



**CHARLOTTE COUNTY – PUNTA GORDA  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION**

MINUTES OF THE MPO BOARD MEETING  
MONDAY, MARCH 20, 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  
Stacy Bjordahl, Charlotte Assistant County Attorney (MPO Legal Services)

**OTHERS PRESENT**

Commissioner Ken Doherty, BCC  
Councilmember Bill Dryburgh, Punta Gorda City Council  
Pastor Ben Shurtliff, Port Charlotte Seventh-Day Adventist Church  
Wayne Gaither, FDOT  
Victoria Peters, FDOT  
Joshua Jester, FDOT  
Nicole Harris, FDOT/Stantec  
William Roll, Kimley Horn & Associates  
Mitchell Austin, City of Punta Gorda Urban Design

Charles Council, CAC Chair  
Rick Kirchhoff, CAC  
Mary Ellen Kiss, CAC  
Pauline Klein, BPAC Chair  
Ravi Kamarajugadda, Charlotte County Public Works, TAC Vice-Chair  
John Elias, Charlotte County Public Works  
Robert Fakhri, Charlotte County Public Works  
DeWayne Nodine, City of Punta Gorda Urban Design

**OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE VIRTUALLY**

Anne Tien, Fiscal  
Deepika Fields, FDOT/Stantec

**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 Ben Shurtliff**

Pastor Ben Shurtliff 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.

D’Juan Harris noted that Agenda Item #20 contained correspondence from the February 17, 2023 Joint MPO Board meeting between the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and the Lee County MPO, as well as a copy of the RAISE Grant letter of support.

Commissioner Deutsch and Commissioner Constance requested that John Kubler introduce himself. Mr. Kubler stated that he was the permanent FDOT District One Director of Transportation Development, but he was currently serving at the Interim FDOT District One Secretary during Secretary L.K. Nandam’s temporary assignment to Tallahassee.

**5. Public Comments on Agenda Items**

No one from the public appeared to speak.

*(Chair Constance read Richard Russell’s comments later under Agenda Item 8-A.)*

**6. PUBLIC MEETING: 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Amendment**

Laks Gurram gave a brief presentation to the MPO Board.

FDOT's Project Management team recently completed corridor studies for State Road 776, Veterans Boulevard and Jones Loop Road. The project recommendations identified in these studies require an amendment to the MPO's 2045 LRTP in order to receive federal and state funding for planning consistency purposes. After review of the 2045 LRTP, the MPO Staff identified several project recommendations from these corridor studies that were not listed in the MPO'S 2045 LRTP.

For reference purposes, the attachments contained the comprehensive listing of projects and recommendations:

- Attachment 1 - SR 776 Corridor Study Recommendations from Sarasota County line to US 41
- Attachment 2 - Veterans Blvd Corridor Study Recommendations from US 41 to Kings Hwy
- Attachment 3 - Carbon Reduction Program (CRP) Projects

In the current FY 2024 to FY 2028 Draft Tentative Work Program, the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO received CRP federal funding under the following work program provisions:

URBAN AREAS LESS THAN 200K (CARL) - \$2.74 million and SMALL URBAN Areas 5K - 49,999 (CARM) - \$271, 725.

The CRP is a new program that was created in the Investment Infrastructure and Jobs Act (IIJA). The language described in attachment 3 will be included in the 2045 LRTP Cost Feasible Plan (CFP) for planning consistency with the Work Program. This language will be utilized to make the recently programmed and future transportation projects eligible for Carbon Reduction funding.

As part of the amendment process, the MPO is required to advertise that a public meeting will be held. It is required to solicit public input before the MPO Board adopts the LRTP Amendments. The MPO has advertised twice within the past 30 days that a public meeting will be held at the March 20, 2023 MPO Board Meeting. A revised 2045 LRTP will be distributed pending MPO Board approval of the amendments.

Commissioner Tiseo expressed concern regarding any additional costs associated with the Carbon Reduction Program (CRP). Laks Gurram and D'Juan Harris assured him that these projects would carry the same costs and process as any federal project, such as extensive National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements, etc. The CRP is a change in funding category contained in the new Bipartisan Infrastructure legislation. FDOT will develop a strategic funding plan in November 2023. Any existing and future projects that reduce carbon emissions will be placed in the new category for funding consideration. Commissioner Tiseo asked about any repercussions for projects not achieving carbon reduction. D'Juan Harris stated that he had not seen any carbon reduction performance measures. Commissioner Constance noted that it was important to analyze any possible federal requirements. Commissioner Deutsch

noted that Charlotte County 2020 population figures developed by the federal Census Bureau would be utilized which did not reflect the area's most recent growth.

*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 proposed 2045 LRTP Amendments by adding the projects from SR 776 corridor study, Veterans Blvd Study and CRP projects to the 2045 LRTP Cost Feasible Plan. Commissioner Deutsch seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously.*

## **7. PUBLIC MEETING: FY 2022/2023 – FY 2026/2027 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) Amendments**

Laks Gurram indicated that FDOT Staff requested the Charlotte County – Punta Gorda Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Board's approval of the STIP/TIP Amendments to the FY 2022/23 – FY 2026/27 Transportation Improvement Plan (TIP) at the March 20, 2023 MPO Board Meeting.

An amendment is required when there are major changes to the scope of a project. Examples include, but are not limited to, the following: (1) material changes exceeding 20 percent plus or minus, (2) changes to capacity (e.g., adding additional lanes), (3) changes to type of work (e.g., adding bridge repairs to resurfacing job, or changing modes from highway to transit), (4) any scope change that is significant enough to affect the priority order of projects in the TIP/STIP, or to affect consistency with the MPO's LRTP, and (5) change resulting in a cost increase greater than 20 percent or \$2 million dollars.

The four proposed TIP amendment projects were shown in Attachment 1:

434965-5 HARBORVIEW ROAD FROM MELBOURNE ST TO I-75

451358-1 US 41 AT MIDWAY BLVD

452491-1 5310 OPERATING-SMALL URBAN UZA-CHARLOTTE COUNTY BOCC

452200-4, -5 ELECTRONIC VEHICLE INFRASTRUCTURE DEPLOYMENT PLAN PHASE II I-75(SR93)

*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 amend the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO's TIP for FY 2022/2023 – FY 2026/2027 to add four projects shown in Attachment 1. Commissioner Deutsch seconded the motion. A roll call vote was taken, and the motion carried unanimously.*

## **8. Chairs' Reports:**

### **A. MPO Board Chair's Report**

Chair Constance stated that he would be saving his comments until the FDOT portion of the agenda. He read Richard Russell's email remarks (*related to Agenda Item #5 Public Comments on Agenda Items*) regarding: (1) a potential flyover interchange for northbound Flamingo Blvd. traffic onto westbound SR 776 and (2) a potential solution for southbound US 41 traffic turning left at Melbourne Street by creating a signalized T-intersection incorporating a sliver of the Chevron gas station property.

### **B. Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) Chair's Report**

CAC Chair Charles Council reported on the March 2, 2023 CAC Meeting, where a quorum had been present. He discussed an FDOT-sponsored Public Meeting regarding the Northbound US 41 Complete Streets Improvements from William Street to the Peace River Bridge. The meeting was held on January 26, 2023 at the Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center in Punta Gorda and had a fairly low turnout.

Charles Council also described the February 17, 2023 Joint Meeting of the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda and the Lee County MPO which was well attended due to a great deal of public comment received from Burnt Store Marina area residents who stated their entry and egress traffic concerns. He described the area's tremendous amount of commercial traffic which cannot be accommodated and impacts Charlotte County residents as well as Lee County citizens. He noted that the timing is right to intervene with solutions, since the project is in the early stages. He also commented about the Joint MPO Board Members interest in meeting more frequently than annually if warranted.

CAC Members were very pleased to have Charlotte County Sheriff Sgt. Dustin Paille attend the March 2, 2023 CAC Meeting to respond to their questions and concerns. Charles Council appreciated interaction by D'Juan Harris with Charlotte County Sheriff Bill Prummel in order to foster the Sheriff Department's participation with the CAC.

Charles Council noted that he is resigning from his CAC Chairmanship and position after making the difficult choice to move to West Virginia to live near his family. He had resided in Charlotte County for the past 18 years. He stated that he was impressed with D'Juan Harris and all the MPO Staff regarding how they handle a great volume of information. He also applauded the MPO Staff and MPO Board's commitment to the citizen's needs and concerns. He also noted the ongoing cooperation of FDOT in respecting the needs of Charlotte County.

Commissioner Constance thanked Charles Council for his comments and appreciated his service. Commissioner Deutsch stated that Mr. Council's contribution as a citizen was very appreciated and reflected his love of Charlotte County. Commissioner Tiseo also appreciated Mr. Council's efforts as he reflected on his own CAC membership days. He was glad that Mr. Council took time to volunteer and noted his engagement in Punta Gorda issues. *Applause followed.* Commissioner Constance stated that he would be missed on the CRA. D'Juan Harris also praised Charles Council for his service, noting their work together over the years. Mayor Matthews thanked Mr. Council for his work with the City of Punta Gorda. She called him a hardworking citizen who would be missed.

**C. Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Chair's Report**

TAC Chair Mitchell Austin reported on the March 2, 2023 TAC Meeting. He stated that there was difficulty in maintaining a quorum throughout the meeting. He referred MPO Board Members to the TAC Meeting Minutes and gladly offered to address any questions.

**D. Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) Chair's Report**

BPAC Chair Pauline Klein reported on the March 2, 2023 BPAC Meeting, where a quorum was not present. She noted that BPAC Members who were participating gave verbal approval by consensus to recommend items on the MPO Board agenda. She noted that it was her pleasure working with Charles Council on both the CAC and BPAC. She seconded his remarks regarding the MPO Staff.

**9. Local Government Reports**

**A. Charlotte County Airport Authority**

Commissioner Herston, Charlotte County Airport Authority Vice Chairman, provided MPO Board Members with a detailed packet of information on Airport activities entitled *Charlotte County Airport Authority-MPO Committee Report, March 20, 2023*. Commissioner Herston noted that the report had grown to 38 pages due to the number of projects being added. He referenced page 12, a project summary page with arrows added on premiere projects including the commercial terminal expansion, a new hanger, Challenger Blvd roadwork and a new Taxiway G. Commissioner Herston also described recent Florida MPO Advisory Council (MPOAC) discussions regarding alternative transportation revenue sources. He stated that he would transmit information on this matter through Bekie Leslie.

Commissioner Constance touted the January 2023 record breaking airport passenger numbers shown on page 8. The number of passengers in one month used to be one year's worth not too long ago and could soon top 2 million passengers annually.

**B. 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:

- 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 nearly complete, including new on-street diagonal parking as well as new park sidewalks, stormwater management treatment infrastructure, landscaping and lighting. Also, part of the project are intersection treatments including ADA crosswalks at the intersections of Retta Esplanade from Gilchrist to Berry. Work should be complete within the next month.
- Continued complaints of speeding and passing vehicles in a no passing zone from residents on Tripoli Boulevard. between Madrid Boulevard. and Monaco Drive which comes from FDOT closing off the median at Madrid Boulevard. and US 41. There are

numerous vehicles speeding and cutting across Tripoli Blvd. to exit at the light at Monaco Drive and US 41 with drivers who are not observing the 25 mph speed zone. This is further evidence that a traffic light is desperately needed on Burnt Store Road at the Home Depot exit driveway to divert traffic and improve safety for these residents.

- Since Hurricane Ian, the City has been in restoration mode since the hurricane. 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 Enforcement, Zoning and Planning staff are in the old City Council Chamber and outside the building in two remote trailers until the City Hall Annex offices are restored. Waiting on FEMA approval to begin restorations.
- Efforts are now underway to clear canal debris with the state of Florida contractor. 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 need to be replaced due to uprooted trees that damaged them.
- There are 792 locations identified in the City seawall system that will have to be replaced, totaling approximately 7.25 miles of seawalls. We are working closely with FEMA to get that project approved so we can begin seawall replacements.
- The City Hall renovation project is still in design and engineering, and only an anticipated 2 to 3 month delay from original forecasting for the redesigned building project to get started.
- Public works and utilities continue to review and provide 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.
- Improvements to the intersection of Turtle Dove Blvd and Whippoowill Blvd were completed. Turtle Dove Boulevard at the intersection of Whippoowill Boulevard now has a directional island for traffic definition at that intersection for safety purposes

Mayor Matthews noted that since providing the above report, the City has been pouring seawall panels by the hundreds, since 600 are required. Extra staff has been hired, and all that is needed is FEMA approval. Canal cleanup has begun with tons of debris discovered (the same as elsewhere in Charlotte County with both governments using the same contractor). Five porta potties were wedged in the mangroves. Mayor Matthews thanked members of the Boater's Alliance which had assisted with identifying submerged items.

### C. [Charlotte County](#)

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

- Various Intersection Improvements
- Flamingo Blvd/Edgewater Drive Widening
- Charlotte Harbor CRA – Parmely Street Road Widening and Sidewalk



Commissioner Herston commented on the last item. He noted that the plumbing business at Parmely had recently sold, so it might be good to approach the new owner regarding a property purchase. Commissioner Tiseo stated that the purpose of the improvements was to do a realignment and might need eminent domain action if the property owner was unwilling. Currently, the County was working within the government-owned right of way (ROW). He noted that the storm water project in the Kentucky Fried Chicken area is in the County ROW. Commissioner Deutsch stated the church down the street from the location is near the road, and there is narrowing there.

## **10. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Report**

Victoria Peters provided updates on the various projects:

### **FDOT Led Discussion**

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

FDOT was coordinating with the County and FDOT on this intersection project. There would be dual right turns with permissive “right turn on red” on the outside right lane only.

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

\$1.4 Million was programmed by FDOT for 2025. Charlotte County will receive the funding, and the developer will do the traffic study. Commissioner Constance noted that a flyover at this intersection would be costly.

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

Design was programmed for \$150,000.00 with right turn lanes both eastbound and westbound considered. Commissioner Tiseo discussed the need for more stacking in the left turn lanes. Commissioner Constance commented on the Sports Park location where there were left turn westbound and right turn eastbound concerns (addressing turning south in both directions into the facility was a needed improvement). Robert Fakhri stated that County Staff could review the matter during the Design phase as far as extending the turn lanes. Commissioner Tiseo noted that the left turn lane improvements have been talked about, and there is a large median to use. John Elias noted that the project will include eastbound access as Commissioner Constance described. D’Juan Harris reiterated that the County will have the lead and work out details during the Design scope. Commissioner Deutsch observed that there was a need to lengthen the turn lane with the Tampa Bay Rays returning for Spring Training 2024. Ideally, this effort should be accomplished within the next 10 months.

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

FDOT has had ongoing coordination between the Counties, the MPOs and the City of North Port. A presentation would be given later in the meeting.

Commissioner Constance inquired if projects in the new Sunseeker Resort area should be added back to the discussion list. Mayor Matthews stated that she had asked Wayne Gaither to



coordinate with the Sunseeker developer on the permit process to secure a signal prior to the October opening of the facility. The Sunseeker developer would need to provide FDOT District One with the specifications and will be responsible for the signal at the main entrance (which is separate from Main Street). Commissioner Constance noted that it was key to place a signal at the main entrance with the goal to move traffic safely.

Commissioner Tiseo spoke regarding the right turn lane on Harbor View at US 41. Robert Fakhri noted that there was ongoing discussion with FDOT regarding this intersection as well as the Olean Boulevard. project. Perhaps a through lane and two right turn lanes would be required but this would stop access to the Century 21 office on the corner. Commissioner Constance wished to add the Harbor View Road right turn project back on the list in order to get informational updates. Commissioner Herston discussed the Harbor View Road right turn lane issue, stating that a measurement of existing pavement should be accomplished. He noted that some of the lanes are too wide. Robert Fakhri noted that lanes were not being added, but rather would be accomplished using existing pavement.

### **Joint Local and FDOT Discussion**

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

There was a Local Agency Program (LAP) agreement for this project. Charlotte County had submitted a Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) Grant application. FDOT is providing staff to assist with the grant.

#### **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 study is funded for FY 2025. A thorough planning analysis will be conducted. D’Juan Harris clarified (as he had done in one-on-one meetings with MPO Board Members) that the Melbourne Street access issue will be included in this study.

Commissioner Tiseo inquired regarding the Sunseeker entrance signalization if there would be a full median cut. John Elias responded that there will be a full signal with a full opening. The timing must be addressed. Commissioner Tiseo wondered if completion would happen by October 2023. John Elias could not speak to the timing. Standard stacking should be addressed. Commissioner Deutsch stated that stacking will be limited, but that should not be a problem if designed properly. He remarked that he would be amazed if it would be completed in the current calendar year due to supply chain issues.

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

John Elias stated that the Charlotte County Board of County Commissioners will be reviewing this roadway, but there will not be an expensive four lane project extending to the County line. Some turn lanes and passing zones may be utilized.

Commissioner Constance added the Burnt Store Road discussion regarding the Vincent Avenue intersection to the list. He noted that it was not workable to turn trailers and boats under the current setting, and a light or roundabout might work. Given the need to retrofit the project, he wanted to understand what improvements were feasible in the area. John Elias noted that County

Staff members have been in discussion with residents. There were problems with the paving on Vincent Avenue. Robert Fakhri noted that the decision to close the median and force traffic to travel south and then, make a U-turn to go north will be reevaluated at the time of PD&E.

Mayor Matthews noted that she had received lots of communication regarding Burnt Store Road. She thanked Interim Secretary Kubler for his prompt responses on the matter which were greatly appreciated. She mentioned 2 FDOT issues:

- Disrupted light sequencing in Downtown Punta Gorda since Hurricane Ian
- Left turn arrow at Aqui Esta/US 41 – possibility of a permissive turn arrow.

John Elias stated that vehicle detection equipment is coming back online. The County is also adjusting it at Cochran Blvd. The County is working with FDOT to adjust the timing while handling a lot of traffic as well. John Elias noted that without detection equipment, the signals all run on timing.

Victoria Peters described the MPO Joint Certification which she characterized as similar to a report card. The MPO has rated tremendously well with a low risk assessment, perfect invoicing, excellent UPWP and other core documents, plus a wonderful display of resilience following Hurricane Ian. She said she would bestow an A++ mark and congratulated MPO Staff.

D’Juan Harris confirmed to the MPO Board that two new items would be added to the discussion list: (1) Burnt Store Road intersection control alternatives and (2) the right turn lanes on Harbor View Road at US 41. He stated that the Sunseeker issues were already being addressed under *Agenda Item 10 Joint Local and FDOT Discussion B*.

#### **11. Consent Agenda:**

- [Approval of Minutes: December 15, 2022, Regular MPO Board Meeting](#)**
- [Approval of Minutes: Joint Regional Charlotte County-Punta Gorda and Sarasota/Manatee MPO Board Meeting – January 23, 2023](#)**
- [Approval of Minutes: Joint Regional Charlotte County-Punta Gorda and Lee County MPO Board Meeting – February 17, 2023](#)**
- [Charlotte County Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board \(LCB\) Resignation and Appointment](#)**
- [Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee \(BPAC\) Reappointment](#)**
- [Citizens Advisory Committee \(CAC\) Appointment](#)**

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

Commissioner Tiseo thanked volunteers for coming forward to help out as citizen servants through their committee participation.

#### **12. [2022 Florida Department of Transportation \(FDOT\)/Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO Joint Certification](#)**

Each year the FDOT and the MPO must jointly certify the metropolitan transportation planning process as described in 23 U.S.C. 134(k) (15) and 23 C.F.R. 450.334 (a). The joint certification begins in January. This allows time to incorporate recommended changes into the Draft Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The District and the MPO create a joint certification package that includes a summary of noteworthy achievements by the MPO and, if applicable, a list of any recommendations and/or corrective actions. The Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO Joint Certification Package have been reviewed and accurately reflect the results of the joint certification review meeting held on February 21, 2022. Based on the review and evaluation, the Florida Department of Transportation had no recommendations and/or corrective actions.

D’Juan Harris stated that he appreciated both FDOT’s and Charles Council’s kind remarks regarding MPO Staff accomplishments. He noted that MPO Staff strives to achieve excellence. If mistakes are made, they are corrected and are not considered mistakes, but lessons learned to continue to strive towards perfection.

*Commissioner Tiseo made a Motion to approve the 2022 FDOT/MPO Joint Certification, authorizing the MPO Board Chair to sign the FDOT/MPO Joint Certification Statement. Commissioner Herston seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.*

### **13. 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Consultant Selection**

Laks Gurrum explained the selection process. The Charlotte County - Punta Gorda MPO and the three selected consultants executed contracts on January 13, 2022, to provide General Planning Consulting (GPC) services for the next three years.

On February 9, 2023, the MPO Staff issued a Task Approach to all three of the MPO's GPC consultants to prepare a Power Point Presentation as to how each consultant would develop the

MPO's 2050 Socioeconomic Data development and 2050 LRTP Update. The LRTP Subcommittee consists of members from MPO Staff, TAC and CAC committees. The subcommittee met with the corresponding consultants and their staff on February 27, 2023, for in-person presentations at the MPO Office. The LRTP Subcommittee ranked the consultants based on this criteria: (1) Qualifications of the Staff/Project Manager (20 Points), (2) Understanding Project Scope (30 Points), (3) Equity/Resiliency (10 Points), (4) Emerging/Innovative Technologies (20 Points), (5) Current/Planned Workload (10 Points), (6) DBE/MBE Requirements (5 Points) and (7) Response to Questions (5 Points).

Upon tallying the scoring criteria, the LRTP subcommittee unanimously recommended Kimley Horn & Associates as the consultant to perform the 2050 Socioeconomic Data development and 2050 LRTP update. Attachment 1 showed the final scoring sheet.

Once approved by the MPO Board, Staff will negotiate a Scope of Services for both tasks, with the assistance of the subcommittee, as soon as possible. The Scope of Services must address all requirements relative to LRTPs and be accomplished at a reasonable cost, consistent with the MPO’s funding allocation. The cost to develop each task update shall be determined once a detailed scope is developed.

The Work Assignment Order will be signed by the MPO Chair. Once a Work Assignment is executed between the MPO and the Consultant, a Notice to Proceed will be issued to begin work on the project. The 2050 LRTP is scheduled for adoption in October 2025.

The recommendations of the selected consultant were presented at the TAC/CAC and BPAC meetings on March 2, 2023. Due to lack of quorum TAC and BPAC members unanimously accepted the recommendation.

*Commissioner Tiseo made a Motion to approve the recommendation of the consultant (Kimley Horn and Associates), authorize the MPO Staff to develop a Work Assignment Order and Scope of Services, and authorize the MPO Chair to sign the Work Assignment Order. Mayor Lynne Matthews seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.*

#### **14. DRAFT 2023 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)**

Federal and State legislation require MPOs 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 Technical and Citizens' Advisory Committees provided initial review the development of the TIP at their March 2, 2023 meetings.

The Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO is scheduled to review and adopt the TIP at the May 15, 2023, MPO Board Meeting. The Draft Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO TIP for FY 2023/2024 - FY 2027/2028 was provided as Attachment 1. The MPO Board adopted the project priorities listed in this TIP on May 16, 2022.

The Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO entered into an interlocal agreement with Sarasota – Manatee MPO and Lee County MPO, formalizing and specifying regional planning projects along with timeframes to produce those projects. The agreement calls for each MPO to identify regional priorities and include those projects in the respective MPO's TIP. Those priorities that were adopted last year are included, in accordance with the interlocal agreement in the TIP.

MPO Board Members were invited to review and comment on the Draft FY 2023/2024-FY 2027/2028 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

Commissioner Constance asked about paving on US 17 from US 41 to Belmont Road. D'Juan Harris noted that July 1, 2024 was scheduled for Design. Mayor Matthews had conversed with Wayne Gaither to verify that the lane diet proposal was pulled from the study of US 17. Wayne Gaither concurred with the Mayor's statement. He stated that the earlier snapshot for FY 2028 will be removed from the Tentative Work Program document going forward. He noted that he would verify the end limits and dates for the various phases. He agreed to send this information in a confirmation email. Commissioner Constance noted that US 41 median closures in the City of Punta Gorda would be discussed at the joint City/County meeting to be held the next day in the same BCC Meeting Chambers. He invited FDOT staff to attend if schedules permitted.

#### **15. Draft 2023 Project Priorities – Discussion**

Laks Gurram informed that the MPO is required to annually develop a List of Project Priorities (LOPP) as part of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) process. A preliminary list of project priorities along with project applications will be submitted to FDOT District One by

March 31, 2023. The project priorities must be approved by the MPO Board and submitted to FDOT by July 1, 2023.

The MPO received candidate projects from the City of Punta Gorda and Charlotte County. These projects include Highway, Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Congestion Mitigation/Transportation System Management (CM/TSM), and Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) projects. Attachment 2 is the list of project priorities previously approved by the MPO Board at the May 2022 meeting.

The Draft 2023 Project Priorities (Attachment 1) presented today reflects the changes based on the Draft Tentative Work Program that was released in December 2022. Below is the Draft LOPP MPO Staff recommends local jurisdictions submit a project priority application for consideration of funding:

- Harbor View Road from Date Street to I-75 – Road Widening (CST)
- Edgewater Drive from Midway Blvd. to SR 776 – Road Widening (ROW & CST)
- N. Jones Loop @ Piper Road – Roundabout – (PE)
- SR 776 @ Charlotte Sports Park - Construction Turn Lanes (CST)
- SR 776 at Biscayne Drive – Design and Construction Turn lanes and Signal (PE&CST)
- SR 776 at Cornelius Blvd. - Design and Construction Turn Lanes (PE&CST)
- SR 776 at Jacobs Street - Design and Construction Turn Lanes (PE&CST)
- SUN Trail – from SR 776 at Gulf Cove to US 41 (CST)
- US 41 Bridge Approach Decorative Finish Street Lights
- US 41 MURT Bridge at S. Alligator Creek – (CST)
- US 41 SB Harborwalk Phase II – ADA ramp improvements

MPO Board Members were asked to review and comment on the 2023 Project Priorities (Highway, TAP, CM/TSM and TRIP) for the upcoming FDOT Draft Tentative Work Program Cycle FY 2025 to FY 2029.

## **16. I-75 Master Plan Central Corridor Study Update & Presentation**

Joshua Jester reviewed both the central and north corridor studies. FDOT is currently conducting the I-75 Connect Master Plan studies and have recently provided the proposed improvements that are needed for each of the interchanges and segments. Public meetings are scheduled over the next few months and FDOT recently concluded a public meeting for the North Corridor segments of the Master Plan Studies in February 2023.

For more information on the Southwest Connect Interstate program, click on the following link: [Home | Southwest Connect \(swflinterstates.com\)](https://www.swflinterstates.com)

FDOT staff provided the following presentation to the MPO Board: [16 Attachment I-75 Combined North\\_Central Corridor.pdf \(ccmpo.com\)](https://ccmpo.com)

Commissioner Tiseo observed that Slide 14's figures were very revealing. They demonstrate the importance of the proposed new interchange in better moving traffic in Charlotte County and the City of North Port.

Joshua Jester discussed managed lanes for the Northern and Southern Corridors. Purple sections revealed managed lanes (with a tolling feasibility study underway). These lanes would be separated from other lanes. He discussed how to enter and egress these lanes using weave sections. Drivers would only use the through lanes if travelling a further distance. Joshua Jester reviewed the timelines for the projects.

Commissioner Deutsch noted that the imaging looked like an aerial of the Jersey Turnpike. Commissioner Constance stated that the study looks great, and capacity is needed now.

Commissioner Herston commented on:

- Major growth to the east in DeSoto County which poses a problem for Kings Hwy.
- Hybrid connection between Yorkshire Street and Raintree Blvd. which also might extend to Kings Hwy.
- Question of whether or not DeSoto County qualifies for additional federal transportation funding

## **17. Public Comments**

There were not public comments.

## **18. Staff Comments**

D’Juan Harris provided MPO Board Members with a list of recent MPO Activities:

[18 Staff Director Report 03 20 2023.pdf \(ccmpo.com\)](#)

He gave kudos to Laks Gurram for achieving a 15-year service milestone with the MPO. He praised his many skills and impressive resume. He gave him a framed recognition certificate.

D’Juan Harris discussed the Letter of Support for the County’s RAISE grant application. He mentioned how an accident on I-75 two days prior to the passage of Hurricane Ian had caused havoc during storm preparations by forcing all southbound traffic onto Harbor View Road.

He also noted that MPO Staff was taking nominations for the Peggy Walters Award until the end of June 2023.

## **19. Member Comments**

Commissioner Deutsch commented on the following topics:

- Poor placement of overly wide arrows on Gasparilla Road near the Myakka bridge. D’Juan Harris stated that Design Project Management may narrow them.
- Importance of placing the future Myakka and Peace River bridges projects in both the LRTP and TIP documents to make them part of future plans. He noted that a bypass or a second crossing of the Peace River between US 41 and 75 must be analyzed. Likewise, a solution for a second crossing of the Myakka River was needed.
- Drafting of a letter to the Sarasota/Manatee MPO regarding advancement in the completion of the rest of River Road at least to Winchester Blvd, thanking them for their support and recognizing its importance.

- Update from FDOT on a needed improvement on SR 776 east of the Myakka River bridge (area is in the fire station/historic post office/little restaurant portion) where a U-turn at the bridge is not sensible. Previously, he had met with Secretary Nandam on this issue.

Mayor Matthews wondered why the US 41 Peace River Bridges only have two lanes. Commissioner Deutsch doubted additional lanes would help given the traffic buildup downtown. Mayor Matthews thanked FDOT for conducting the I-75 Master Plan Study, noting the tremendous backup she encountered on a recent trip to Tallahassee.

Commissioner Tiseo noted that he had been traveling the backroads of Florida to stay off the interstates. He thanked FDOT for recent collaboration on the Harbor View Road project (as an important connector between I-75 and US 41). He mentioned Bermont Road, which like Harbor View Road, is a County Road. It assists with cross state travel and is a tremendous asset. He would appreciate FDOT's assistance on improvements to this roadway.

Commissioner Constance stated that MPO Board Members were in agreement on sending thank you letters to both the Sarasota/Manatee MPO and the Lee County MPO. He requested that D'Juan Harris draft these letters.

## **20. Correspondence**

D'Juan Harris provided MPO Board Members with the Letter of Support for Charlotte County, FL Harborview Road Project from Melbourne Street to I-75 – 2023 RAISE Grant Application which he had written USDOT Secretary Pete Buttigieg.

Additionally, citizen correspondence from the Joint Meeting with the Lee County MPO on February 17, 2023 was provided. Most concerns focused on traffic issues along Burnt Store Road in the Burnt Store Marina area.

## **21. Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 4:06 p.m. The next regularly scheduled meeting of the MPO Board will be held on Monday, May 15, 2023 at 2:00 p.m. at the Charlotte County Administration Center, 18500 Murdock Circle, Room #119, Port Charlotte, Florida, 33948.