



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

**MINUTES OF THE MPO BOARD MEETING
MONDAY, MAY 19, 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

Wayne Gaither, FDOT Southwest Area Office, alternate for L.K. Nandam, FDOT District One Secretary

STAFF PRESENT

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

OTHERS PRESENT IN-PERSON

Michelle Peronto, FDOT District One
Jason Heironimus, FDOT
Peyton McLeod, FDOT/PGA
Pam Barr, FDOT
Commissioner Shan Swelland, Charlotte County Airport Authority
Jill Hartman, CAC Vice Chair
Richard Russell, CAC
Richard Kirchhoff, CAC

Lauri Rossi, BPAC Chair
Robert Fakhri, Charlotte County Public Works, TAC Chair
John Elias, Charlotte County Public Works
Ben Bailey, Charlotte County Community Development
William Roll, Kimley Horn & Associates
Elaine Allen-Emrich, Charlotte Sun
Tammy Powell
Lawrence Powell
Steven Powell
Jesse Horton
Robert Wight
Kaylyn Lee
Ken Kubik
Mike Jabers
Tracy Brubeck
Christina Brinkman
Roger Frisella
Cathy Kruse
Michael Flowers
Alex Jusko
Claudia Santiago
Jasmine Santiago
M Scollot
Dawn Barnhart
Pat Labe
Jessica Cline

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 – Pastor Jim Chandler – Englewood Christian Church

Pastor Jim Chandler from Englewood Christian Church was unavailable. Commissioner Thornberry 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 to Agenda Item #10 FDOT Report: Addition of Crosswalks and ADA projects within the City of Punta Gorda

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

5. Public Comments on Agenda Items

All comments received were regarding Agenda Item #12 - 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Needs Assessment – Update.

Tammy Powell, a realtor, expressed her concern regarding the LRTP item impacting the Ranchettes in South County. She emphasized that the neighborhood does not need to have a roadway from Jones Loop Road down to Palangos Drive in Punta Gorda. The improved driving time does not warrant the costs of taking more than twenty homes to achieve it. The proposed loop would impact many residential, business and farming interests. She noted that more of those individuals would have attended the meeting had they known they could speak. There were many questions regarding the plan. These citizens want to voice their opposition.

Christina Brinkman, a resident of Acorn Blvd in the Ranchettes, spoke on her opposition to the LRTP proposal regarding Acorn Blvd. She noted that it would impact her home, family and all that she had worked for as a lifelong resident with a long-term family business. She felt that the proposal was not growth, but rather an intrusion. She reasoned that Acorn Blvd is not a public roadway. Ranchette roads are now private, and maintenance is up to the residents. Even neighbors' farm animals would all be impacted. It is a rural neighborhood with private roads, where her daughter may safely cross the street to visit other children. She stated that neighbors were never notified of the proposal, and she found out about it from someone who took a class. She requested that (1) Acorn Blvd be removed from the priority list, (2) the legal status of Acorn Blvd as a private road per BCC Resolution 2021-021 be respected, and (3) landowners be notified directly for any future study or proposed use of private land.

Cathy Cruz spoke next on the same issue. She is a retired educator and fire official who loves living in the Ranchettes. She agreed with the two earlier speakers. She also was looking through the eyes of an elected official and described having only known of the proposal for three days. She considered it to be a public safety issue that could be handled smarter. She recommended making the issue beneficial for all. She asked the MPO Board Members to please keep their minds open to a solution.

Michael Flowers spoke as a lifelong resident. He recommended going through the road closer to Cecil Webb preserve to make the connection.

Kaylyn Lee lives on Acorn Blvd. She opposes the LRTP proposal. She recommended use of Cecil Webb property for the road connection. She noted that the citizens really do not want to see the proposal implemented.

Commissioner Constance appreciated residents filling out comment cards that were available in the back of the meeting room.

6. Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval of Minutes: March 31, 2025 Regular MPO Board Meeting**
- B. MPO Board Resolution Authorizing FY 2024/2025 Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Planning Grant Agreement**

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

7. PUBLIC MEETING: Final FY 2025/2026 – FY 2029/2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Federal and state legislation mandate that Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) adopt a five-year Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). This program serves as a comprehensive, multi-year plan that outlines federal and state capital improvements for transportation. It ensures that projects are consistent with the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), which typically has a 20-year planning horizon. The development of the TIP undergoes formal review by both the Technical Advisory Committee and the Citizens' Advisory Committee, ensuring that technical expertise and public input are incorporated.

The interlocal agreement between the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO, Sarasota/Manatee MPO, and Lee County MPO is a collaborative effort to streamline regional planning projects. It ensures that each MPO identifies regional priorities and incorporates them into the Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs). This agreement formalizes the process and sets timeframes for developing these regional projects.

The priorities adopted last year are included in the TIP, aligning with the agreement's requirements. This approach fosters coordination and consistency across the region, addressing transportation needs effectively.

It was requested that the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO Board Members review and adopt the Final Draft TIP for 2025/2026 – FY 2029/2030. Attachment 1 was the Draft – Final TIP:

[Final Draft 2025/2026 – FY 2029/2030 Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO Transportation Improvement Program \(TIP\)](#)

Laks Gurram briefly discussed the TIP. It was now consistent with the most recent FDOT snapshot. The only change was to how the funding of the former Carbon Reduction projects would be accomplished.

Commissioner Constance noted for those present that this agenda item was not pertinent to the Ranchettes discussion.

Commissioner Constance opened the Public Meeting.

There were no public comments received.

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

Commissioner Tiseo made a motion to approve the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO's Final Draft FY 2025/2026 through FY 2029/2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Commissioner Thornberry seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously in a roll call vote.

8. Chairs' Reports:

A. MPO Board Chair's Report:

MPO Chair Constance wished to add a discussion item to the FDOT report. He wanted clarification of his concern at Jones Loop Road resurfacing. Wayne Gaither noted that he would fast track the issue.

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

CAC Vice Chair Jill Hartman, who was filling in for CAC Chair Dianne Quilty, reviewed the highlights of the April 23, 2025 CAC Meeting. All actionable items on the agenda were recommended unanimously by the CAC for MPO Board approval. CAC topics of discussion were: (1) the possibility of traffic signals or other safety measures for both directions of US 41 at Retta Esplanade, (2) an FDOT Advanced Air Mobility presentation and the many questions that arose, (3) an emergency vehicle preemptive device presentation from Opticom (which the MPO Board had already received), (4) a Project Priorities discussion, (5) the draft MPO interlocal agreement with the Heartland Regional TPO for the six interior counties, (6) a 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) presentation that included Veterans Blvd and Kings Hwy flowing ramps at I-75.

Under staff comments, Charlotte County Transit had reported providing 300+ trips per day and commencing a new Beach Shuttle. Also discussed were concerns about increased traffic at the proposed Buc-ee's site along I-75 at the Peace River (including Harbor View Road impacts there). Also discussed were new SR 776 right turn only projects.

Commissioner Tiseo referenced the CAC Minutes mention of the 2050 LRTP Update. Laks Gurram responded that any item that comes to the MPO Board typically gets reviewed by various MPO committees in advance. Commissioner Tiseo noted that the CAC Minutes describe public outreach efforts including three public workshops, and he asked how the MPO advertises them to the public. Laks Gurram described how the MPO utilizes various Public Participation strategies (outlined in the MPO's Public Participation Plan). These include the use of various local government websites, local newspapers and all libraries to notify events such as these public workshops. Commissioner Tiseo noted that citizens could provide their input on a survey at the MPO website www.ccpgmpo.gov. Laks Gurram stressed that meetings are advertised well in advance. Commissioner Tiseo wanted to make certain that the public gets the word on topics like the Ranchettes issue. Laks Gurram stated that there will be a second round of LRTP public workshops held on May 27-28, 2025. The South County one is scheduled for May 28, 2025 at the Charlotte Harbor Events Center from 4-6 p.m. Additionally, the LRTP will be discussed at the next MPO Board meeting on August 4, 2025, as well as at upcoming TAC and CAC meetings. Public could attend the committee meetings and voice their opinions. Commissioner Tiseo noted that LRTP concerns may be discussed all the way through the process. Councilmember Polk mentioned that at her recent MPOAC training, the issues of the difficulty of getting the word out on transportation projects had been discussed and unique ways to accomplish this were noted.

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

TAC Chair Robert Fakhri reviewed the highlights of the April 23, 2025 TAC Meeting. All actionable items on the agenda were recommended unanimously by the TAC for MPO Board

approval. These items were similar items to the CAC items. It was noted that Charlotte County was not adversely impacted by the Carbon Reduction removals, because of alternative funding.

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

BPAC Chair Lauri Rossi reviewed the highlights of the April 24, 2025 BPAC Meeting. All actionable items on the agenda were recommended unanimously by the BPAC for MPO Board approval (as with the TAC and CAC). One additional LRTP comment centered on lane repurposing on Marion Avenue. BPAC Members asked that it be revisited, and it was not a widening, but rather a reduction. BPAC Members were also excited that CC Transit will be accommodating bikes on the buses. They had also suggested that the Beach Shuttle service start earlier in the day.

Commissioner Tiseo asked if there were any openings currently on any MPO committees. Laks Gurram noted that there were no openings other than on the Transportation Disadvantaged Local Coordinating Board (LCB). Commissioner Tiseo noted that the MPO is always looking for citizen volunteers. Laks Gurram stated that staff has been lucky recently in filling vacancies, and anyone from the public may attend these meetings as well. Those committee meetings are the first opportunity to discuss topics and provide public comment.

9. Local Government Reports:

A. Charlotte County Airport Authority

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

From: TJ Thornberry

Subject: RE: MPO Board Airport Report

Two recent legislative updates

Two recent legislative updates could impact airports in Florida, though they may not have any direct relevance to the MPO. The first is a bill passed by the Florida Senate on April 3, 2025, which bans weather modification and geo-engineering activities. It requires publicly owned airports like PGD to report any known weather modification activities or equipment at their facilities, potentially adding operational oversight responsibilities. More details are available here:

<https://www.newsweek.com/florida-passes-bill-ban-weather-modification-2066673>

The second development involves a proposed tax package that would repeal the aviation fuel tax, a critical funding source for the state's Aviation Grant Program. This could affect airport infrastructure projects across Florida, including PGD's ongoing development initiatives, such as our terminal expansion. Additional information can be found here:

<https://keysweekly.com/42/bills-targeting-tourism-dollars-for-property-tax-relief-clear-florida-house/>

I attached the link below for the latest minutes for reference on CCAA business. The April minutes are not yet available.

[Signed-Meeting-Minutes-07a-Meeting-Minutes-from-02-20-2025.pdf](#)

Commissioner Constance described safety concerns for both the intersection of Airport Road/Piper Road and the intersection of Henry Street/Piper Road. He asked if there was any

interest in utilizing roundabouts at these locations to improve functionality. John Elias stated that in the past, a signal had been considered at each location, but not a roundabout.

Commissioner Constance indicated that staff may wish to consider utilizing roundabouts. John Elias stated that the cost of property for Right-of-Way (ROW) would be his only concern.

B. City of Punta Gorda

Councilmember Polk provided a City of Punta Gorda project update in advance:

CITY OF PUNTA GORDA REPORT TO THE MPO BOARD MAY 2025

The City Council is considering options for traffic calming within the city including W. Marion Avenue (West of 41) and W. Retta Esplanade at our May 21st City Council meeting.

The 2024 Annual Paving program was delayed by last year's hurricanes until last month. The work will be completed by the end of this week.

The 2025 Annual swale program is set to begin this week.

The City anticipates the completion of the citywide paving assessment of asphalt streets by the end of the month.

The City staff is working in coordination with state contractor to have vessels removed from the marina starting later this month.

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.

Commissioner Constance questioned Councilmember Polk regarding the City's traffic calming concerns. Councilmember Polk described the extremely dangerous situation at Retta Esplanade and US 41 where flashing lights may help improve safety.

C. Charlotte County

Commissioner Tiseo provided the County report in advance 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

Commissioner Tiseo asked if the project was still on schedule. John Elias reported that it was underway with preliminary work begun last week. He confirmed to Commissioner Tiseo that the projects should take approximately six months. For the sake of the public, good alternate east-west routes to use during the project were Peachland Blvd, Quesada Avenue and Midway Blvd. Commissioner Constance was relieved to know that completion should occur by the end of November before tourist season. Jeff Keyser is the project manager.

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

Commissioner Tiseo asked if there are still stormwater issues with these improvements. John Elias responded and noted that there will be some R-cuts installed later.

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 PowerPoint presentation to be discussed at an upcoming BCC Meeting. The date has not been determined at this time. 30% construction plans will be due soon after the BCC 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.

10. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Report

Wayne Gaither brought up two items:

- LK Nandam was unable to attend the meeting due to other commitments. Commissioner Constance gave the news about Secretary Nandam's departure from FDOT. He praised his twenty years of dedicated FDOT service. He characterized Secretary Nandam as incredibly intelligent. Although Commissioner Constance felt angst at learning of his FDOT departure, he understood the many challenges that Secretary Nandam had faced. He praised the fact that Secretary Nandam never gave a "no" answer, instead saying "Let me look into it." Commissioner Constance did not know how FDOT will replace him, recalling how Secretary Nandam had gotten FDOT through COVID and had chaired M-CORES. He stated that it was important to highlight his exceptional work.
- The State Legislature is still working on the state budget. The TIP is still required. There is still a sizeable discrepancy between the House and the Senate versions of the budget. Commissioner Tiseo observed that with so much uncertainty as hurricane season approaches and in light of last year's hurricane damage, the State leaves local governments in a bad place.

Pam Barr reviewed the FDOT Led Discussion items with assistance from John Elias:

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) Shaft work is being completed by TransCore’s subvendor with expected finish date of June 2025. Commissioner Constance noted for the public that the project deals with “right on red” turning.
B.	N/A	<u>US 41 at Edgewater Dr</u> (Pam Barr/Wayne Gaither-FDOT/Robert Fakhri-Charlotte County) This project has been completed and will be removed from the list.
C.	446340-1	<u>SR 776 at Flamingo Boulevard</u> (Pam Barr/Wayne Gaither - FDOT/ Robert Fakhri -Charlotte County) John Elias stated that 10% design was being finalized and utility permits were being obtained. Commissioner Constance noted that the northern side of Flamingo had been blown open on the developer’s section, so the County’s south end needed to keep pace.
D.	446393-1	<u>SR 776 at Charlotte Sports Park</u> (Pam Barr/Wayne Gaither – FDOT/ Robert Fakhri -Charlotte County) Design is beginning. FDOT Construction Engineering and Inspection (CEI) had provided figures. Commissioner Constance inquired if this project was just for the eastbound section or rather for both directions. John Elias confirmed that the work was for both directions. Commissioner Tiseo recommended that an overlay slide for the public be provided as in the past, since it helps to clarify the discussion for the public.
E.	N/A	<u>I-75 Possible New Interchange North of Kings Hwy Interchange</u> (Pam Barr/Wayne Gaither-FDOT) Pam Barr reported no change with this project. Commissioner Doherty stated that he had news regarding recent local discussions that would be reviewed under the LRTP item (Agenda #12).

Chair’s request: An additional item was discussed regarding FDOT resurfacing under I-75 and a limited section of ROW. Wayne Gaither noted that the small segment had fallen through the cracks. He stated that FDOT was addressing the issue at Jones Loop Road and other I-75 interchanges. A supplemental agreement was being developed. However, it might be pushed out depending on the severity of the repairs. It definitely would be completed before the end of the calendar year.

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 Combined Funding Strategies</u> (Wayne Gaither-FDOT/John Elias/Robert Fakhri-Charlotte County)</p> <p>John Elias discussed Harbor View Road Combined Funding Strategies. Utility work was underway with high level meetings with FDOT held monthly. Completion of Phase 1 ROW acquisition was expected by the Summer of 2026. Construction will be done through a LAP agreement. There was not as much information available on Phase 2.</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 Planning/Operational Improvements Study</u> (Wayne Gaither-FDOT/John Elias/Robert Fakhri-Charlotte County)</p> <p>John Elias stated that staff was working with FDOT with identifying the scope and finalizing the LAP. Commissioner Constance noted that the southbound US 41 left turn at Melbourne Street was very dangerous. John Elias described how the County and FDOT were currently undertaking the removal of vegetation to open up sight lines between the bridges with resulting traffic delays. Commissioner Tiseo asked about the traffic signals at Sunseeker. Robert Fakhri described the fiber and foundation. June 2, 2025 was on the schedule for the mastarm installation. It was hoped this would align well with the study.</p>
C.	N/A	<p><u>Bermont Road (CR 74) Safety Discussion</u> (FDOT/John Elias/Robert Fakhri-Charlotte County)</p> <p>John Elias had nothing new to report but the item would stay on the agenda. Commissioner Tiseo suggested in jest that with Secretary Nandam's departure, perhaps the MPO should try its luck again at four laning this roadway with turnover to the State. Wayne Gaither noted that the east-west connection stays on FDOT's radar for SIS consideration. Commissioner Constance asked if Glades County would be receiving any money for repair (for its portion east of SR 31). Wayne Gaither stated that FDOT has been in contact with Glades County (CR 74), and they have a financial plan that includes basically resurfacing, since it is not a state road.</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>Design is 60% complete. The northern half of Vincent was now paved in Charlotte County. Lee County is working through a funding mechanism such as an MSTU (as confirmed by Commissioner Doherty). Commissioner Tiseo noted that he had teased Lee County officials at a recent meeting about the Charlotte portion already being</p>

		paved. There have been delays in getting the roadway accepted by Lee County. Once that occurs, the MSTU can be created. John Elias spoke further, emphasizing that he believed all parties were so close to solving the issue.
E.	N/A	<u>Burnt Store Road @ Home Depot/ US 41 @ Madrid Blvd Signal/Access Management</u> John Elias had no update on this project which is a City request for signal installation. A lack of County project funding continues. It is far down the County's priority list.
F.	N/A	<u>US 41 @ Rio Villa Drive/Baynard Drive – Discussion</u> Wayne Gaither had nothing new to report. FDOT had done some initial analysis (with data from 2018-2025). There had been no huge impact at Aqui Esta, no huge shift in travel patterns (only some fluctuating increases and decreases). Currently, traffic on Rio Villa Drive must turn right and then, do a u-turn to head north. FDOT wanted to reduce the number of potential contact points which would reduce the number and severity of accidents. Commissioner Tiseo asked Councilmember Polk about the possibility of the City taking possession of Baynard Drive. Councilmember Polk stated that she would have to poll the other City Councilmembers on this issue. Commissioner Thornberry stated that due to his construction business in the area, he sees traffic flowing to the Aqui Esta Drive with its signal rather than use the turn around. Wayne Gaither stated that he would provide Laks Gurram with the requested data to distribute to the MPO Board Members.
G.	N/A	<u>SR 776 @ Toledo Blade Intersection Discussion</u> John Elias was working with the West Port Village developer. Commissioner Constance would appreciate some preliminary schematics.

Added discussion item: City of Punta Gorda Projects - Crosswalks and ADA Projects

Laks Gurram had discussed the issue at a one-on-one briefing with Councilmember Polk. The request was that these projects be added to US 17 and US 41. Wayne Gaither was happy to schedule time with City and their staff and recommended that they reach out to him. Councilmember Polk described how unsafe the Punta Gorda downtown was for customers due to a lack of safe ADA parking spaces there. Commissioner Constance noted that site maps would be helpful when developed.

11. Final 2025 Draft Project Priorities

Laks Gurram discussed the 2025 Draft Project Priorities list by category. All projects were received from Charlotte County/none from the City of Punta Gorda.

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

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.

The Draft 2025 Project Priorities presented today reflects the changes that were proposed since the April 23, 2025 TAC/CAC & the April 24, 2025 BPAC Meeting. The final draft provided today includes the project recommendations from the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan that was adopted by the MPO Board on December 16, 2024. The Final Draft LOPP applications received from member entities are listed below. The project priorities must be approved by the MPO Board and submitted to FDOT by June 30, 2025.

▪ Harbor View Road from Melbourne St to Date Street – Road Widening (ROW& CEI)	▪ Charlotte County - Emergency Preemption Devices
▪ Harbor View Road from Date Street to I-75 – Road Widening (ROW & CST)	▪ Veterans Blvd @ Atwater St Intersection Improvements (CST, CEI)
▪ SR 776 at Biscayne Drive – Design and Construction Turn lanes and Signal (PE&CST)	▪ Burnt Store Rd from Lee County line to Wallaby Lane (ROW, CST, CEI)
▪ SR 776 @ Charlotte Sports Park - Turn Lanes (CEI)	▪ US 41 MURT Bridge at S. Alligator Creek – (CST)

Commissioner Constance inquired about the removal of Taylor Road construction funds. Laks Gurram described the deep swales that would not work with a trail project. Commissioner Constance noted that it was still an unsafe situation. He felt a better solution was needed. John Elias described how this was standalone Multiuse trail project funded by FDOT County is considering as a future road widening project to four lanes which includes sidewalks. Commissioner Constance noted that this likely would not happen for a few years. Commissioner Tiseo understood that it was not appropriate to keep the project on this list and requested its placement on the Taylor Road expansion project list. Laks Gurram noted that it will be on the radar for future consideration. Staff will adjust the list accordingly moving Taylor Road from the Trails to the Highway portion.

Also discussed were the Comprehensive Safety Action Plan projects and the County's only Freight Project.

Upon request, Laks Gurram discussed the joint TRIP list rotation process with the Sarasota/Manatee MPO. Commissioner Constance requested a list showing the comparison of funding for the last ten years.

Attachments:

1. [2024 Project Priorities](#) – Approved by MPO Board May 2024
2. [2025 DRAFT Project Priorities](#)

3. [2025 TRIP Regional Project Priorities](#)

Commissioner Tiseo made a motion to approve the final 2025 Project Priorities (Highway, TAP, CM/TSM and TRIP) for the upcoming FDOT Draft Tentative Work Program Cycle FY 2027 to FY 2031. Commissioner Doherty seconded the motion. It was approved unanimously in a roll call vote.

12. 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Needs Assessment - Update

Laks Gurram described how the current LRTP builds upon the previous LRTP as a starting point. Then, he introduced William Roll, the LRTP consultant, who gave a presentation.

Commissioner Constance asked about the US 17 to Jones Loop Road connection. Logistically, he requested that the Consultant please take into account the residents' concerns. This was because Acorn Blvd was not an accepted roadway, there was no County ownership, and the proposal was giving the community angst. William Roll stated that he understands the situation.

The Draft 2050 Needs Assessment includes input from the public and various stakeholders from the County. Staff received input from three public workshops held on February 10, 11, and 12, 2025 to gather feedback from more than 50 participants to help shape the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). Additionally, on April 7, 2025, MPO staff and the MPO's consultant hosted a Consensus Building Workshop with over 34 stakeholders, aiming to build consensus on key issues.

Additional outreach activities include a short survey and an interactive mapping exercise available on the MPO's website at www.ccpmpo.gov. These are designed to gather further community input on the transportation network. MPO staff and the Consultant will meet with the Steering Committee to review the Needs Assessment and provide comments to support development of the Draft Cost Feasible Plan. The Draft Needs Assessment projects that are presented today includes input from TAC/CAC and BPAC members.

Attachments:

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

Commissioner Constance stated that Winchester Blvd and River Road are important pieces that should still be in the plan. \$40 Million in Charlotte County funding was used for Charlotte's evacuation purposes. William Roll stated that it would be most appropriate to show a blended map across County lanes. Commissioner Tiseo asked why the 4 laning of Gasparilla Road is being removed. He believed it was warranted at one time, but the public had wanted it removed. John Elias gave his recollection. Sales tax money was involved. Commissioner Constance recalled there were economic downturns involved. The BCC listened to the outcry and removed it. Commissioner Tiseo raised concerns regarding the importance of the four laning, since hundreds of platted lots were present that had yet to be built upon (the Meadows and the Villas). Commissioner Constance observed that Shaun Cullinan and then, Public Works could review the issue. Commissioner Tiseo recommended perhaps extending Gasparilla Road to the platted lot

area. William Roll noted that the plan only looks as far as 2050, and there are other competing roadways. It is not as vital for hurricane evacuation Commissioner Tiseo asked if metro forecasting numbers had been utilized. They are very granular and revised every six months. Commissioner Doherty referenced hurricane evacuation and the election of 2012, when the uproar over widening SR 775 forced a change to SR 771 instead. It will take a long time to get River Road completed, and there is the need to consider other roadways.

William Roll has conducted testing with FDOT's travel demand forecasting software regarding access to I-75 both at Veterans Blvd and Kings Hwy. He was proposing a collective distributor system. If a driver was heading north on I-75, the driver would exit on a ramp. It takes all the traffic turbulence pulling it off onto a separate set of roadways. It would involve physically severing Veterans Blvd. Although the potential Yorkshire Street/Raintree Blvd interchange is more cost effective, Charlotte County governmental interests have no control over it with its Sarasota County location. The LRTP will include a request that FDOT does a review. It is a concept that is being tested. Commissioner Tiseo wanted to see what the traffic movements would be in William Roll's proposal. William Roll indicated that ramps and bridges would be utilized (similar to what had been done in Lee County at the Alico Road area).

Commissioner Doherty stated that since the last MPO Board Meeting, he had met with County Administrator Hector Flores and other staff on this issue. They are working on a revised traffic pattern for the Charlotte County area of Kings Hwy and Veterans Blvd. Progress on a new interchange in the Raintree Blvd /Yorkshire Street area of North Port is extremely slow and will be far out on the horizon for Sarasota County. In conversations between Commissioner Doherty, Hector Flores, Laks Gurram and William Roll, this concept of a collective distribution system is being developed for Charlotte County's problem area (Kings Hwy and Veterans Blvd) which will empower internal improvements. While still needing to partner with the Sarasota/Manatee MPO on the proposed new interchange, the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO would also pursue this concept. He noted that it works, but it is not cheap). He recommended that staff be given a direction to work with FDOT to conduct a study from the Department's perspective first as well as develop a scope. Commissioner Constance asked Wayne Gaither about the County developing the expensive concept. Wayne Gaither noted that FDOT doesn't do local traffic analyses but understands the impact of major generators. He believed that an FDOT study may be warranted, noting that it would take some time and must be coordinated with FHWA. He felt FDOT would be remiss if it did not at least look at issue. Laks Gurram stated that MPO staff wanted to have the MPO Board request a feasibility study as a first step. William Roll will follow up directly with the FDOT staff to identify a study of this nature within the cost feasible plan. Commissioner Doherty requested a discussion of this project at the August 4, 2025 MPO Board meeting. William Roll and Wayne Gaither indicated that they will proceed as directed.

Discussion followed on South County's Zemel Road/Loop Connector relative to the LRTP public workshops where there have been opportunities for the public to provide input. This was not a new concept, and there really is no definition of where the road would go. It is a project that is needed after 2050, however, if it is not identified it will be costly to do. It would be solely a study to evaluate alignment and is not typically done in an LRTP. William Roll does not see it as cost feasible.

Commissioner Tiseo discussed the unique South County Ranchettes community which contains private roads with public access. Following further discussion from Commissioners Tiseo and

Constance, it was recommended that the line in the Acorn Blvd area be removed with a replacement swath placed in the general area instead. It was noted that any development of this wish list item would be in the very distant future and not part of the LRTP's cost feasible plan. The MPO Board Members expressed their consensus on removal of the line with replacement of a general swath on the LRTP map.

Commissioner Tiseo gave the MPO website address www.ccpgmmpo.gov to Ranchettes residents present in the audience. Laks Gurram stated that the South County Workshop would be held on Wednesday, May 28th from 4-6 p.m. at the Charlotte Harbor Event Center in Punta Gorda.

Commissioner Constance asked about next steps in the LRTP process. William Roll said that at the meeting today, the multimodal needs assessment should be locked down with the current meeting's modification.

Commissioner Constance had a question regarding eastbound Olympia Avenue (US 17) at northbound US 41. Discussion followed regarding two lane feeds and how three lane feeds will never work given pedestrian crossing concerns. It was noted that eastbound US 17 is overbuilt, and perhaps should be better configured with a stop bar. Councilmember Polk did not see a purpose for removal given the likelihood of future development. William Roll noted that a lane could be repurposed for truck parking, etc. Commissioner Thornberry feels there will be a need for that capacity as in the past. Commissioner Tiseo observed to Councilmember Polk that it might be prudent to review this issue with City staff and other City Councilmembers. The item could be adjusted at the next MPO Board meeting. Commissioner Constance would like to see a sketch, since he was not certain what the City desired. William Roll stated that a downtown traffic operations safety of the corridor analysis would be warranted. Commissioner Constance noted that he would defer to the City's wishes on the matter. William Roll noted that he would move forward with the advice and council provided by the City.

Commissioner Doherty made a motion to approve the 2050 LRTP Needs Assessment including the meeting's edits regarding (1) removal of the straight line and insertion of the general swath in the Ranchettes area of the South County map, (2) inclusion of any desired City adjustments in the area of eastbound Olympia Avenue (US 17) and northbound US 41, and (3) development of a scope of a proposal for an FDOT feasibility study of a collective distribution system in the area of Kings Hwy and Veterans Blvd. Commissioner Tiseo seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

13. Regional Interlocal Agreement between Heartland Regional TPO and Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO

The purpose of this Agreement is to provide a structured forum for communication and coordination between the MPOs and to ensure joint regional cooperation regarding transportation planning in accordance with Section 339.175, Florida Statutes, 23 C.F.R. Part 450, Subpart C, and the requirements of related federal legislation. More specifically, this Agreement establishes the commitment by the parties to coordinate and collaborate in good faith and due diligence toward the development of joint regional transportation planning products and processes for the bi-county region of Charlotte and DeSoto Counties. The Interlocal Agreement will allow the desire parties to participate cooperatively in the creation of a

regional transportation plan which will identify potential project priorities for funding through the Transportation Regional Incentive Program.

Commissioner Doherty made a motion to approve the Interlocal Agreement for the Creation of a Regional Transportation Plan between the Heartland Regional Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) and Charlotte County-Punta Gorda Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). Commissioner Tiseo seconded the motion, and it carried unanimously.

As a follow up to William Roll on the prior agenda item, Commissioner Constance inquired about the US 41 bridges showing six lanes of roadway. FDOT District One Secretary L.K. Nandam had discussed at a previous meeting how one bridge will reach the replacement of its natural lifespan and will be reassessed. One bridge would be expanded to provide for multi-use improvements. Wayne Gaither offered to reach out to the FDOT bridge staff, noting that it is often possible to extend the life of freshwater bridges.

14. Congestion Management Multimodal Planning (C3MP) Initiative

The links between MPOs, their state DOTs, and regional modal agency partners are critical, yet often underdeveloped and underutilized. Recognizing an opportunity for enhanced collaboration and mutual benefit, FDOT District One, covering an area of 12 counties in Southwest Florida encompassing six MPOs, established the Congestion Management Multimodal Planning (C3MP) Initiative in 2019.

C3MP represents a new way of incorporating modal considerations into existing FDOT and MPO processes. With an initial focus on public transit, and a recent expansion into other modes including aviation and freight, C3MP aims to implement a proactive, coordinated, collaborative, and innovative approach to providing safe and reliable mobility choices that reduce congestion in our communities.

This presentation highlights the Initiative's vision and mission, goals, and processes, with a special emphasis on linking planning documents of MPOs.

Attachment:

1. Power Point Presentation

Commissioner Constance noted to Michelle Peronto that Secretary Nandam was leaving a legacy. Michelle Peronto responded that he was leaving many legacies.

15. Advanced Air Mobility - FDOT Update

Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) is defined by the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) as “an air transportation system that moves people and cargo between places previously not served or underserved by aviation – local, regional, intraregional, urban – using revolutionary new aircraft that are only just now becoming possible.” While AAM supports the transportation of people and goods between many geographic areas, Urban Air Mobility (UAM) focuses specifically on urban and suburban environments. UAM is envisioned as a “safe and efficient

aviation transportation system that will use highly automated aircraft that will operate and transport passengers or cargo at lower altitudes within urban and suburban areas.”

UAM is widely seen as the largest component of AAM and the one that has received the largest investment to date. Beyond UAM, AAM would incorporate use cases outside of urban environments, including commercial inter-city, cargo delivery, public services, and private vehicle travel. Both concepts include not only the aircraft themselves but also the framework for operation, access to airspace, infrastructure, and engagement with community members.

The AAM acronym is used to describe this transformative airborne technology defined above by NASA and the FAA, but for the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), the focus is on commercial passenger-carrying electric vertical takeoff and landing (eVTOL) aircraft and their support systems. eVTOL is the most discussed and reported segment of AAM to date. Innovations in distributed electric propulsion systems, electronic controllers, and battery systems have made this type of aircraft possible, which represents a move from a single rotor to multiple that increases handling and safety.

<https://www.fdot.gov/aviation/advanced-air-mobility>

Attachments:

[Power Point Presentation](#)

[Fact Sheet](#)

Councilmember Polk inquired regarding how fast the eVTOLs can travel. Michelle Peronto was not aware of the answer but stated that it could be addressed at one of two upcoming workshops (July 8 in Bartow and July 10 in Fort Myers). Michelle Peronto explained the QR codes found in the presentation linked to AAM Guidebook which is the foundation of the local government training. Commissioner Constance stated that the topic was discussed at the National Association of Counties meeting, and the technology is being pushed. He noted that it is something big, and the focus is on Florida. Commissioner Doherty observed that eventually the vehicles will be autonomous.

16. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

17. Staff Comments

The staff activities report was distributed to the MPO Board Members. Laks Gurram reported on the following items:

- Peggy Walters Citizens Mobility Award nominations were now being taken with one nomination expected thus far.
- Staff could not attend the MPOAC Meeting, but Laks Gurram had introduced himself to Amanda Carpenter, the new MPOAC Director.
- Staff had completed interviewing multimodal planner candidates and was now in the process of extending an offer to an applicant.

- Laks Gurram commented on how much he enjoyed working with FDOT District One Secretary LK Nandam and wished him well. Wayne Gaither offered to forward the well wishes.

18. Member Comments

Commissioner Constance asked Wayne Gaither for updates on completion of the US 41 roundabout at Carmalita Street and the mastarms and requested that he please email an update on those two items.

Commissioner Doherty asked that Secretary Nandam receive his best wishes. He had worked with Secretary Nandam since 1979? (not sure about this), characterizing him as a true gentleman who had done an outstanding job especially on the M-CORES initiative.

Councilmember Polk stated that she went to the recent MPOAC training where she had learned a great deal. She thanked Laks Gurram for encouraging her to participate. Most attendees were new with approximately six months of MPO Board experience. They had learned their role and how to get involved. All participants were complaining about lack of funding. They were encouraged to think outside the box without financial constraints and take into consideration comprehensive plans and land development regulations.

Commissioner Tiseo hoped to see Secretary Nandam again one day in his new consulting role. Regarding the day's meeting, he noted that the MPO Board Members do not rubber stamp anything, but rather listens to the experts and then, uses their judgment to make decisions. All of Florida's MPOs have grappled with growth, especially in Charlotte County. Growth is exploding. There are infrastructure concerns and construction inflation costs.

Commissioner Constance appreciated everyone's time and thanked the public for providing good information.

19. Adjournment

The next MPO Board Meeting will be a regular MPO Board Meeting on Monday, August 4, 2025. There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 5:13 pm.