



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

MINUTES OF THE MPO BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, MARCH 31, 2025
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 Joseph Tiseo, Charlotte County Commissioner, MPO Vice Chair
Commissioner Ken Doherty, Charlotte County Commissioner
Commissioner Thomas Thornberry, Charlotte County Airport Authority
Councilmember Jeannine Polk, Punta Gorda City Council

ADVISORY

L.K. Nandam, FDOT District One Secretary

STAFF PRESENT

Lakshmi N. Gurram, MPO Interim Director
Bekie Leslie, Administrative Services Coordinator
Wendy Scott, MPO Planner
Sierra “Ray” Scott, Administrative Support - STARR
Kimlyn Walker, Assistant County Attorney (MPO Legal Services)
Janette Knowlton, County Attorney (MPO Legal Services)

OTHERS PRESENT IN-PERSON

Wayne Gaither, FDOT District One Southwest Area Office (SWAO)
Jeremy Stucker, FDOT District 1
Walter Breuggeman, FDOT
Carlo Gargiulo, Chaplain, Punta Gorda Fire Department
Dianne Quilty, CAC Chair
Lauri Rossi, BPAC Chair
Dr. Mary Ellen Kiss, CAC
Robert Fakhri, Charlotte County Public Works
Joann Vernon, Charlotte County Public Works

Shaun Cullinan, Charlotte County Community Development
Richard Lisenbee, Charlotte County Lighting
Richard Lehmkuhl, City of Punta Gorda Urban Design
Carl Benge, City of Punta Gorda/Urban Design
Jan Dick, Citizen
Marian Dick, Citizen
Matt Youdsewick, Quest
Jake Kistel, TCS
Charlie Witkowski, Miovision
William Roll, Kimley Horn & Associates
Elaine Allen-Emrich, Charlotte Sun

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

MPO Chair Constance called the meeting to order at 2:00 p.m. All MPO Board members were present.

2. Invocation – Carlo Gargiulo – Chaplain Bayfront Health Punta Gorda

(Note: The hospital is now named Advent Health Punta Gorda and is permanently closed due to hurricane flooding. Carlo Gargiulo is the current Punta Gorda Fire Department Chaplain.

Chaplain Carlo Gargiulo from the Punta Gorda Fire Department gave the invocation.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

4. Addition and/or Deletion to the Agenda

Laks Gurram noted the following changes:

One addition:

11. Agenda Addendum: 2025 PAVEMENT AND BRIDGE (PM2) AND SYSTEM PERFORMANCE (PM3) TARGETS

Several Corrections and one request:

- A future meeting date on the agenda has been corrected to Thursday, October 2, 2025 at 9:30 a.m.
- The MPO has received updated PowerPoint presentations for Agenda Items #14, #15 and #16. They have been uploaded to the MPO website and included in the MPO Board packets.
- Not a correction, but rather a request from the LRTP consultant to move Agenda Item #14 to follow Agenda Item #6.

Additionally, Attorney Janette Knowlton requested that Agenda Item #17 regarding the MPO Director Selection Process be considered immediately following Agenda Item #5 Public Comments on Agenda Items.

Commissioner Doherty made a motion to approve the changes to the agenda packet and agenda item order. Commissioner Tiseo seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously.

5. Public Comments on Agenda Items

No public comments were received.

17. Discussion/Direction on the MPO Director Selection Process

Janette Knowlton described how at the February 14, 2025 MPO Board Special Meeting, the MPO Board appointed Mr. Lakshmi N. Gurram as the interim MPO Director. Additionally, the Board had requested an update on the MPO Director selection process.

Janette Knowlton stated that three new applications had been received, but none of the applicants had met the MPO Board's requirements. Human Resources was continuing to advertise the position on the County website (*in addition to placement on the MPO website*) and on other career search websites. Additionally, the Interim Director had requested consideration of an additional salary increase in light of his workload handling two positions.

Commissioner Tiseo commented that in his one-on-one briefing with Laks Gurram he learned that MPO operations were going well and there was a good relationship ongoing with staff. When he had asked Mr. Gurram if he had any desire to be the permanent MPO Director, Mr. Gurram did not say no. Therefore, Commissioner Tiseo stated that the MPO Board had the opportunity to appoint Mr. Gurram as the permanent MPO Director.

Commissioner Doherty related that he also had the same type of discussion with Mr. Gurram at his one-on-one briefing. He noted that it was important to have stability in the MPO Office. With one MPO staff member leaving in August 2025, Commissioner Doherty observed that there was a strong need to hire new MPO staff.

Discussion followed regarding compensation for Laks Gurram. Commissioner Constance suggested a 10% increase to Mr. Gurram's current Principal Planner salary (\$95,035). Commissioner Doherty advocated for the minimum figure found at the bottom of the salary survey sheet (\$98,000). It was noted that there was no need to interview Mr. Gurram, and he was already in the County's system as far as employment and health care benefits.

Commissioner Tiseo questioned Secretary Nandam about the role played by the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO's deprivation of Transportation Management Area (TMA) status (over 200,000 population) in the 2020 Census and the MPO's current non-TMA tight funding constraints in attracting and hiring a qualified MPO Director. Secretary Nandam offered to check with FDOT Policy staff regarding Charlotte County's questioning of the results of the 2020 Census count (three individuals short of the 200,000+ population figure). Wayne Gaither was asked to describe approaches to recent salary ranges and negotiations in nearby Southwest Florida MPOs. Commissioner Constance noted that Charlotte County now was suffering for a

decade due to the results of the 2020 Census. Janette Knowlton stated that she had consulted with Gordon Burger regarding Charlotte County's subsidies toward the MPO's budgetary costs, and they amounted to approximately \$15,000.

Upon questioning, Laks Gurram responded to Commissioner Thornberry regarding his motivation for now agreeing to accept the MPO Director position. His response was warmly received by MPO Board Members.

Chair Constance said that he looked forward to experiencing more of Mr. Gurram's consistent work efforts. He praised Mr. Gurram for his past gesture of standing up behind other meeting presenters to support them with important information.

***Commissioner Tiseo** made a motion to appoint Lakshmi N. Gurram as the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO Director, with a 10% salary increase, including all employee benefits currently provided by the County Government. **Commissioner Doherty** seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.*

6. PUBLIC MEETNG: FY 2024/2025 – FY 2028/2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment

Laks Gurram thanked MPO Board Members for their confidence in him. He discussed the TIP Amendment:

FDOT Staff requested the Charlotte County – Punta Gorda Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) approve the following STIP/TIP Amendments in the current FY 2024/25 through FY 2028/29 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) at the March 31, 2025 MPO Board Meeting:

- 1. 452491-1 Charlotte County Transit FTA 5310 Operating Assistance. This is a new project for Transit and requires a formal amendment to add it to the TIP in FY 25.**
- 2. 456205-1 Regent Road crossing 623232 L – This is a rail safety project, and this amendment adds as a new project for railroad safety in Charlotte County.**

A STIP/TIP amendment is required to the MPO's TIP and the Statewide STIP when a major change occurs to a project. These changes include: the addition or deletion of a project, a major change in project cost, project phase initiation dates, or a major change in design concept or design scope (i.e., changing project termini or the number of through traffic lanes). [23 C.F.R. 450.104].

An amendment requires public review and comment, demonstration of financial constraint, or a conformity determination, if applicable. The proposed TIP amendment is included as Attachment 1 in the agenda packet.

Commissioner Constance opened the Public Meeting.

There were no public comments received.

Commissioner Tiseo made a motion to close the Public Meeting. Commissioner Doherty seconded the motion which passed unanimously.

Commissioner Tiseo made a motion to approve the amendments to the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO's TIP for FY 2024/2025-FY 2028/2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Commissioner Doherty seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously in a roll call vote.

14. 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Preliminary Needs - Update

Laks Gurram introduced project consultant William Roll who briefed the MPO Board on the latest LRTP efforts (draft needs and revenue forecast). He had met with several MPO Board Members earlier in the day. Federal Law requires MPOs to update their Long-Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs) at least every five years. The next update of the LRTP will have a horizon year of 2050 and must be adopted by the MPO Board by October 2, 2025.

1. [2050 LRTP multimodal Needs](#)
2. [Power Point Presentation](#)

The MPO Staff has received the preliminary results of the 2023 Existing plus Committed (E+C) Network Deficiency Analysis from FDOT. Based on this analysis, the MPO will be able to identify the needed roadway projects based on future (2050) travel demand.

These network changes will initially be based on the 2045 LRTP Roadway Needs. Added to the 2045 Needs will be comments received from the public during the outreach activities currently underway as well as input from the MPO Board and Advisory Committees.

Initial outreach on the 2050 Needs Plan included three public workshops that were held on February 10, 11 and 12, 2025. More than 50 individuals attended and provided input on the development of the LRTP. Additional outreach activities include a short survey and an interactive mapping exercise. Both of these are available on the MPO's website; www.ccpmpo.gov. The MPO Staff and the Consultant met with the LRTP Steering Committee on February 26th, 2025 to provide feedback on the existing network. At the March 5, 2025 TAC/CAC & March 6, 2025 BPAC meetings, committee members had an opportunity to review the 2050 Needs projects. The MPO Staff and Consultant also offered the public a virtual workshop on March 5, 2025 to solicit public opinion, ideas and comments.

The first stakeholder consensus building workshop would occur on the following Monday, April 7, 2025 at the Family Services Center. Commissioner Constance requested a correction to one of the maps where the street should have been marked Elkcam Blvd (not Midway Blvd). William Roll stated that his firm uses ARC GIS Pro which recently has contained some software glitches. He requested that everyone please reach out to him with any concerns on mapping. Based upon recent USDOT guidance (regarding the retooling of Environmental Justice efforts), the second stakeholder consensus building workshop now was scheduled for June 9, 2025. Additional events planned were May 27-29, 2025 public workshops at West, Mid and South County locations, as well as virtual public workshops on May 29, 2025 and at a date to be determined sometime in August 2025.

William Roll discussed a 2050 Potential Roadway Deficiencies slide. He noted that it highlighted major roadways in Charlotte County including I-75/US 41/SR 776 plus Bermont Road. He reviewed roadways in each section of the County (West/Mid/South). He noted that preliminary needs include a subset which are high priority capacity roadway needs. Mr. Roll stressed that the goal is to comprehend what needs to be on the map.

Commissioner Doherty asked William Roll if the short section of Yorkshire Street going from two lanes to four lanes was tied in with the proposed new I-75 interchange in Sarasota County. He stated that he would like to discuss the proposal further under Agenda Item #9.

Commissioner Tiseo asked if there were any other map deletions/additions that the MPO Board wanted. William Roll noted that widenings may be downgraded to intersection improvements, since plans were constrained by available funds. Commissioner Tiseo inquired if Bermont Road should be added. Commissioner Constance expressed displeasure that there are black sections on the 2050 Potential Roadway Deficiencies slide and characterized them as a wakeup call.

William Roll discussed the possible widening of bridges on SR 776. Secretary Nandam was asked about FDOT's approach to a situation when the bridges are failing but not the adjacent roadways. He responded that FDOT can provide information regarding when the bridges will be replaced. Chair Constance described the current configuration and age of the SR 776 bridges and raised the possibility of including bicycle lanes at the time of the older eastbound bridge replacement. Secretary Nandam noted that it was important to tap into FDOT discretionary bridge replacement funds.

Commissioner Doherty inquired about whether or not William Roll had met with Public Works staff and County Administration. He noted that the County has a Transportation Capital Needs Assessment (CNA) that has a twenty-year horizon. A discussion followed on State and Federal transportation policies including the need to change funding formulas. Also reviewed were transit and bicycle/pedestrian plans factoring into the LRTP. Commissioner Tiseo and Secretary Nandam discussed FDOT's current approach to the use of bicycle lanes with keyholes on major roadways as opposed to multi-use side paths.

William Roll stated that he will analyze all feedback received plus crash information (heat maps). Safety will be taken into consideration when drafting the LRTP document. Commissioner Constance encouraged all MPO Board Members to inform William Roll of their concerns. Mr. Roll would be meeting with all five members of the Board of County Commissioners (BCC). Commissioner Tiseo mentioned to Councilmember Polk that she might want to receive input from the City Council, so that she could return with the information to the MPO Board.

7. Chairs' Reports:

A. MPO Board Chair's Report:

MPO Chair Constance encouraged fellow MPO Board Members to identify non-optimum transportation issues in their travels and write them down for discussion. Many times, concerns involved County locations rather than those overseen by FDOT. He described a recent troubling

experience witnessed on Chancellor Blvd where poor advance planning efforts on a short, steeply pitched driveway at a large gas station resulted in dangerous driving conditions. He also described an area where two turn lanes are involved south of Toledo Blade Blvd where it is possible that palm trees in the median may have to be eliminated. He was pleased with Robert Fakhri's recent efforts, noting that the northern portion of Flamingo Blvd had been blown open by the developer. He asked for a completion date on the US 41 roundabout on Carmalita. Wayne Gaither checked on the status and reported back that it would be open in May 2025. Chair Constance also commented regarding driving south on Enterprise Drive at SR 776, where just adding a turn lane at the intersection could be helpful. He also noted that increased population has made travel in some areas unbearable. Commissioner Thornberry inquired about progress on roadwork at US 17 eastbound, since he is frequently questioned about the matter. Secretary Nandam explained the steps of road resurfacing projects and agreed to check on the project timeline.

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

CAC Chair Dianne Quilty reviewed the highlights of the March 5, 2025 CAC Meeting. All actionable items on the agenda were recommended for approval unanimously by the CAC to the MPO Board. Two issues arising during the CAC's LRTP review were a discussion on State/Federal revenues, as well as the possibility of local impact fee increases. The CAC Members also discussed the Harbor View Rd project's additional extension given the number of new units in the proposed Benderson development near I-75. SR 776 widening plans were also mentioned. Laks Gurram had updated the CAC Members on the draft TIP amendment, the draft Project Priorities List and the Joint Certification. A SR 776 safety improvements presentation was made. Under staff comments, Betty-Ann Sherer had given a great presentation on recent transit improvements and answered questions about Charlotte County Transit. Laks Gurram had discussed the three LRTP workshops held in February. Under member comments, Richard Russell discussed Harbor View Road's significance as a hurricane evacuation route. With costs greatly increasing, he recommended for consideration having two lanes heading towards the interstate and one returning. Steve Schoff had requested an explanation regarding impact fees. Rick Kirchhoff inquired about traffic signal timing, and Ravi Kamarajugadda addressed the issue, noting that there are timelines for updating, but an individual intersection can be evaluated more quickly.

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

TAC Chair Robert Fakhri reviewed the highlights of the March 5, 2025 TAC Meeting. All actionable items on the agenda were recommended for approval by the TAC to the MPO Board.

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

BPAC Chair Lauri Rossi reviewed the highlights of the March 6, 2025 BPAC Meeting. All actionable items on the agenda were recommended for approval by the BPAC to the MPO Board. She described other BPAC discussions including: (1) the maintenance of Tucker's Grade Road, (2) Richard Lisenbee's assistance with signal timing when accidents occur on area roadways, (3) a request for City of Punta Gorda staff member Carl Bengé to provide a Local Agency Program (LAP) project update, (4) Tanya Merkle's reporting on FDOT review of

Sun Trail applications (due by April 15, 2025), and (5) SR 776 safety improvements such as the change in full median openings to directional ones as a quick fix for now. She noted that BPAC Members were surprised that an Emergency Vehicle Pre-emption program was not already in place locally. BPAC members also had asked for bicycle accommodations on Charlotte County Transit vehicles.

8. Local Government Reports:

A. Charlotte County Airport Authority

Commissioner Thornberry provided the following Airport Authority Report for the MPO Board Members:

A copy of the January 16, 2025 Airport Authority Meeting Minutes was distributed. Highlights were: (1) resolution for non-pursuit of privatization unanimously approved and (2) groundbreaking for both the Charlotte Technical College hanger and the Charlotte High School hanger (in partnership with the Charlotte County Public Schools and Space Florida).

Commissioner Thornberry noted that the Charlotte County Airport Authority had raised \$6,000 for United Way of Charlotte County in the Aviation Gives Back Campaign.

Additional links:

[PGD Ranked Among Nation's Most Affordable Airports - Punta Gorda Airport](#)

[Allegiant Begins Nonstop Service to Chattanooga! - Punta Gorda Airport](#)

Commissioner Thornberry observed that the Legislative session is currently underway, and the Airport Authority is awaiting any new legislative actions. Commissioner Constance inquired about any new routes for Punta Gorda. Commissioner Thornberry stated that they'd met with Sun Country (which now has just one route to Minneapolis). Additionally, staff had participated in a "speed dating" event that allowed for meeting with other airlines.

B. [City of Punta Gorda](#)

Councilmember Polk stated that she would address some of her recent roadway concerns under the Member Comments portion of the meeting. She provided a City of Punta Gorda project update:

CITY OF PUNTA GORDA REPORT TO THE MPO BOARD

March 2025

The replacement of 7.25 miles of damaged seawalls continues within PGI and BSI. Overall, approximately 55 percent of the seawalls have been repaired as of March 2025. BSI's north and south sections are completed, and PGI has six zones with pending repairs to seawalls.

The construction of the Laishley Park Splash Pad is ongoing. Trench drains and recirculation piping are currently being installed. It is expected to reopen in mid-2025. Completion has been delayed due to hurricanes, DOH permitting, and contractor issues.

The Boca Grande drainage 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 continues to move forward. 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. The City continues to work toward completing the Environmental Record Review.

Hurricane Helene and Milton damage assessments and documentation for FEMA have been completed and submitted.

Hurricane repairs continue. Street sign repairs are 99% completed.

The City has assessed and developed the 2025 swale program, the contractor will begin work soon.

The city's pavement condition analysis and 5-year program is in progress. Pavement data has been gathered and is being post-processed.

The City's annual paving program was delayed due to hurricanes. This has been rescheduled for mid April. Back filling hurricane wash outs, and rebuilding rip rap walls in the waterfront parks continues.

Electric power has been restored in the city's event lawn area of Laishley Park.

The Gilchrist Park children's playground fence has been replaced, and the playground has been re-opened.

Loose portions of the damaged marina have been removed from the water and hauled for disposal. This work continues.

The NRCS Railroad Ditch and Tidal Creek and Emergency Watershed Protection project begins next week. This project is to clean and remove hurricane debris from 11,250 feet of the railroad drainage ditch, and 5,150 feet of tidal creek. Both drainage systems are vital drainage systems for the city.

C. Charlotte County

Commissioner Tiseo provided the County report on the following items:

Veterans Boulevard at Cochran Boulevard Intersection Improvements:

Latest Updates:

Lighted message boards will be on site two weeks prior to the start of construction notifying the motoring public for the upcoming work.

Construction is scheduled to start on May 19, 2025

Veterans Boulevard Intersection Improvements

Latest Updates:

- Veterans Boulevard @ Loveland Boulevard intersection. Final plans have been received. Charlotte County is preparing a priority list and securing funding.
- Veterans Boulevard @ Torrington Street intersection. Final plans have been received. Charlotte County is preparing a priority list and securing funding.
- Veterans Boulevard @ Harbor Boulevard intersection. Final plans have been received. Charlotte County is preparing a priority list and securing funding.
- Veterans Boulevard @ Yorkshire Street intersection. Final plans have been received. Charlotte County is preparing a priority list and securing funding.
- Veterans Boulevard @ Orlando Boulevard intersection. 90% plans have been reviewed by county staff. Comments have been returned to FTE for corrections.
- Veterans Boulevard @ Norman Street intersection. 60% plans have been reviewed by county staff. Comments have been returned to FTE for corrections.
- Veterans Boulevard @ Atwater Street intersection. 60% plans have been reviewed by county staff. Comments have been returned to FTE for corrections.

Construction Forecast in Year 2025/2026

Flamingo/Edgewater Widening:

Latest Updates:

- 95% of field survey work has been completed.
- Protected species and wetlands evaluations in process.
- 95% of geotechnical field work has been completed.
- 90% roadway and bridge plans for Ph.4 received and staff comments returned to Engineer. Currently working toward final design.
- 90% roadway and bridge plans for Ph.3 and Ph.5 are under review awaiting Charlotte County staff comments.
- 90% utility plans are in progress. For Ph.5.
- 85% Property acquisition in progress.
- Recently the county obtained the necessary SWFWMD permit.
- Coordination to resolve outside utility conflicts is ongoing.
- FDOT Lap project review is in progress for the SR776 intersection work
- Submitted and awaiting SWFWMD permitting for SR776.
- ACOE Agency permitting review in progress for Phase 3,4, and 5.

Design Development Forecast Spring 2025

Kings Highway Widening

Latest Updates:

- Consultant is currently working with the permitting agencies.
- Consultant is currently working with FPL on conflict matrix.
- 100% plans have been reviewed by county staff Comments have been sent back to Johnson Engineering for corrections.

Construction Forecast Year – Summer 2026

Sandhill Boulevard Widening

Project Description:

Replace the existing two-lane roadway on Sandhill Blvd from Kings Highway to Deep Creek Blvd, including intersection improvements at Capricorn Boulevard and Deep Creek Blvd.

Latest Updates:

Johnson Engineering is currently preparing a project concept Power Point presentation to be discussed at an upcoming commissioners meeting. The date has not been determined at this time.

30% construction plans will be due soon after the commissioners meeting.

**Design Development Forecast Completion Summer 2026.
Construction Forecast Completion Summer 2028.**

Peachland Boulevard at Harbor Boulevard Intersection Improvements

Project Description:

This project incorporates the design and construction of new turn lanes and traffic signal modifications at the intersection of Peachland Boulevard and Harbor Boulevard. New left and right turn lanes will be added along with signal modifications, sidewalks, and pedestrian crosswalk improvements.

Latest Updates:

- Design survey has started.
- 60% plans are due for review on Spring 2025.

Design Development Forecast Completion Fall 2025.

Commissioner Constance requested that Laks Gurram contact Robert Fakhri to obtain two sketches for all BCC and MPO Board Members: (1) Sandhill Blvd widening and (2) Peachland Blvd at Harbor Blvd.

9. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Report

Secretary Nandam noted that with the legislative session ongoing, FDOT had submitted budget requests to the Governor, and the House and Senate versions had been developed though they were far apart. He noted that many funding philosophies were involved, and in the next few weeks, the two bodies would come to a consensus in the legislative budget for submittal to the Governor. In 2023, the FDOT Secretary sent a rejection letter to the Federal government on carbon reduction funds, however, \$49.9 million in those funding dollars had already been spent. FDOT would be paying those funds back plus not accepting any additional carbon reduction funding going forward. Actions were based upon Department of Governmental Efficiency (DOGE) recommendations, and some projects may be deleted in the future. FDOT staff will notify Laks Gurram of these changes. He also congratulated Mr. Gurram on being hired as MPO Director. Secretary Nandam did not anticipate a big impact but noted that there will be some. He described how FDOT annually identifies funding levels for “off the top” programs that must be accomplished (such as rest stops and other maintenance projects). In July once revenues are known, FDOT determines additional expenditures that may be made.

Commissioner Constance appreciated Secretary Nandam’s sobering report. Commissioner Tiseo further inquired about carbon reduction funding. Secretary Nandam explained how Florida had received a total of \$320 Million from the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA) also known as the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL). In FY 22-23, \$49.9 Million was received, and those funds already had been spent. That amount would be repaid. Going forward, as the result of a disagreement in ideologies, Florida would not be accepting \$270 M for FY 24-27 in projects, which now must be adjusted to some other type of funding. Commissioner Tiseo requested FDOT’s timeline for receipt of revenue estimates. Secretary Nandam stated that they would not be available until August 2025.

Wayne Gaither gave a brief update on the traffic signal at the US 41 entrance to the Sunseeker Resort.

Next, Wayne Gaither reviewed the FDOT Led Discussion items:

FDOT Led Discussion

	FPID #	PROJECT DESCRIPTION
A.	N/A	<u>US 41 at Olean Boulevard</u> (Pam Barr/Wayne Gaither-FDOT/Robert Fakhri-Charlotte County) The project was completed by TransCore. Completion of shaft work will commence on April 21, 2025 and be completed by the end of May 2025.
B.	N/A	<u>US 41 at Edgewater Dr</u> (Pam Barr/Wayne Gaither-FDOT/Robert Fakhri-Charlotte County) The traffic signals are done by the County, and the work will be completed soon.
C.	446340-1	<u>SR 776 at Flamingo Boulevard</u> (Pam Barr/Wayne Gaither - FDOT/ Robert Fakhri -Charlotte County)

		Charlotte County is in ongoing discussion with the developer to the project's north. Meanwhile, the County is proceeding on the project's south end.
D.	446393-1	<u>SR 776 at Charlotte Sports Park (Pam Barr/Wayne Gaither – FDOT/ Robert Fakhri -Charlotte County)</u> Design is proceeding. Adjustments have been made at the MPO Board's request to include extra turn lanes in both directions. Right turn lanes are also included.
E.	N/A	<u>I-75 Possible New Interchange North of Kings Hwy Interchange (Pam Barr/Wayne Gaither-FDOT)</u> Wayne Gaither had provided a copy of the Stantec white paper to Commissioner Doherty, who had asked about the status of the project. Laks Gurram had also provided him with a document from FDOT's District Two staffer David Tyler. Commissioner Doherty stated that the white paper was very good. He realized that the primary deliverable (IJR - Interstate Justification Report) will be extensive and calls for the establishment of champions for the project. He imagined those champions would be primarily from Sarasota County. If a champion from Charlotte County had not yet been identified, Commissioner Doherty was willing to volunteer to represent Charlotte County in the discussions. He noted that Charlotte's problem is the Kings Hwy interchange. He believed it needs to show up in our MPO's LRTP and was not sure where the MPO is in the process. Commissioner Tiseo described how discussion was held at the Joint MPO Meeting with the Sarasota/Manatee MPO Board, and he assumed that staff was working to move it forward. Their champions to contact would be Sarasota County Commissioner Ron Cutsinger and representatives from the City of North Port. He was unaware of their coordination efforts. Laks Gurram noted that this agenda item has been brought up on numerous occasions, and the white paper has been distributed. The interchange will not be located in Charlotte County, and the goal is to coordinate with the Sarasota/Manatee MPO. Some model runs have been done. Staff doesn't want to lose track of the project and will continue to make certain it is on the list. Commissioner Doherty suggested that confirmation was needed to verify that this project is on the list for the Sarasota/Manatee MPO's LRTP, which can bring the plans to change from a Needs to a Cost Feasible project. Chair Constance stated that this a regional project that is just as needed as River Road. He recalled how at a joint meeting held years ago in Manatee County representatives from Port Manatee had supported the concept of the new interchange. Commissioner Doherty noted that the constrained area of Kings Hwy is in his district. He wished to see it in concrete and asked Secretary Nandam for his guidance. Secretary Nandam was not aware of any further conversation beyond the white paper. He agreed that a local champion should be identified. It would be 15 years more before the IJR should be directed. Commissioner Doherty stated that he would get with Hector Flores and Laks Gurram on the matter. Discussion followed on the potential interchange in the Cape

		<p>Coral area at Del Prado Blvd in Lee County, which Wayne Gaither said had been discussed for more than a decade and was noted in an MPO evacuation study as tying to I-75. Similar issues could be faced at both interchanges. Del Prado is in the Lee LRTP but is unfunded. Secretary Nandam observed that the challenge for them is to justify the need since Tucker's Grade has not/will not fail. Chair Constance stated that Charlotte is looking to improve connectivity between Burnt Store Rd and US 41 which could be impactful. Secretary Nandam noted that Lee County needs a Babcock Ranch connection to met up on the west side. Commissioner Tiseo observed that during an evacuation traffic should flow east (not onto I-75).</p>
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Joint Local and FDOT Discussion

Robert Fakhri provided updates on various projects (items A-G):

	FPID #	PROJECT DESCRIPTION
A.	434965-1 434965-2 434965-3 434965-4 434965-5	<p><u>Harbor View Road</u> Combined Funding Strategies (Wayne Gaither-FDOT/John Elias/Robert Fakhri-Charlotte County)</p> <p>Robert Fakhri stated that design and Right-of-Way (ROW) acquisition are moving forward.</p> <p><u>FDOT 12/05/2023 PUBLIC HEARING DOCUMENTS</u></p>
B.	446391-1	<p><u>US 41 from Kings Hwy to Peace River Bridge</u> Planning/Operational Improvements Study (Wayne Gaither-FDOT/John Elias/Robert Fakhri-Charlotte County)</p> <p>Staff was finalizing the scope and trying to get a consultant on board.</p>
C.	N/A	<p><u>Bermont Road (CR 74)</u> Safety Discussion (FDOT/John Elias/Robert Fakhri-Charlotte County)</p> <p>Wayne Gaither stated that he would find out the CR 74/SR 31 roundabout completion date.</p>
D.	436928-3	<p><u>Burnt Store Road – From Lee/Charlotte C/L to Wallaby Lane</u> (FDOT/John Elias/Robert Fakhri-Charlotte County)</p> <p>The County packet was 60% design/build.</p>
E.	N/A	<p><u>Burnt Store Road @ Home Depot/ US 41 @ Madrid Boulevard</u> Signal/Access Management</p> <p>This project is a City request for signal installation. A lack of County project funding continues.</p>
F.	N/A	<p><u>US 41 @ Rio Villa Drive/Baynard Drive</u> – Discussion</p>

		Wayne Gaither discussed FDOT's assessment of the intersection of US 41 at Aqui Esta Drive. He characterized the intersection as very constrained in the Achieva Credit Union area. Secretary Nandam noted that Aqui Esta is a City road. Commissioner Constance observed that perhaps a conversation was needed with that business given the two full entrances in front and back. Driveways and additional intersections make the area difficult to widen.
G.	N/A	<u>SR 776 @ Toledo Blade Intersection Discussion</u> The West Port Village developer is now addressing traffic flow. This work is in the early stages, and traffic impact statements are with the developer.

Commissioner Doherty asked for coordination with FDOT District One staff and Glades County Administrator Paul Carlyle to discuss Bermont Road (CR 74). Secretary Nandam indicated that FDOT is willing to converse with both Counties. However, he noted that part of the discussion must address what roadways the two counties would want to exchange for jurisdictional transfer (SR 776 had been mentioned in the past). Additionally, many improvements would be included for CR 74 with many associated costs. There would be the need to evaluate the roadway as part of the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS). Commissioner Doherty stated that he would reach out to County Administration to start the introductory conversation to ascertain Glades County's position. Commissioner Constance stated that it would be wonderful to start the conversation.

Commissioner Tiseo remarked to Councilmember Polk that the City may wish to annex the County section of Baynard Dr, since there is a portion in a doughnut hole between Rio Villa Drive and Aqui Esta Drive.

10. Consent Agenda:

- A. **Approval of Minutes: December 16, 2024, Regular MPO Board Meeting**
- B. **Approval of Minutes: – January 27, 2025 Joint Regional Charlotte County-Punta Gorda and Sarasota/Manatee MPO Board Meeting**
- C. **Approval of Minutes: February 14, 2025 Joint Regional Charlotte County-Punta Gorda and Lee County MPO Board Meeting**
- D. **Approval of Minutes: February 14, 2025 MPO Board Special Meeting**
- E. **Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC) Appointment**

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

11. 2024 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 has been reviewed and accurately reflect the results of the joint certification review meeting held on January 24, 2025. Based on the review and evaluation, the Florida Department of Transportation had no recommendations and/or corrective actions.

[Joint Certification - Part 2 - FDOT_includes MPO Accomplishment.pdf](#)

[Charlotte Joint Certification Statement.pdf](#)

Commissioner Tiseo made a motion to approve the 2024 FDOT/MPO Joint Certification, authorizing the MPO Board Chair to sign the FDOT/MPO Joint Certification Statement. Commissioner Doherty seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

11. A. Agenda Addendum: 2025 PAVEMENT AND BRIDGE (PM2) AND SYSTEM PERFORMANCE (PM3) TARGETS

Laks Gurram addressed the MPO Board regarding the 2025 Pavement and Bridge (PM2) and System Performance (PM3) Targets.

Federal law requires the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), metropolitan planning organizations (MPOs), and transit providers to establish and report targets for performance measures that assess road safety, bridge and pavement condition, system performance, transit asset management, and transit safety.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) established performance measures for: roadway safety, bridge and pavement condition, and system performance. MPOs may support the targets established by FDOT or establish their own targets for the MPO area.

In August 2024 FDOT adjusted PM 2 – Bridge & Pavement and PM 3 – System Performance Targets for 2025, effective October 1, 2024. FDOT revised three targets, requiring MPO Board adopt by March 30, 2025. The target revisions are included below:

Performance Measures	Adopted 2025 Targets	Updated 2025 Targets
PM2: Percent of NHS Bridges in Poor Condition (By Deck Area)	≤ 10.0%	≤ 5.0%
PM3: Percent of Person-Miles traveled on the Interstate that are reliable	≥ 70.0%	≥ 75.0%
PM3: Percent of Person-Miles traveled on the non-Interstate NHS that are reliable	≥ 50.0%	≥ 60.0%

Attachment: 1. [PM2 Bridge and Pavement and PM3 Systems Performance sheet](#)

Commissioner Doherty made a motion to adopt the PM2 and PM3 targets for submission to the FDOT and inclusion in the 2025 TIP. Commissioner Tiseo seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

12. Draft FY 2025/2026 – FY 2029/2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Federal and State legislation require MPOs to adopt a five-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 formally review the development of the TIP.

The Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO is scheduled to review and adopt the TIP at the May 19, 2025 MPO Board Meeting. Attachment 1 is the Draft Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO TIP for 2025/2026 – FY 2029/2030.

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 and their staffs were asked to review and comment on the Draft FY 2025/2026 through FY 2029/2030 Transportation Improvement Program.

Attachment

Another snapshot would be done on April 10, 2025. As Secretary Nandam cautioned, there may be bad news regarding lost projects. Section 4 is where the majority of the projects are included.

Commissioner Constance inquired about Harbor View Rd construction timelines. Laks Gurram indicated that it would be in the current TIP. The revised costs would be discussed in the next agenda item.

13. 2025 Draft Project Priorities

Laks Gurram discussed the 2025 Draft Project Priorities list. Florida Statute 339.175(8) requires every MPO in the state to develop an annual List of Project Priorities (LOPP) consistent with the goals, objectives, and policies of the MPO's adopted 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan. The LOPP is used in developing the next draft FDOT Five-Year Work Program and Charlotte County-Punta Gorda Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

A preliminary list of project priorities along with project applications will be submitted to FDOT District One by March 31, 2025. The project priorities must be approved by the MPO Board and submitted to FDOT by June 30, 2025.

The MPO received candidate projects from Charlotte County. These projects include Highway, Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP), Congestion Mitigation/Transportation System Management (CM/TSM), and Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) projects.

MPO Staff provided an overview of the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 List of Project Priorities. The final list will be presented at the May 19, 2025 MPO Board meeting for adoption. The prioritized list is then transmitted to FDOT for consideration of funding during development of the FY 2027 through FY 2031 Draft Tentative Work Program.

Below is the Draft LOPP, MPO Staff anticipates submittal of a project priority application in 2025:

- 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 – (CST)*
- SR 776 @ Charlotte Sports Park - Turn Lanes (CST)*
- SR 776 @ Flamingo Blvd – (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 – on SR 776 from Gulf Cove to US 41 (CST)
- SUN Trail – on SR 776 from Gulf Cove to Myakka Forest (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 – Differed

* Projects programmed through construction will be removed from the 2025 LOPP.

MPO Board Members and their staffs were asked to review and comment on the 2025 Project Priorities (Highway, TAP, CM/TSM and TRIP) for the upcoming FDOT Draft Tentative Work Program Cycle FY 2027 to FY 2031.

Laks Gurram provided details regarding the two Harbor View Road segments. He also discussed the next LRTP (2055) funding. He noted that the Taylor Road project had been removed since it had been a multi-use trail project and was not feasible due to deep swales along the roadway. City projects were also noted. Commissioner Tiseo asked who requested pulling the Taylor Road project. FDOT staff indicated the deep swales are the issue. Commissioner Constance observed this was disappointing, since it is a very dangerous roadway, characterizing it as being as unsafe as Harbor View Road.

Laks Gurram stated that the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan projects are now part of the Project Priorities list and gave the example of #11 Cooper Street which was funded as a multi-use project. He had also received the joint TRIP list and noted that under item #10, the Sarasota/Manatee MPO Board had deleted Honore Avenue from it.

Attachments:

[2024 Project Priorities – Approved by MPO Board May 2024](#)

[2025 DRAFT Project Priorities](#)

[2025 TRIP Regional Project Priorities](#)

15. SR 776 Safety Improvements - Presentation

Wayne Gaither introduced Walter Breuggeman who gave the SR 776 Safety Improvements presentation. FDOT held a Public Meeting on Feb 13, 2025 regarding these improvements. He reviewed the schedule and construction costs. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District One, is proposing improvements at multiple intersections along State Road (SR) 776 in Charlotte County. The purpose of the improvements is to promote safety, enhance traffic flow and reduce crashes. The proposed improvements include converting existing full median openings to two-way directional median openings (also known as R-cuts) at seven (7) intersections along the corridor:

- Oceanspray Boulevard
- Sea Mist Drive/Shalimar Street
- David Boulevard
- Hollis Avenue
- Cornelius Boulevard
- Biscayne Drive
- Collingswood Boulevard

Potential median modifications are also being considered at three (3) additional intersections:

- Mayport Street/Biggs Street
- Regina Drive/Roberta Drive
- Port Charlotte Town Center west entrance

Attachment: [SR 776 Safety Improvements](#)

Walter Breuggeman stated that the improvements enhance safety at minimum expense. Commissioner Doherty had seen the same types of efforts made on US 41 years ago. He predicted that some businesses would complain. Issues in the area of Cochran Blvd to Midway Blvd were discussed. Drivers do U-turns at Midway Blvd in conflict with Midway drivers who are making right turns. The question arises in this scenario about the problem being shifted to a signalized intersection located down the road. Secretary Nandam commented on right turn vs U-turn conflicts, noting that it becomes a conflict when right turning drivers do not stop. He described it as an enforcement and driver behavior issue. He observed that restricting right turns on red is not appreciated. Commissioner Constance stated that drivers are making incredibly wide turns. Commissioner Tiseo had also observed this situation, noting that tight turns are difficult when operating a large truck. Walter Breuggeman commented that many U-turns are located at non-signalized intersections at adjacent locations. The situation could be monitored and addressed including the removal of temporary curbing. Another option is a sign stating right turn must yield to U-turns at the intersection.

16. Emergency Vehicle Preemption Devices Installation - Presentation

Laks Gurram introduced Richard Lisenbee, Charlotte County Traffic Management Center Manager. Mr. Lisenbee stated that it bothers him that Charlotte County doesn't have emergency vehicle preemption devices to control traffic. He hopes it will be reconsidered at this time,

especially given how far the products have come recently. The two contractors introduced themselves (Jake Kistel of TCS and Charlie Witkowski of Miovision) and gave the presentation.

Contractor Statement: In 2005, Miovision set out to create a Video Collection device and accompanying software that would revolutionize the way traffic data was collected. In 1968 Opticom was born from the need for traffic signal priority. In mid-2023 these two companies came together on a mission to make streets safer for all road users, while giving cities the ability to better serve and protect their citizens. Opticom has been the leading brand when it comes to priority at intersections, and we have over 180,000 connected vehicles and intersections, Opticom is installed in the 48 of the largest US cities, and we have over 5,000 cities worldwide who depend on this technology

Attachment: [PowerPoint Presentation](#)

MPO Board Members questioned the contractors regarding the costs and specifics of the product function. Rich Lisenbee concurred with Commissioner Tiseo that product issues can sometimes occur when companies close. However, he noted that since the criteria and testing is subject to rigorous FDOT standards, it is usually reliable and continues to be supported.

A great deal of discussion followed regarding: product pricing, identification of key intersections, required licensing fees and the inability to hack the system. Commissioner Doherty stated that County Administration should conduct an analysis of all the details and bring the discussion back to the BCC with a recommendation. He believed the concept had merit. The contractors noted that the important thing is to get first responders home safely by utilizing emergency vehicle preemption (EVP). Commissioner Tiseo stated that the BCC would need a hard number with a schedule of charges. He also believed the concept had merit and warranted a look. Secretary Nandam stated that FDOT has partnered with other jurisdictions on EVP and provided some resources.

18. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

19. Staff Comments

Bekie Leslie distributed the staff activities report to the MPO Board Members. Laks Gurram noted that Councilmember Polk will be attending the MPOAC weekend Institute for elected officials - in Tampa on May 16-17, 2025. He also described the draft joint MPO interlocal agreement with Heartland TPO is under review. Kimlyn Walker County Attorney had reviewed the draft document, and it will be provided to the MPO Board soon. He stated that the MPO is now taking nominations for the Peggy Walters Citizens Mobility Award.

Laks Gurram echoed Secretary Nandam's earlier remarks on the likelihood of the MPO losing carbon reduction funded projects. He stated that he will provide the draft tentative list revisions to the MPO Board Members. Commissioner Constance requested that Laks Gurram email a list of the projects being eliminated once he identifies them.

Laks Gurram thanked the MPO Board Members for their confidence and support in his recent MPO Board Director appointment.

20. Member Comments

Commissioner Tiseo observed that the Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC)'s situation seems to be going the way of the Regional Planning Councils (RPCs). He is not attending the MPOAC meeting in Tallahassee given the distance and lack of benefit in attending in person. Typically, the meetings that include elected officials are held in Orlando. If there is an in-person quorum, MPOAC Secretary Lisa Stone tells him he may participate virtually. Much of the meeting is informational in nature. If another MPO Board Member wants to go to Tallahassee in his place, that member is welcome to do it. He will only participate virtually.

Secretary Nandam stated that FDOT staff had received similar feedback. Recently the MPOAC Director had resigned. FDOT will take a more active role in the organization going forward. He has heard that the value comes from when the MPO Board staff directors participate together. Commissioner Tiseo noted that a virtual quorum would be desirable. He was not finding value in just attending presentations. Commissioner Doherty noted that the Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (LCB) had faced similar quorum issues due to State requirements, and LCB planning staff polls LCB Members in advance in order to obtain an in-person quorum. Commissioner Tiseo commented that most MPOAC meetings are in Orlando, and staff level interaction is most valuable (rather than elected officials' in person attendance).

Councilmember Polk remarked on several issues in the City of Punta Gorda (having related them to LRTP Consultant William Roll earlier in the day). These included the lack of Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) spaces on the area of Marion Avenue and Sullivan Street. She noted that this issue needs to be addressed especially for the elderly and those in need of a safe drop-off point. Crosswalks were also needed. Additionally, crossing Retta Esplanade at US 41 was also very dangerous. A large portion of the Harbor Walk is non-existent in the area where the Punta Gorda Hotel had been located. Councilmember Polk also noted that at the end of Harbor View Road in the right turn lane area, "no turns on red" signage is missing (*in actuality, the allowing of right-turn on red at that location had been approved prior to her service on the MPO Board*). She also discussed the dangerous intersection at Piper Road and Henry Street where she had witnessed several serious crashes, where drivers were cutting through four lanes of traffic. She also described the area of US 17 where left turns were required to head north on I-75 characterizing it as backed up with many large trucks. She also commented that Harbor View Road was very dangerous for bicyclists and pedestrians, especially since there were many residential areas along the roadway all the way until the Melbourne Avenue portion. Eighteen-wheeler trucks were flying down it.

Commissioner Constance stated that it was important to get Councilmember Polk's concerns on the record.

Commissioner Thornberry commented on the traffic situation on southbound Harbor View Rd at the intersection with US 41. He characterized it as very dangerous when pulling up to the light.

Commissioner Doherty stated that he was glad to be back on the MPO.

Chair Constance appreciated everyone staying for the entirety of the meeting.

21. Adjournment

The next MPO Board Meeting will be a regular MPO Board Meeting on Monday, May 19, 2025.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:26 pm.