



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

**MINUTES OF THE JULY 16, 2025
TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)
CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)
BICYCLE/PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC)
JOINT MEETING**

TAC MEMBERS PARTICIPATING (IN PERSON)

Robert Fakhri, Charlotte County Public Works (Chair)
Betty-Ann Sherer, Charlotte County Transit
Tony Conte, Charlotte County School Board
Don Scott, Lee County MPO
Shaun Cullinan, Charlotte County Community Development
Carl Benge, City of Punta Gorda Urban Design
Jordan Ray, Economic Development (Alternate)
Ellen Pinder, Charlotte County Emergency Management (Alternate)
Cory Elijah, Airport Authority (Alternate)

TAC MEMBERS ABSENT

Misty Servia, DeSoto County
April Santos, Charlotte County (Vice Chair) - Excused
Gabriel Quintas, City of North Port

CAC MEMBERS PARTICIPATING (IN PERSON)

Dianne Quilty, Mid County Representative, CAC Chair
Jill Hartman, West County Representative
James Kunard, South County Representative
Robert Logan, Mid County Representative (also on BPAC)
Richard Russell, At-Large Representative
Pauline Klein, At-Large Representative (also on BPAC)
Priya Ahluwalia, South County Representative CAC
Steven E. Hurt, Mid County Representative, CAC Vice-Chair

CAC MEMBERS ABSENT

Mary Ellen Kiss, South County Representative - Excused
Steve Schoff, West County Representative - Excused
Vacancy, West County Representative

BPAC MEMBERS PARTICIPATING (IN PERSON)

Robert Logan, Mid-County Representative (also on CAC)
Philipp Pfäeffli, Bicycle Business Representative
Pauline Klein, Bicycle Club Representative - excused (also on CAC)
Lorenzo Daetz, Historical/Cultural/Environmental Representative
Brian Blankinship, South County

BPAC MEMBERS ABSENT

James Wernicke, Vice Chair, West County Representative - Excused
Laura Rossi, Chair, South County Representative - Excused
Ben Turner, West County Representative
Jan Dick, South County Representative - Excused

OTHERS PARTICIPATING IN PERSON

Laks Gurram, MPO Director
Wendy Scott, MPO Planner
Bekie Leslie, MPO Administrative Services Coordinator
Sierra Ray Scott, Senior Administrative Assistant
Ravi Kamarajugadda, Charlotte County Public Works
Hank Flores, City of Punta Gorda
Adrianna Gehrke, City of Punta Gorda
Boyd Lawrence, City of Punta Gorda
Louis Long, Charlotte County Public Schools
William Roll, Kimley-Horn and Associates
Marc Ispass, Kimley-Horn and Associates
Richard Lisenbee, Charlotte County Traffic Systems Supervisor, Public Works
Keith Robbins, FDOT
Richard Lehmkuhl, City of Punta Gorda
Sgt. Dustin Paille, Charlotte County Sheriff's Office
Ken Eitenmiller, Citizen
Pam Brown, Citizen
Tanya Merkle, FDOT

1. Call to Order & Roll Call

Laks Gurram introduced the Chairs who were present. CAC Chair Dianne Quilty, TAC Chair Robert Fakhri and acting BPAC Chair Brian Blankinship called the Joint Meeting to order at 9:32 a.m. Members, staff and consultants introduced themselves. A quorum was present for TAC, CAC, and the BPAC.

2. Election of Chair for Joint TAC/CAC/BPAC Meeting

Lakshmi N. Gurram informed those present that this meeting is the first time ~~ever~~ the MPO has conducted a Joint committee meeting which includes all three committees. To ensure the meeting runs smoothly and efficiently, MPO staff ~~recommends~~ recommended the election of a

Chair to preside over the joint committee meeting. The individual committee chairs elected Robert Fakhri to serve as chair.

3. Pledge of Allegiance

All attendees recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

4. Public Comments on Agenda Items

There were no public comments on agenda items.

5. Consent Agenda:

- A. Approval of Minutes: [TAC Meeting April 23, 2025 Meeting](#)
- B. Approval of Minutes: [CAC Meeting April 23, 2025 Meeting](#)
- C. Approval of Minutes: [BPAC Meeting April 24, 2025 Meeting](#)

Don Scott made a motion to approve the April 23, 2025, TAC Meeting Minutes. Betty-Ann Sherer seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Jill Hartman made a motion to approve the April 23, 2025, CAC Meeting Minutes. Pauline Klein seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Pauline Klein made a motion to approve the April 24, 2025, BPAC Meeting Minutes. Philipp Pfäeffli seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

6. Reports

A. CAC Chair's Report

CAC Chair, Dianne Quilty, stated that she did not have anything to report.

B. TAC Chair's Report

TAC Chair, Robert Fakhri, stated that he did not have anything to report.

C. BPAC Chair's Report

BPAC acting Chair, Brian Blankinship, stated that he did not have anything to report.

D. City of Punta Gorda Report

Carl Benge reported that there have been some conversations with FDOT regarding stairs by US 41 and they are waiting to hear back about their Safe Streets for All (SS4A) grant application.

E. Charlotte County Report

Robert Fakhri stated there was nothing to report.

F. Sheriff's Report

Laks Gurram stated on behalf of Dep. Miller that there was a two page [report](#) provided in the agenda packets regarding Bicycle and Pedestrian Accidents from March 1 to May 8, 2025.

Sergeant Paille presented on e-Bikes and Micromobility devices.

[Presentation.](#)

Discussion followed that included:

- Definitions of micromobility devices such as e-scooters, e-bikes, non-motorized bikes, and reticulated designs or systems in bicycles. This also included the definition of a motorized vehicle and when a driver's license and insurance is required by the operator.
- Legal top speeds for e-bikes (28 mph) and e-scooters (20 mph.)
- Laws and rules regarding street use, sidewalk use, and crosswalk use of e-bikes, as well as when e-bikes must yield to pedestrians, which is the same as regular bicycles.
- Availability of information regarding e-bikes versus the level of interest, especially among teenagers.
- Helmet usage, when it is required (under 16 years of age) and whether there has been any changes in legislation due to the increased speed of e-bikes.

7. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Report/BPAC Coordinator Report

Tanya Merkle reported that there is new legislation, and they are waiting on SUN (Shared Use Non-motorized) Trail applications to be reviewed. Recent legislation impacts will be reflected in the draft Tentative Work Program.

8. FY 2025-FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment

The FY 2026 UPWP budget is being amended to incorporate the following additional funding: \$36,630 in PL carryforward funds, \$6,951 in CPG 5305(d) PL funds, \$854 in TD funds and \$100,000 in FTA Section 5307. These amendments are reflected in the following task allocations:

- \$30,581 allocated to Task 1-Admisitration
- \$7,000 allocated to Task 2 - Data Collection & Analysis Planning
- \$6,000 allocated to Task 8 – Transit and Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Planning
- \$864 in additional funding from the Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) for TD Planning reflected under Task 8- Transit & Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Planning

- \$100,000 added to FTA Section 5307 Transit Funds reflected under Task 8 - Transit & Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Planning to support consulting services for a cost analysis comparing in-house drivers to contracted services.
- Additionally, the MPO Agreement will be amended to reflect the FHWA/5305(d) funding allocations only.

Budgeted Action:

Funding Source	Source Level	Previous FY 2026 UPWP Allocation	New FY 2026 UPWP Allocation	UPWP FY 2024 Increase
FHWA	PL	\$523,378	\$560,959	\$37,581
FHWA/5305(d)	PL	\$ 82,845	\$88,845	\$ 6,000
TD	State	\$ 26,437	\$ 27,291	\$ 854
FTA Section 5307	Federal	\$ 48,029	\$148,029	\$100,000
TOTAL		\$680,689	\$825,124	\$144,435

1. [UPWP FY 2026 Planning Task Sheets; and Planning Agency Participation and Funding Source Tables](#)
2. [Amendment to the MPO Agreement](#)
3. [FDOT Cost Analysis Certification form](#)

Don Scott made a motion for the TAC to recommend that the MPO Board approve the FY 2025/2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment as presented; Betty-Ann Sherer seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Pauline Klein made a motion for the CAC to recommend that the MPO Board approve the FY 2025FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment as presented; Priya Ahluwalia seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Pauline Klein made a motion for the BPAC to recommend that the MPO Board approve the FY 2025FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment as presented; Philipp Pfäeffli seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

8a. FY 2025/2026 through FY 2029/2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment

On July 9, 2025, the MPO received a [request](#) from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to amend the adopted TIP to include projects that are being rolled forward from the previous fiscal year. These include:

- Projects that were programmed but not initiated in the prior fiscal year
- Projects with uncommitted funds or remaining balances
- Projects that are partially completed or fully completed but still have residual funding

These projects are automatically carried forward in FDOT's Work Program and must be reflected in the MPO's TIP to maintain consistency and ensure eligibility for federal and state funding.

The amendment ensures that the MPO's TIP remains aligned with FDOT's FY 2026–2030 Work Program and complies with federal and state planning requirements

James Kunard inquired about the attachment and the specific amounts of funding being reallocated for projects. He also asked for a status update on the Harborview Road project, specifically regarding Right of Way (ROW). In response, Laks Gurram provided clarification on how to interpret the chart and confirmed that Harborview Road remains in the ROW phase.

Betty-Ann Sherer made a motion for the TAC to recommend that the MPO Board approve the FY 2025/2026 through FY 2029/2030 TIP Roll-Forward Amendment as presented; **Tony Conte** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Pauline Klein made a motion for the CAC to recommend that the MPO Board approve the FY 2025/2026 through FY 2029/2030 TIP Roll-Forward Amendment as presented; **James Kunard** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Pauline Klein made a motion for the BPAC to recommend that the MPO Board approve the FY 2025/2026 through FY 2029/2030 TIP Roll-Forward Amendment as presented; **Philipp Pfäeffli** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

9. 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) – Cost Feasible Projects – Action Item

Laks Gurram introduced William Roll and Marc Ispass from Kimley-Horn. The Draft 2050 Cost Feasible Plan being presented includes a prioritized list of multimodal transportation projects, such as roadway widenings, intersection improvements, transit services, and bicycle/pedestrian facilities. These projects were identified through the previously approved Needs Assessment and shaped by extensive input from the public and local stakeholders.

Below are the details of public workshops conducted and as well as those that staff will be conducting in the future:

May 27 –28, 2025: Three in-person public workshops held in West, Mid and South County

May 29, 2025: Virtual public meeting to gather additional community input

June 9, 2025: Second Consensus Building Workshop with community stakeholders

July 8, 2025: LRTP Subcommittee met to review the draft Cost Feasible Plan and public comments

A third round of in-person public workshops will be held to further refine the project list:

- July 16, 2025 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. West County (Tringali Community Center)
- July 17, 2025 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Mid-County (Family Services Center)
- July 17, 2025 4:00 p.m. – 6:00 p.m. South County (Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center)

The Draft Cost Feasible Plan and Executive Summary Report, that is presented today highlights:

- Public and stakeholder comments
- Revenue forecasts
- A financially constrained list of projects through 2050

Upon approval by the Joint Committees, the Draft Plan will be presented to the MPO Board on August 4, 2025, for review and approval. Following Board approval, the plan will be released for a minimum 30-day public comment period. The final adoption of the 2050 LRTP is scheduled for the October 2, 2025, MPO Board meeting.

1. [2050 LRTP Draft Cost Feasible Projects](#)
2. [2050 LRTP Revenue Summary](#)
3. [Power Point Presentation](#)

Diane Quilty asked about the intersection at SR 776 and Hollis Ave. close to the Myakka River, which is in the current program to be improved, therefore not included in the LRTP. Currently there are temporary delineators in place, but eventually the space is planned as an R-CUT intersection.

The cost savings of combining two projects on a given road or intersection was discussed. Bike lane improvements and/or additions were mentioned at this time.

Pauline Klein asked about the widening and extension of Burnt Store Rd. Staff confirmed that the right of way acquisition has begun for this project. Lorenzo Daetz asked why the extension is being constructed and whether developer contributions are involved. In response, Shaun Cullinan confirmed that developers are assisting with project funding, supporting the extension effort.

Laks Gurram discussed several out-of-county projects and reminded the committees that these projects are not programmed using MPO allocated dollars. These projects are in Sarasota-Manatee and Lee County MPOs' areas.

Richard Russell asked about the funding to generate the plan. Willian Roll answered that the 2045 plan funding had been higher than this 2050 plan, and there are many changes that are impacting revenues. He used the example of the increase in electric vehicles and natural gas for trucking. Costs have also gone up for all road improvements.

Ravi Kamarajugadda commented on three projects with changes to their funding, which was agreed to be discussed following the meeting. He also asked if unfunded projects were included in the presentation, which the consultant stated are included in the packet.

Brian Blankinship asked if the charts for bicycle/pedestrians projects were included in the packet, which the consultant agreed to provide following the meeting.

James Kunard asked if locally enacted sales taxes were permanent. These taxes are not permanent but have been consistently reenacted every six years. They will be back up for vote 2026. There was a question on whether the 1% sales tax is limited to transportation improvements. A portion is given to transportation, and this is considered a reasonable revenue source.

Betty-Ann Sherer made a motion for the TAC to recommend the MPO Board endorse the Draft 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Cost Feasible Plan and to open the public comment period for a minimum of 30 days as presented; **Tony Conte** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Priya Ahluwalia made a motion for the CAC to recommend the MPO Board endorse the Draft 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Cost Feasible Plan and to open the public comment period for a minimum of 30 days as presented; **Jill Hartman** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

Pauline Klein made a motion for the BPAC to recommend the MPO Board endorse the Draft 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Cost Feasible Plan and to open the public comment period for a minimum of 30 days as presented; **Philipp Pfäeffli** seconded the motion, and it was passed unanimously.

10. Traffic Safety Culture – Presentation

Keith Robbins, FDOT District Safety Administrator, gave a traffic safety culture presentation. This presentation explored the influence of culture on public perceptions of traffic safety and how these insights can be leveraged to drive positive change.

Additionally, it ~~provides~~ provided an update on the District One Safety Strategic Plan and highlights current trends in roadway fatalities and serious injuries within the Charlotte County – Punta Gorda MPO region.

[Presentation.](#)

Discussion followed that included:

- Current speed suppression program, Operation Southern Slowdown.
- Comparisons between European licensing/training and cost as well as roadways like the Autobahn and how/why it works. This also included discussion on the amount of stop signs used in the US compared to Europe where there tend to be more yield signs.
- Legality of modifications on vehicles, such as lifted trucks and headlights, and enforcement of these regulations.

- Speed limits and road design leading to adjustments of those speed limits and the likelihood of users to follow posted limits.
- History of US roadways and the speeds anticipated when they were first constructed versus speeds that vehicles are capable of today.
- Severity of crashes being dependent not only on the rate of speed but on the difference in speeds between the vehicles involved.

FDOT funding and multiple improvements being made to roads ~~at one time~~ all at once in order to stretch that funding further. This allows FDOT to help bring down speeds on roads and lower rates of severe injury and fatal crashes.

11. Public Comments

There were no public comments.

12. Staff Comments

Laks Gurram expressed appreciation to all attendees for their participation in the meeting. He shared that the MPO received a nomination for the Peggy Walters Award, which will be presented to Joseph Sabatino at the upcoming MPO Board meeting on August 4th.

Laks also announced that Wendy Scott will be retiring in August, thanking her for her service. He extended congratulations to STTAR employee Ray Sierra Scott, who has accepted a full-time position as Senior Administrative Assistant.

13. Member Comments

James Kunard stated during member comments that he would be absent from the September 17, 2025 CAC meeting.

14. Adjournment (Next TAC Meeting – September 17, 2025, Next CAC Meeting – September 17, 2025, Next BPAC Meeting – September 25, 2025)

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:57 a.m.

The next regularly scheduled TAC meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 17, 2025, in-person at 1050 Loveland Blvd, Port Charlotte, Florida 33980 at 9:30 a.m.

The next regularly scheduled CAC meeting will be held on Wednesday, September 17, 2025, in-person at 1050 Loveland Blvd, Port Charlotte, Florida 33980 at 1:30 p.m.

The next regularly scheduled BPAC meeting will be held on Thursday, September 25, 2025, in-person at 1050 Loveland Blvd, Port Charlotte, Florida 33980 at 2:00 p.m.