of-Way is partially funded. There are ongoing discussions between the County and FDOT. Commissioner Tiseo inquired about having a permissive right on red in both directions (similar to what is under consideration at Olean Blvd and US 41). Commissioner Constance said that the turns are aligned with the roadway at the Olean location, whereas they are misaligned at Harbor View Road and US 41. D’Juan Harris stated that Mark Mathes, FDOT Traffic Engineer, had given detailed information on those concerns at a previous MPO Board Meeting. He was researching the matter and will follow-up in the Fall.

**Joint Local and FDOT Discussion**

**A. Harbor View Road Combined Funding Strategies (Wayne Gaither-FDOT/John Elias/Robert Fakhri-Charlotte County)**

This project is ongoing. Wayne Gaither stated that FDOT staff assisted the County in applying for the RAISE Grant. These grants are difficult to secure, and the award has not been announced yet. If the County does not receive the RAISE Grant, there is the possibility of reapplying and improving the grant application for the next round.

**B. US 41 (SR 45) from Kings Hwy to Peace River Bridge Planning/Operational Improvements Study (Wayne Gaither-FDOT/John Elias/Robert Fakhri-Charlotte County**

The County is taking the lead and addressing the exact signal location. Sun Seeker Resort has the proper entrance location identified and is constructing the signal as a permitting project. Commissioner Tiseo asked if the October completion date was aggressive. Wayne Gaither stated that it was very aggressive, since specs still must be submitted for FDOT review, and the procurement process must be continued for equipment purchase. Wayne Gaither had spoken to Micah Richins, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for Sunseeker Resorts, on these matters, and he had indicated to Mr. Gaither that both of those items were in the works.

**C. Bermont Road (CR 74) Safety Discussion – (FDOT/John Elias/Robert Fakhri-Charlotte County)**

The County recently reduced the speed limit to 45 mph at Happy Hollow (US 17 area) and placed radar feedback equipment there. The first three miles had been made a no passing zone.

**D. Burnt Store Road and Vincent Avenue – Intersection Alternatives (FDOT/John Elias/Robert Fakhri-Charlotte County)**

This topic had been discussed earlier in meeting *(Agenda Items #6 and #6.A)*.

Commissioner Constance was not comfortable with the dangerous southbound US 41 left turn lane at Melbourne Street. He described the recent fatal motorcycle accident at that location and believed that engineering minds could be used to solve this issue. D’Juan Harris noted as a point of clarification that Agenda Item #9.B was the US 41 planning operational corridor analysis study that will address the whole gambit of issues of concern in that broad area. The new Sunseeker signal will have an impact on traffic flow. Melbourne Street access will be scrutinized as part of the study as well as bicycle/pedestrian connectivity. The study will commence in July 1, 2024, and the intent is to keep the planning study broad. Commissioner Tiseo recalled that the study will be data driven. He noted that Sunseeker is acquiring much property on the east side of US 41. Mayor Matthews stated that Sunseeker had made an offer to the gas station to acquire the property and relocate them, but the offer had been turned down.

Victoria Peters stated that the final FDOT Speed Management Workshop would be held on May 18, 2023 from 8 am to 4:30 pm at the FDOT District One Auditorium in Bartow.

**10.** [**Consent Agenda:**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/05%2015%202023%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/10%20AGENDA%20ITEM%20Consent%20Agenda%20BL%20DH.doc)

1. [**Approval of Minutes: March 20, 2023 Meeting**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/05%2015%202023%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/10A%20AGENDA%20ITEM%20Approval%20of%20minutes%20CC-PG%20MPO-BL%20DH.doc)
2. [**MPO Board Resolution Authorizing FY 2021/2022 Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Planning Grant Agreement**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/05%2015%202023%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/10B%20AGENDA%20ITEM%20MPO%20Board%20tdtfgrantaccept%20DH.doc)
3. [**Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Appointment**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/05%2015%202023%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/10C%20AGENDA%20ITEM%20CACAt-Large%20County%20appointmentRichard%20Russell%20DH.doc)

1. **[Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) Appointment](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/05%2015%202023%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/10D%20AGENDA%20ITEM%20BPAC%20Mid%20County%20appointment%20Laura%20Rossi%20bas%20DH.doc)**

Commissioner Tiseo mentioned the appointment of Richard Russell to the Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) and thanked all citizens who serve on committees.

***Mayor Matthews*** *made a Motion to approve the Consent Agenda.* ***Commissioner Tiseo s****econded the motion, and it carried unanimously.*

**11.** [**Final Draft 2023 Project Priorities**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/05%2015%202023%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/11%20AGENDA%20ITEM%20project%20priorities%20FY%202023%20DH.doc)

Laks Gurram noted that the MPO is required to annually develop a List of Project Priorities (LOPP) as part of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) process and to submit the list to FDOT for consideration of funding. FDOT requested the initial priorities be submitted by

March 31, 2023 to initiate their review process. A preliminary list of project priorities was submitted to FDOT District One on March 31, 2023. However, the final List of Project Priorities must be approved by the MPO Board and submitted to FDOT by July 1, 2023.

The MPO received preliminary candidate projects from Charlotte County.

These candidate projects are seeking state and federal funding from these three categories:

1. Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP)
2. Congestion Mitigation/Transportation System Management (CM/TSM)
3. Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP)

The Draft 2023 Project Priorities reflects the changes that were proposed since the March 20, 2023 MPO Board meeting and April 26, 2023 TAC/CAC Meeting. The final draft provided today includes the project recommendations from the recently completed corridor planning studies of State Road 776 and Veterans Boulevard. The Final Draft LOPP received from member entities are listed below:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| * Harbor View Road from Date Street to I-75
 | * Veterans Blvd @ Cochran Blvd
 |
| * Veterans Blvd @ Loveland Blvd
 | * Veterans Blvd @ Atwater St
 |
| * Veterans Blvd @ Norman St
 | * Veterans Blvd @ Yorkshire St
 |
| * Veterans Blvd @ Torrington St
 | * Veterans Blvd @ Harbor Blvd
 |
| * Veterans Blvd @ Orlando Blvd
 | * Jones Loop Rd @ Piper Rd. Roundabout
 |
| * SR 776 @ Charlotte Sports Park
 | * SR 776 @ Biscayne Drive
 |
| * SR 776 @ Cornelius Blvd.
 | * SR 776 @ Jacobs Street
 |

Attachment 1 had results from the SR 776 Corridor Study as well as the Veterans Blvd Corridor Study recommendations.

Commissioner Constance stressed the importance of the 2023 Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) project on Taylor Road from Airport Rd to N Jones Loop. Mayor Matthews agreed with his assessment of Taylor Road as a major safety concern, stating she frequently receives citizen calls regarding this roadway, despite it being a County road. Mayor Matthews requested that the dark blue color coding for the US 41 South Fork of the Alligator Creek Bridge project be corrected. Laks Gurram stated that there would be time for making corrections. He also noted that the Taylor Road project has been the number one goal for the MPO Board for a long time, and once funded for Design, the intent was to obtain project construction funding within two years.

Commissioner Constance commended Staff for the placement of Taylor Road at the top of the list. Noting that this project will save lives, it exemplifies what local leadership is all about. D’Juan Harris noted as a point of information that the US 41 South Fork of the Alligator Creek

Bridge project (a State maintained roadway) is on the Sun Trail alignment. That project has several funding sources. With the local roadway, Taylor Road, being underserved and unsafe, it is an ideal candidate for the Safe Streets for All grant.

Commissioner Tiseo referenced the Veterans Blvd Corridor Study. He used the example at Orlando Blvd., where a roundabout or signal is mentioned. He asked which improvement was proposed at that location. Laks Gurram stated that the comments were taken directly from the Veterans Blvd. Corridor Study, and the solutions were not yet specified. Commissioner Tiseo was leery about utilizing a bar cut design. Robert Fakhri noted that a signal at Orlando Blvd. seems appropriate for this location. It is funding dependent and will require further analysis. Commissioner Tiseo believed that it would be helpful to include a signal at each major roadway as found on Kings Hwy. John Elias acknowledged that the corridor is jammed up and will require analysis. The problem is striking a balance based upon available funding. Robert Fakhri stated that a signal at Orlando Blvd was warranted within the next four years. Laks Gurram noted that mid-term improvements aren’t all shown on the spreadsheet.

***Commissioner Deutsch*** *made a Motion to adopt the identified 2023 Transportation Improvement Program (Highway, TAP, CM/TSM and TRIP) Project Priorities for the upcoming FDOT Draft Tentative Work Program Cycle (FY 2025 through FY 2029) including the Joint TRIP Project Priorities between the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and (1) the Sarasota/Manatee MPO and (2) the Lee County MPO for the upcoming FDOT Draft Tentative Work Program Cycle. The Motion includes MPO Board changes made at the May 15, 2023 Meeting.* ***Commissioner Tiseo s****econded the motion, and it carried unanimously.*

**12. Public Comments**

Richard Russell noted that County and State governments can act swiftly, if need be, using the example of the Matlacha Bridge reopening shortly after Hurricane Ian’s passage. He applauded the MPO Board on addressing the Melbourne Street issue and thanked the Members for their confidence in allowing him to serve on the CAC.

**13.** [**Staff Comments**](https://ccmpo.com/wp/wp-content/uploads/2023/05/05%2015%202023%20MPO%20Board%20Meeting/13%20Staff%20Director%20Report%2005_15_2023%20DH.pdf)

D’Juan Harris was very happy to see projects from the SR 776 and Veteran’s Blvd corridor planning studies come to fruition and be added to the Project Priorities List. The next step will be to obtain funding and get the projects in the pipeline. The MPO’s Project Priorities had doubled, and in the past year, MPO Staff had been working hard to develop a Google maps research tool. Once refined and labelled with disclaimers, this valuable research tool would be made available to the MPO Board Members and Committee Members for their use in familiarizing themselves with transportation projects.

D’Juan Harris noted that the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged would be holding a Business Meeting on June 15, 2023 at 9 a.m. at the Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center. All were welcome to participate.

Commissioner Constance thanked MPO Staff for their efforts. He was glad that D’Juan Harris travels statewide to promote the MPO’s regional approach and make the MPO’s mission known.

**14. Member Comments**

John Kubler noted that FDOT District One Secretary L.K. Nandam would be returning to his work in Bartow perhaps by the end of June or a month later, following his temporary FDOT assignment to Tallahassee during the State Legislative Session. Therefore, it was uncertain if this would be the last MPO Board Meeting that John Kubler would attend. Commissioner Constance thanked him for his recent efforts to assist the MPO Board.

Commissioner Tiseo spoke regarding the ability to accomplish rapid Matlacha Bridge repairs. He noted that the honor system had been used on waiving environmental and permitting requirements that normally was not permissible with routine projects. Commissioner Constance stated that a “blank check” approach was also taken.

Commissioner Herston inquired whether or not the Punta Gorda Police Department’s Burnt Store Road Watch Report for accidents and speeding listed the County of residence of the drivers. Mayor Matthews stated that it did not contain the information, but she would see if such a report could be generated.

**15. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 3:55 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the MPO Board will be held on Monday, July 17, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. at the Charlotte County Administration Center, 18500 Murdock Circle, Room #119, Port Charlotte, Florida, 33948.