



**JOINT MEETING OF THE CHARLOTTE COUNTY - PUNTA GORDA  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD AND LEE COUNTY  
METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD**

**Burnt Store Road Presbyterian Church, Stewart Hall, 11330 Burnt Store Road,  
Punta Gorda, Florida at 9:30 a.m.  
Friday, February 27, 2026**

- 1. Call to Order/Roll Call**
- 2. Invocation – Pastor Bill Frank – First Baptist Church of Punta Gorda**
- 3. Pledge of Allegiance**
- 4. Chairs' Comments**
- 5. Approval of Agenda – Previous joint meeting minutes attached for informational purposes only**
- 6. Public Comments on Agenda Items**
- 7. Review and Comment on the Joint Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) Project Priority List**
- 8. Update on the Burnt Store Road Project Phases and Interim Safety Projects**
- 9. Status of the SR 31 Projects**
- 10. Long-Range Plan Coordination Update**
- 11. Information on the Southwest Florida Passenger Rail Priority Request**
- 12. Transportation Legislative Update**
- 13. Next Meeting Date**
- 14. Staff Comments**
- 15. Public Comments**
- 16. Member Comments**
- 17. Adjournment**

All interested parties are invited to appear and be heard on each of the above items. Written comments filed with the MPO will be considered. Copies of all of the above-proposed documents are available by calling the Lee MPO Office at 239-244-2220 or the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO Office at 941-883-3535.

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## **JOINT MEETING OF THE CHARLOTTE COUNTY-PUNTA GORDA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD AND LEE COUNTY METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION BOARD**

**Burnt Store Road Presbyterian Church, Stewart Hall,  
11330 Burnt Store Road, Punta Gorda, Florida  
Friday, February 14, 2025, at 9:30 a.m.**

### **Meeting Minutes**

#### **Agenda Item #1 - Call to Order/Roll Call**

The meeting was called to order at 9:30 a.m. by Charlotte County Commissioner/Charlotte County – Punta Gorda MPO Chair Christopher Constance, who then chaired the meeting.

The Lee County MPO Board roll was called by Lee County MPO staff. A quorum was present. Lee County MPO Board Members in attendance included Lee County Commissioners Cecil Pendergrass and Brian Hamman; City of Cape Coral Councilmembers Laurie Lehmann, Derrick Donnell, Bill Steinke, Joe Kilraine, Rachel Kaduk; City of Fort Myers Councilmember Teresa Watkins Brown; Town of Fort Myers Beach Councilmember/MPO Board Chair John R. King; City of Sanibel Vice-Mayor Michael Miller; City of Bonita Springs Councilmembers Laura Carr and Chris Corrie.

The Charlotte County – Punta Gorda MPO Board roll was called by Charlotte County – Punta Gorda MPO staff. A quorum was present. Charlotte County – Punta Gorda MPO Board members in attendance included Charlotte County Commissioners Christopher G. Constance, Thomas Thornberry, Kenneth Doherty, and Joseph Tiseo; and City of Punta Gorda Councilmember Jeannine Polk.

Others in attendance included the following – L.K. Nandam, Pam Barr, Michelle Simmons, Bryn Parsons, Stephen Pack, Jason Mobsby, James Heffelfinger, and Jimmy Vilce with FDOT; Kristin Caruso and Jay Winter with Scalar; Matthew Yarosewick with Quest; Steve Nappi and Cal Santarelli with H&H; Charlotte County – Punta Gorda MPO staff D’Juan Harris, Lakshmi Gurram, Wendy Scott, Bekie Leslie, Sierra Ray Scott; Lee County MPO staff Don Scott, Ron Gogoi, and Brian Raimondo; Lee County MPO Legal Advisor Derek Rooney, Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO Legal Advisor Janette Knowlton; members of the public - Dr. Mary Ellen Kiss, Tony Alle (FMA), Faith Harris, Gary Harrell, Richard Kirchhoff (CC-PG MPO Citizens Advisory Committee), Jeff Lustig, Derek Felder (Lee County MPO LCB), Charlie Whitehead (News Press), Carl Burnside, Dr. Charles Darley, Steve Crane, and Polly Crane. Local government staff present were Shaun Cullinan and Ben Bailey with Charlotte County Community Development, John Elias with Charlotte County Public Works, Robert Hancik with the Charlotte County Airport Authority; Richard Lehmkuhl and Carl Bengel with City of Punta Gorda, and Rob Price and Keith Riddle with the Lee County Department of Transportation.

#### **Agenda Item #2 – Invocation**

Chair Constance gave the invocation.

#### **Agenda Item #3 - Pledge of Allegiance**

The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.

#### **Agenda Item #4 - Chair Comments**

Chair Constance provided welcome comments.

#### **Agenda Item #5 - Approval of Agenda**

Commissioner Brian Hamman moved the approval of the agenda, and Commissioner Joseph Tiseo seconded the motion which was approved unanimously.

#### **Agenda Item #6 - Public Comments on Agenda Items**

The following members of the public provided public comments on agenda items: [Dr. Mary Ellen Kiss](#) (Agenda Item #8 related to Burnt Store Road Corridor Projects) and [Mr. Steve Crane](#) (written comment emailed prior to the meeting and print version handed out at the meeting). Chair Constance referred back to the minutes that were included in Agenda Item #5. Mr. Scott noted the minutes were approved by each individual Board in the prior year and were included for informational purposes only.

#### **Agenda Item #7 - Review and Comment on the Joint Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) Project Priority List**

Mr. Scott discussed the new Joint Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) Project Priority List. (All presentation slides for each agenda item have been combined and posted in a link at the end of the minutes.) Commissioner Hamman asked about the State taking over Burnt Store Road. Mr. L.K. Nandam discussed a trade possibility, funding opportunities, and the difficulty of legislative tradeoffs. Mr. Scott addressed new interchange discussions (IJR's). Councilmember Kilraine asked about timeline and funding. Chair Constance questioned the prior Burnt Store Road swap history. Mr. Scott talked about a prior statewide functional classification study. Commissioner Doherty mentioned former state secondary roads that were all turned over from FDOT with some gas tax monies. Commissioner Pendergrass provided additional context and historical perspective.

#### **Agenda Item #8 - Summary of the Burnt Store Road PD&E Public Meeting and Update on Corridor Projects**

Mr. Jimmy Vilce project manager with FDOT introduced Ms. Kristin Caruso with Scalar consulting who then provided a summary of the Burnt Store Road PD&E Study and showed a brief video that can be viewed here: [Burnt Store Intersection](#). Chair Constance inquired about future bike/ped crossings. Ms. Caruso noted for the purpose of the PD&E, bike/ped crossings were not examined, but they will be looked at in the future. Mr. Vilce provided additional information on future provisions. Ms. Caruso noted that the public hearing on January 28 had over forty in-person attendees and sixty virtual attendees and continued with her presentation with additional information on the study. Mr. Harris then provided an update on the Charlotte County side. (All presentation slides for each agenda item have been combined and posted in a link at the end of the minutes.)

#### **Agenda Item #9 - Status of the SR 31 Projects**

Mr. Scott and Mr. Harris presented information on the status of the SR 31 projects. Mr. Nandam added that projects, both state and private, total \$800 million, the SR 78 bridge is financed in FY 26-27 with the goal to finish design. Councilmember Derrick Donnell commented on the need for public education on driving roundabouts. Mr. Scott discussed educational efforts and additional information that could be provided to the public. It was noted the presentation slides will be included in the minutes. (All presentation slides for each agenda item have been combined and posted in a link at the end of the minutes.)

At this point in the meeting, Chair Constance asked for a Vincent Road discussion. Mr. Rob Price with the Lee County Department of Transportation discussed the policy regarding acceptance of maintenance of a road in which it must add something beneficial to improve the Lee County network. He noted the Board is free to disagree with recommendation. He added there is no need for pavement maintenance at this time. He continued that the lane that is being added to Vincent may have to be taken over due to project impact, and Lee County only has a few MSBUs. Chair Constance recommended the southern half of Burnt Store Marina

be considered for an MSBU and asked the Lee County Commission to consider it and provided the example of Charlotte with Hillsborough for the North Port area. Mr. John Elias with the Charlotte County Public Works echoed Chair Constance's statements. It was noted the estimate for the Lee County portion south side is \$387,000 and the MSBU agreements with City of Punta Gorda and City of North Port were described. Commissioner Tiseo recommended an estimate be provided on anticipated costs. Commissioner Pendergrass asked about one County taking responsibility and mentioned the Coconut Road agreement with three jurisdictions is similar. Mr. Elias described how the road developed to the marina. Commissioner Hamman asked what the plan was when it was built. Commissioner Doherty gave a brief history of the Burnt Store Marina and Burnt Store Isles and noted that Lee County never accepted the plat. He then suggested that Lee County take Burnt Store Marina and set up an ad valorem MSTU taxing unit with a millage for all properties in the Burnt Store Marina and then give Charlotte County the funding. Chair Constance added this is a nice primer for a future joint meeting. Mr. Elias commented that another option is to split the cost.

#### **Agenda Item #10 – Long Range Plan Development Coordination**

Mr. Lakshmi Gurram presented the 2050 Charlotte County Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), and Mr. Scott presented the Lee County 2050 LRTP. Mr. Gurram then presented an East West connection alternate between US 41 and Burnt Store Road. Chair Constance commented on the importance of regional coordination (All presentation slides for each agenda item have been combined and posted in a link at the end of the minutes.)

#### **Agenda Item #11 – Information and Review of the Regional Lee/Charlotte-Punta Gorda/Sarasota Manatee MPO's Interlocal Agreement**

Mr. Harris presented the review of the Interlocal Agreement. Chair Constance thanked the three MPO Directors for coordinating.

#### **Agenda Item #12 - Next Meeting Date**

It was noted that the 2026 joint meeting would be held in late February 2026.

#### **Agenda Item #13 - Staff Comments**

Mr. Harris provided a heartwarming farewell speech as this was his last meeting as Charlotte County – Punta Gorda MPO Director. Mr. Scott commented on his appreciation for working with Mr. Harris.

#### **Agenda Item #14 - Public Comments**

No public comments were made.

#### **Agenda Item #15 - Member Comments**

Among the comments made were discussion of: well wishes for Mr. Harris, appreciation for Mr. Harris' exemplary service, keeping things local, Cape Coral evacuation important, blessings for Mr. Harris, thanks for Mr. Harris, importance of strong cooperation, emphasis on completing Burnt Store Road and access to I-75, difficulty in replacing Mr. Harris as he set the bar so high, Mr. Harris as a subject matter expert, Mr. Harris' professionalism, thanks for Mr. Harris' steadfastness, continued blessings from God for Mr. Harris, thanks to Mr. Harris for his service, importance of working together, Mr. Harris will be missed, hope that road decisions remain local, regional cooperation is important, and God bless Mr. Harris. Chair Constance noted a Charlotte County – Punta Gorda MPO meeting and farewell to Mr. Harris will follow the adjournment of the joint meeting.

#### **Agenda Item #16 - Adjournment**

The meeting was adjourned at 10:53 a.m.

All meeting presentations can be viewed at the following link: [Joint MPO Presentations](#)

An audio recording of the meeting can be accessed at the following link: [Joint MPO 02/14/25](#)

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## **REVIEW AND COMMENT ON THE JOINT TRANSPORTATION REGIONAL INCENTIVE PROGRAM (TRIP) PROJECT PRIORITY LIST**

**Attachment:** Joint 2026 TRIP Priorities for Lee and Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPOs

**Discussion Item:** Review of the Proposed TRIP Project Priorities

### **Background**

The TRIP program provides funding for roadway and transit projects on the regional roadway network map. The TRIP priority projects seeking funding require a minimum fifty percent local funding match; must be a facility on the regional roadway network map; be submitted on a joint project priority list by adjacent MPOs; and are required to be programmed in the local Capital Improvement Element.

### **Recommendation**

Provide input on the proposed priorities for the Joint 2026 TRIP Priorities for the Lee and Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPOs. The Joint TRIP Priority List will be presented at the respective MPO Board for voting approval at a future regular MPO Board meeting. Previously, joint meetings of the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO and Lee MPO Boards agreed to prioritize the completion of the remaining improvements to Burnt Store Road the top annual Joint TRIP project priority submitted to FDOT until all roadway segments are completed

The MPOs appreciate FDOT's continued commitment to funding the segments that have already been completed or are currently underway and encourage FDOT to continue this commitment for the remaining two-lane segments. FDOT should continue to work with the respective County, City and MPO staff to ensure completion of all segments.

**DRAFT**

**2026 JOINT TRIP PRIORITIES FOR LEE AND CHARLOTTE COUNTY-PUNTA GORDA MPO**

Adoption by Lee MPO in May or June

Adoption by Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO in May 2026

| Sponsor                  | Route                           | From              | To           | Proposed Improvement | Requested Phase | Total Cost    | Requested TRIP Funds | Amount of TRIP Funds Prgrammed | Year Funded | 2025 Joint Priority |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|----------------------|-----------------|---------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|-------------|---------------------|
| Lee & Charlotte Counties | Burnt Store Rd                  | Van Buren Pkwy    | Wallaby Lane | 2L to 4L             | ROW             | \$29,060,000  | \$4,000,000          |                                |             |                     |
| Charlotte County         | Harborview Rd                   | Melbourne St      | I -75        | 2L to 4L             | CST             | \$45,630,000  | \$9,000,000          |                                |             |                     |
| Lee County               | Sunshine Ext.                   | 75TH Street       | SR 80        | New 4L               | PD&E            | \$6,000,000   | \$3,000,000          |                                |             |                     |
| Charlotte County         | Edgewater Dr/Flamingo Blvd Ext. | Collingswood Blvd | SR 776       | 2L to 4L             | CST             | \$38,080,000  | \$2,200,000          |                                |             |                     |
| Lee County               | Alico Extension - Phase 2       | Alico Road        | SR 82        | New 4L               | CST             | \$190,284,151 | \$10,000,000         |                                |             |                     |
| Charlotte County         | Jones loop Rd                   | Burnt Store Rd    | Piper Rd     | 4L to 6L             | PE              | \$45,020,000  | TBD                  |                                |             |                     |
| Lee County               | Alico Extension - Phase 1B      | Alico Road        | SR 82        | New 4L               | CST             | \$41,082,029  | \$6,000,000          |                                |             |                     |
| Charlotte County         | Tuckers Grade Extension         | Burnt Store Rd    | US 41        | New 2L               | CST             | \$31,000,000  | \$5,000,000          |                                |             |                     |
| Lee County               | Alico Extension - Phase 3       | Alico Road        | SR 82        | New 4L               | CST             | \$86,265,388  | \$8,000,000          |                                |             |                     |
| Lee County               | Ortiz Avenue                    | SR 82             | Luckett Road | 2L to 4L             | CST             | \$52,457,000  | \$8,000,000          |                                |             |                     |

## **UPDATE ON THE BURNT STORE ROAD PROJECT PHASES AND INTERIM SAFETY PROJECTS**

**Attachments:** Map of the Burnt Store Road Corridor in Charlotte and Lee Counties

**Discussion Item:** Update on project phases and interim safety projects.

### **Background**

Burnt Store Road is a north/south two-lane undivided rural roadway that extends from Pine Island Road in Lee County to US 41 in Charlotte County. Capacity improvements to the roadway were recommended in the Burnt Store Road-Veterans Parkway-Colonial Boulevard Bi-County Corridor Study completed in 2005.

The study recommended widening Burnt Store Road Corridor from two to four lanes from Pine Island Road (SR 78) in Lee County to I-75 in Charlotte County. The corridor is identified as a critical evacuation route for both Charlotte County and the City of Cape Coral.

### **Project Development - Lee County**

The Lee County DOT segmented the Burnt Store Road project into three separate segments from Pine Island Road (SR 78) to Van Buren Parkway, utilizing local funding and Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) funds. All three segments have now been widened to four lanes, with the final segment Pine Island Road (SR 78) to Tropicana Parkway completed in Fall 2023.

The Project Development & Environment Study (PD&E) began in January of 2020 for the two-lane segment of Burnt Store Road from Van Buren Parkway to the southern terminus of Charlotte County Segment III near Wallaby Lane. The PD&E study public hearing was held on January 28, 2025, and the project received location and design concept acceptance on August 5, 2025. The design phase, which will bring the project to 60% design is underway and is expected to be completed in the next few months. Lee County has committed \$15.5 million towards right-of-way acquisition for to the project. The project includes widening the roadway to four lanes in a six-lane ultimate right-of-way. Proposed improvements also include a Continuous Green T (CGT) at the Vincent Avenue and Burnt Store Road intersection. This intersection configuration allows eastbound traffic on Vincent Avenue to make a northbound left turn onto Burnt Store Road with signalization and a channelized merge lane. Upon completion of the 60% design phase, Lee County will undertake responsibility for completing the final design and construction phases.

### **Interim Safety Improvements – Lee County**

In January the Lee County Commissioners approved moving forward with several safety measures for the remaining two-lane section of section of Burnt Store Road from Van Buren Parkway north to Vincent Avenue.

The planned improvements include:

- Adding rumble stripes along the edge lines and centerline to alert drivers if they cross out of the travel lanes.
- Adding two passing lanes, each approximately 1.06 miles in length.
- Adding 4-foot paved shoulders.

The next step will be to obtain environmental permits for the additional pavement while simultaneously bidding the project for construction. The permitting process is expected to take approximately six to nine months. Once construction starts, it will take about nine months to complete. The estimated cost of the improvements is \$5.7 million.

### *Project Development - Charlotte County*

In Charlotte County, capacity improvements included widening Burnt Store Road from two to four lanes, the addition of bicycle lanes, and six-foot sidewalks from the Lee County line to US 41. All phases of work are now complete, except for an approximate 1000 foot segment north of the Lee County line which will be included in the scope of work for the proposed improvements in Lee County.

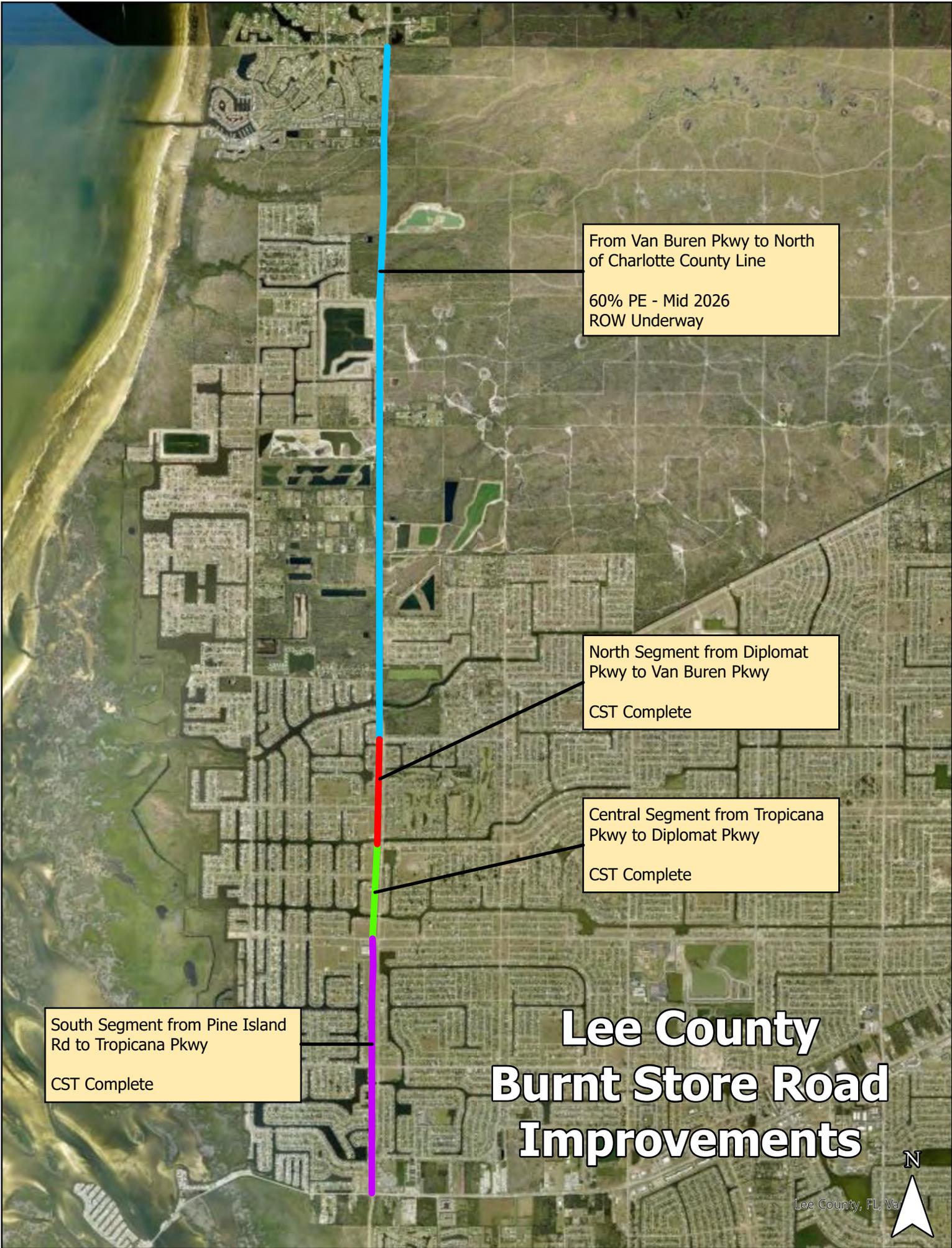
In collaboration with Lee County, Charlotte County, and both MPO staffs, the FDOT Project Management team evaluated multiple alternatives, including a roundabout and traffic signal, and selected a Continuous Green-T (CGT) Intersection as the preferred solution. This design allows eastbound traffic on Vincent Avenue to turn left onto Burnt Store Road with signalization and a channelized merge lane, while northbound traffic on Burnt Store Road flows freely. Benefits of the CGT include improved efficiency and safety.

Charlotte County Public Works completed a transportation study in 2024 to identify the preferred east–west alignment connecting Burnt Store Road to US 41 at Tucker's Grade. The study evaluated multiple alternatives, access management, typical sections, and preliminary right-of-way and stormwater needs. A preferred alignment was selected, and findings indicate that a two-lane connection will be needed between 2035 and 2040. The PD&E phase has begun, and the estimated cost for the two-lane improvement is approximately \$31 million (PDV). Updated traffic modeling indicates the corridor will need to expand to four lanes by 2050, and portions of Burnt Store Road may require widening to six lanes by 2045, depending on development.

The Feasibility Study for North Jones Loop Road from Burnt Store Road to Piper Road has also been complete. The 2050 LRTP divides the project into two segments: Burnt Store Road to Knights Drive, and Knights Drive to east of Piper Road. FDOT has proposed a roundabout on the corridor, with preliminary engineering (PE) in FY 2029 and construction in FY 2031, at an estimated cost of \$3.2 million (FPID 453459-1). FDOT has also programmed a Truck Parking Facility at Jones Loop Road in FY 2028, at a cost of \$28.9 million (FPID 452154-1), to support freight mobility along I-75.

### *Recommendation*

At the April 12, 2012, Joint Lee/Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO meeting, board members designated the Burnt Store Road Corridor as a critical regional evacuation route for Lee and Charlotte Counties. While both counties have allocated funding for major roadway expansions, additional work is needed. The MPO Boards agreed to prioritize completion of the corridor as the annual Joint TRIP project submitted to FDOT until all roadway segments are completed. FDOT should continue collaborating with county, city, and MPO staff to ensure full completion of the corridor.



From Van Buren Pkwy to North of Charlotte County Line  
60% PE - Mid 2026  
ROW Underway

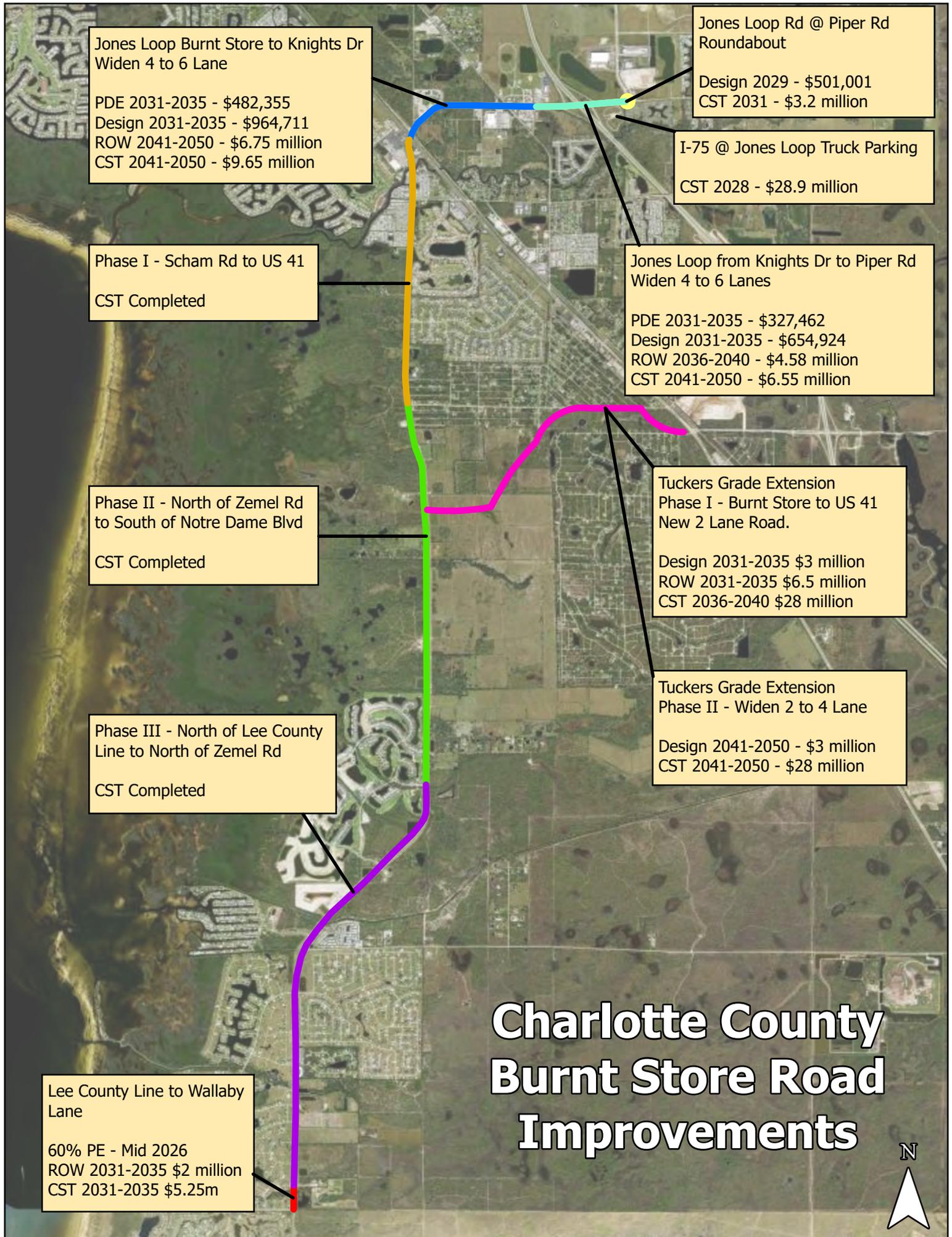
North Segment from Diplomat Pkwy to Van Buren Pkwy  
CST Complete

Central Segment from Tropicana Pkwy to Diplomat Pkwy  
CST Complete

South Segment from Pine Island Rd to Tropicana Pkwy  
CST Complete

# Lee County Burnt Store Road Improvements





Jones Loop Burnt Store to Knights Dr  
Widen 4 to 6 Lane

PDE 2031-2035 - \$482,355  
Design 2031-2035 - \$964,711  
ROW 2041-2050 - \$6.75 million  
CST 2041-2050 - \$9.65 million

Jones Loop Rd @ Piper Rd  
Roundabout

Design 2029 - \$501,001  
CST 2031 - \$3.2 million

I-75 @ Jones Loop Truck Parking

CST 2028 - \$28.9 million

Phase I - Scham Rd to US 41

CST Completed

Jones Loop from Knights Dr to Piper Rd  
Widen 4 to 6 Lanes

PDE 2031-2035 - \$327,462  
Design 2031-2035 - \$654,924  
ROW 2036-2040 - \$4.58 million  
CST 2041-2050 - \$6.55 million

Phase II - North of Zemel Rd  
to South of Notre Dame Blvd

CST Completed

Tuckers Grade Extension  
Phase I - Burnt Store to US 41  
New 2 Lane Road.

Design 2031-2035 \$3 million  
ROW 2031-2035 \$6.5 million  
CST 2036-2040 \$28 million

Phase III - North of Lee County  
Line to North of Zemel Rd

CST Completed

Tuckers Grade Extension  
Phase II - Widen 2 to 4 Lane

Design 2041-2050 - \$3 million  
CST 2041-2050 - \$28 million

Lee County Line to Wallaby  
Lane

60% PE - Mid 2026  
ROW 2031-2035 \$2 million  
CST 2031-2035 \$5.25m

# Charlotte County Burnt Store Road Improvements



## STATUS OF SR 31 PROJECTS

**Attachments:**

SR 31 Project Map

**Discussion Item:**

SR 31 Corridor Improvements Status

**Background**

SR 31 is a north/south two-lane undivided rural roadway that runs from SR 80 in Lee County to SR 70 in DeSoto County. The roadway currently carries 19,800 vehicles daily of which, approximately 19% are trucks.

**Current Projects in Charlotte and Lee County**

- **SR 31 at CR 74 Roundabout** – Construction is underway and expected to complete in the summer of 2026. These improvements will include constructing a roundabout, milling and resurfacing, upgrading drainage, installing new lighting, adding landscaping, signing, and pavement marking. The current Maintenance of Traffic (MOT) and construction schedule is listed below:
  - - No lane closures are planned at this time.
    - Motorists should expect to see crews performing work during the daytime hours, beginning Monday, February 16, through Friday, February 20, between the hours of 7 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.
    - Crews will be grading ponds and ditches, installing permanent lighting and hookup, placing sod, and preparing for final friction paving.

The 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) identifies a major capacity improvement on SR 31: upgrading the existing two-lane segment from Cypress Parkway to CR 74 to a four-lane divided roadway. The project is an unfunded need. The total estimated cost for this long-range improvement is broken down by phase as follows:

| Phase              | Estimated Cost (PDV) | Phase              | Estimated Cost (PDV) |
|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|----------------------|
| <b>PD&amp;E</b>    | \$6,763,949          | Right-of-Way (ROW) | \$108,223,191        |
| <b>Design (PE)</b> | \$13,527,899         | Construction (CST) | \$135,278,989        |
|                    |                      | <b>Total</b>       | <b>\$263,000,000</b> |

- SR 31 from SR 80 (Palm Beach Blvd.) to SR 78 (Bayshore Road) – The design phase for this bridge replacement and widening project from 2 lanes to 6 lanes is underway and it is projected to be completed by mid-2028. The construction phase is programmed for FY 2029 at a cost of \$299.7 million.
- SR 31 from SR 78 in Lee County to Horseshoe Road/Lake Babcock Drive in Charlotte County is currently under construction with the new four lane section

being built 200-300 feet east of the existing SR 31, transitioning to the existing roadway and widening the existing road to a divided 4-lane section at Cypress Parkway. The construction is being funded and built by the Babcock Ranch Community Independent Special District (ISD). The existing SR 31 will remain in place to access properties on the west side of the road. The planned completion of this road project is spring of 2027.

- SR 78 from I-75 to SR 31 – A Project Development and Environment Study started in November of 2019 and completion for this study is planned for mid-2026. An alternatives public meeting was held in May of 2023 that included the widening of SR 78 from two to four lanes from I-75 to SR 31 as well as improvements to the I-75/SR 78 interchange. The design phase for this project is now included in the FDOT Tentative Work Program in FY 2029 at a cost of \$7.0 million. In addition, there is \$500,000 programmed for a design phase in FY 2026 for a DDI.

Shell Creek Preserve

Bermont

SR 31 @ CR 74 Intersection Improvements  
Construction expected to complete in Summer 2026



SR31 @ CR74 Looking SE

SR 31 - Cypress Pkwy to CR 74  
2 Lane to 4 Lane Divided  
PDE - \$6.76 million  
PE - \$13.53 million  
ROW - \$108.22 million  
CST - \$135.28 million

Tucker

Swamp

Gilchrist

SR 31 - SR 78 to Horseshoe/Lake Babcock Dr  
Construction funded by Babcock Ranch ISD  
New roadway 200-300 feet east of existing SR31, transitioning back to existing SR31 @ Cypress Pkwy

SR 78 - I-75 to SR 31  
Widening and interchange improvements  
PDE completion mid-2026  
Design 2029 - \$7 million  
DDI 2026 - \$500,000

SR 31 - SR 80 to SR 78  
Widening 2 to 6 lane  
Design completion in mid-2028  
CST 2029 - \$299.7 million

Glen  
country



Prairie Pines Preserve



Caloosahatchee

Verandah Golf Club

80

N

River Mall Country Club

# SR 31 Improvements

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## **LONG-RANGE PLAN DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION**

**Attachments:** Lee and Charlotte-Punta Gorda Needs and Cost Feasible Maps.

**Discussion Item:** Provide update on planned projects in the Long-Range Plan.

### **Background**

The two MPOs adopted their plans this last year and staff is providing an update on those Long-Range Plans. Unfortunately, due to the lack of funding, some of the cross-county projects are only included in the Needs Plan but there are some efforts underway that staff is reporting on to inform on current activities. This includes efforts to raise funding for a new interchange somewhere between SR 78 in Lee County and Tuckers Grade in Charlotte County. There are currently two efforts, one that includes a state appropriation request for \$7.5 million for funding an Interchange Justification Report (IJR) and Project Development & Environment study between SR 78 and Tuckers Grade. Also, there is a federal appropriation request for the same amount of funding for a future interchange at the I-75 and Del Prado Extension.

### **Recommendation**

This presentation is for informational and discussion purposes only.

## UNFUNDED ROADWAY NEEDS

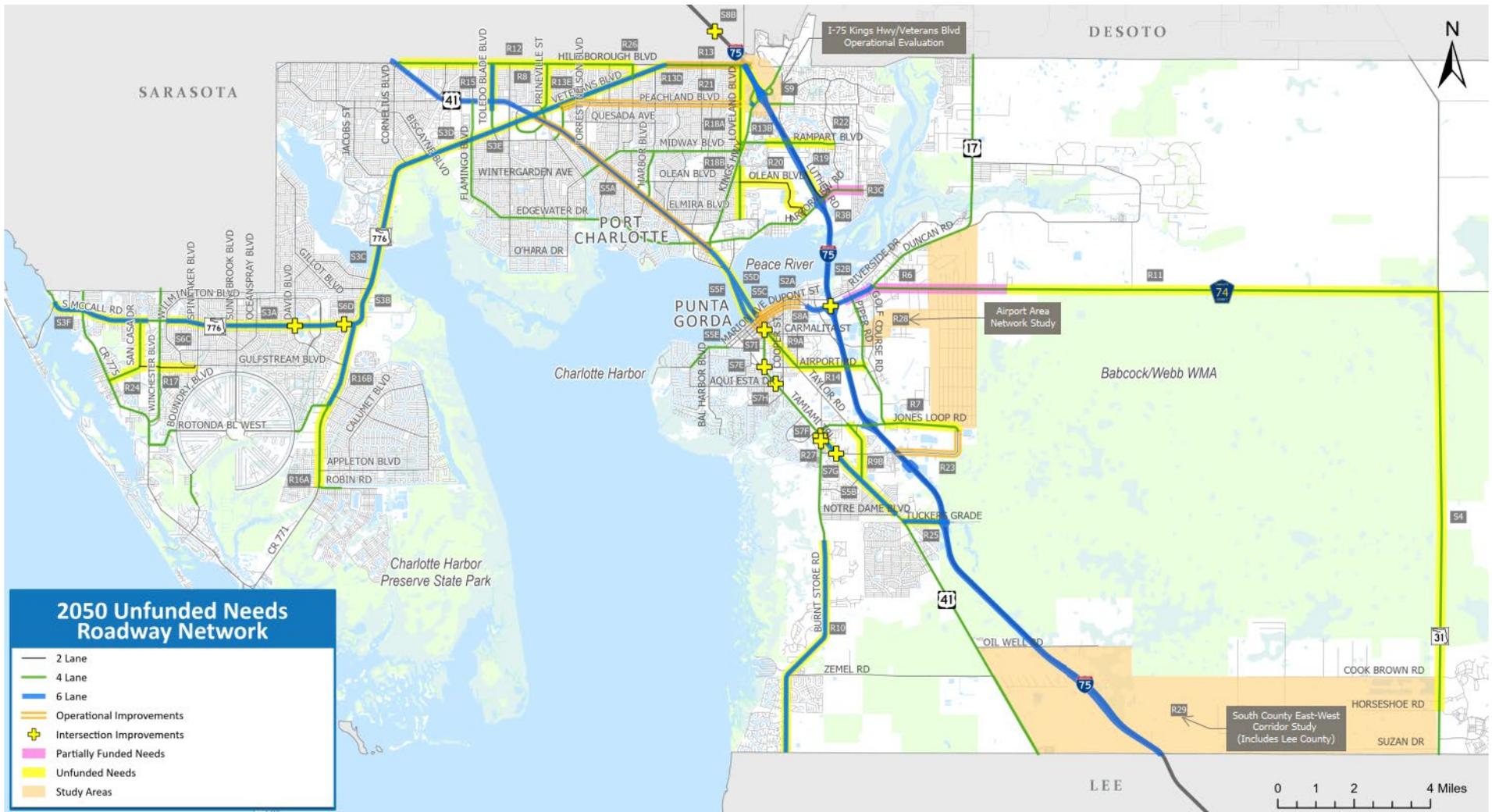


Figure 10. Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO 2050 Unfunded and Partially Funded Roadway Needs Map

COST FEASIBLE PLAN

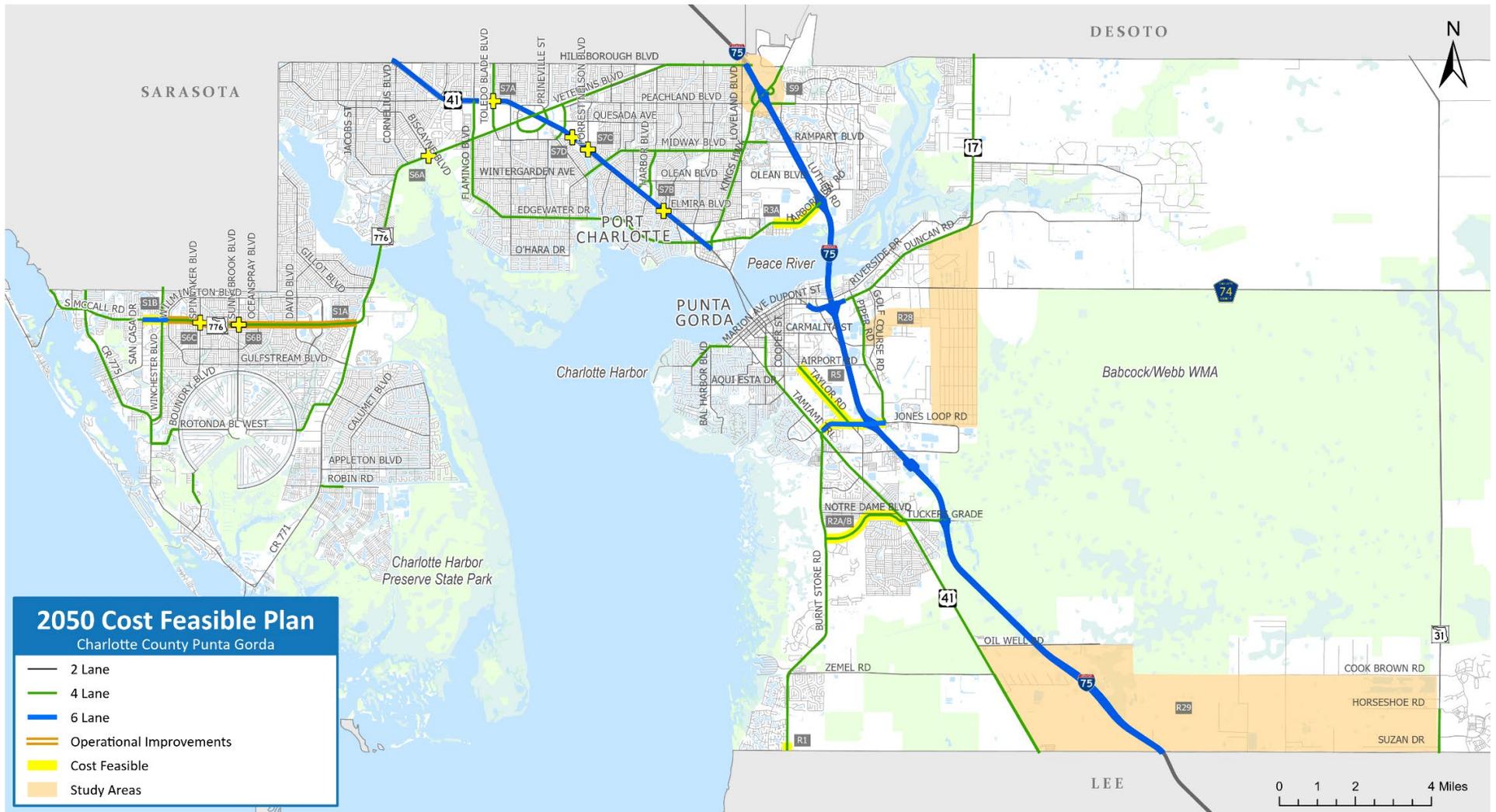
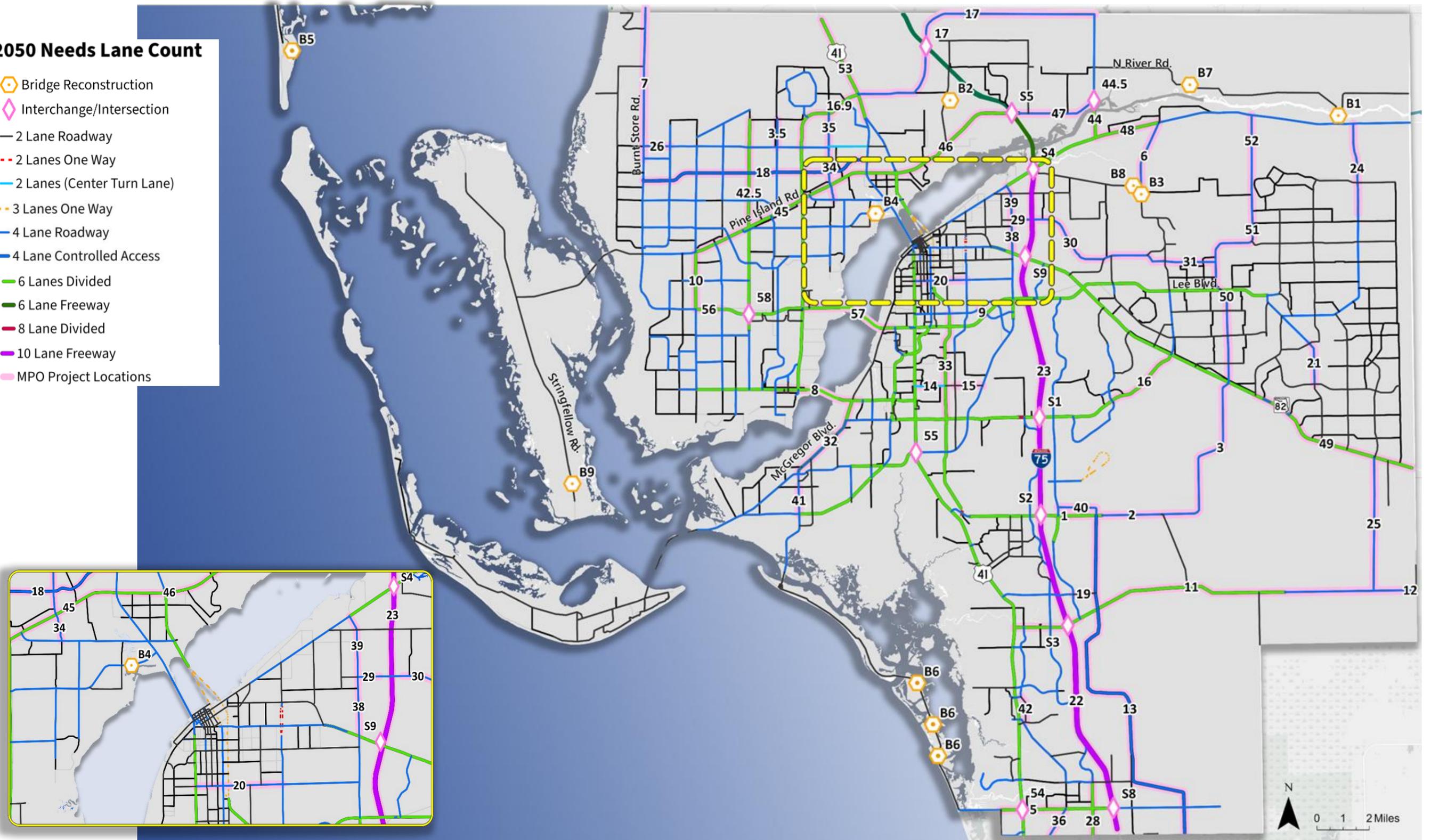


Figure 9. Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO 2050 Cost Feasible Roadway Projects Map

Figure 3-10: 2050 Roadway Needs

**2050 Needs Lane Count**

-  Bridge Reconstruction
-  Interchange/Intersection
-  2 Lane Roadway
-  2 Lanes One Way
-  2 Lanes (Center Turn Lane)
-  3 Lanes One Way
-  4 Lane Roadway
-  4 Lane Controlled Access
-  6 Lanes Divided
-  6 Lane Freeway
-  8 Lane Divided
-  10 Lane Freeway
-  MPO Project Locations

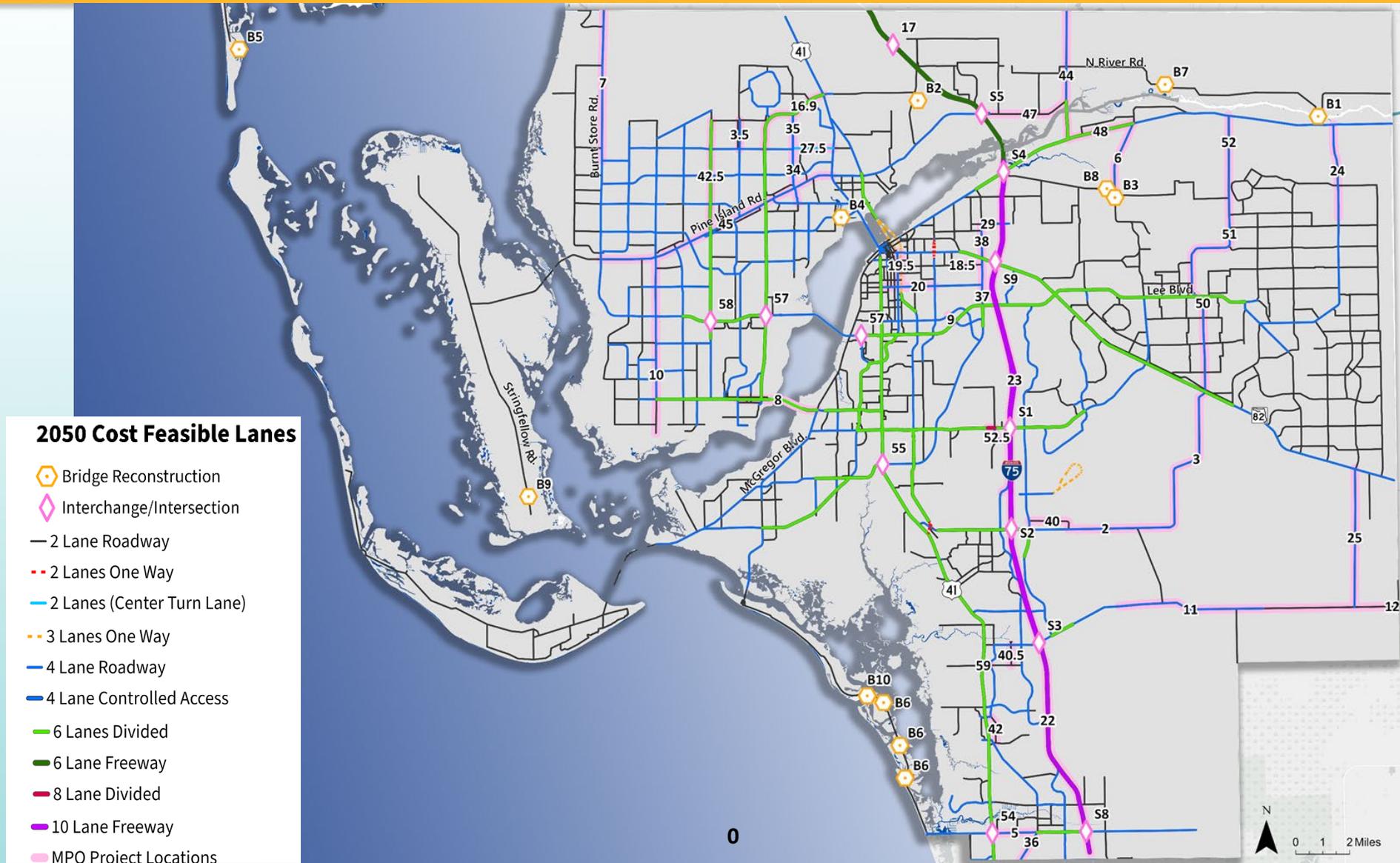


**2050 Transportation**



# Cost Feasible Roadways

- Reconstruction of 11 bridges
- 12 major intersection/interchange improvements
- Construction of 10 new roadway corridors
- 27 roadway widening projects
- Reconfiguration or Modification of 4 roadway corridors



## **INFORMATION ON THE SOUTHWEST FLORIDA PASSENGER RAIL PRIORITY REQUEST**

**Discussion Item:** Information on the Southwest Florida Passenger Rail priority request.

### **Background**

The Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC) launched a Passenger Rail Priorities Program in 2023 to identify priority intercity passenger rail projects that enhance Florida's rail projects. It was anticipated that the program will allow the state and local governments to take advantage of federal discretionary grants available through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act (IIJA), and planning grants available through the Florida Rail Enterprise.

A \$1.75 million Southwest Florida Rail Feasibility Study was among the Passenger Rail Priorities adopted by the MPOAC in 2025 following the submission of a project application and a Joint Resolution from the MPOs of Collier, Lee, Charlotte County - Punta Gorda, and Sarasota Manatee supporting the study. The study will investigate the feasibility of running intercity (Amtrak) and high speed rail on I-75 using its multimodal transit envelope and connecting the four metro areas to Tampa and its existing intercity (Amtrak) and planned high speed (Brightline extension from Orlando to Tampa) rail network.

The study has not been funded yet. The State's Florida Rail Enterprise account could be a potential funding source. Current fiscal year state budget has \$301.6 Million for that account, but we do not know how much is left. No funds have been set aside in the Governor's proposed budget for FY 2027. Another funding source could be the Corridor Identification and Development Program (Corridor ID) which is a federal discretionary grant program for comprehensive intercity passenger rail planning and development. *Step 1 Service Development Plan* grant under this program can fetch up to \$500,000 for pre-planning activities leading to a Service Development Plan.

The MPO staff has followed up on this priority item with FDOT District One staff and from those discussions staff is currently working with a consultant on developing a scope of services to give them more information on what we are seeking and to also help in potential grant funding.

### **Recommendation:**

This is an informational item only. No further action is required.

## TRANSPORTATION LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

**Attachment:** Transportation Legislation Overview

**Discussion Item:** Provide an update on the transportation related legislation this session.

### **Background**

Staff from both MPOs have been following the current transportation legislation this session in Tallahassee and we are including information on the current status. The legislative session is scheduled to adjourn on March 13, 2026.

### **Recommendation:**

This is an informational item only. No further action is required.

# Transportation Related Legislation

Joint Lee/Charlotte-Punta Gorda MPO Meeting

February 27, 2026

# HB 283/SB 498: School Zone and Pedestrian Safety

School Zone and Pedestrian Safety: This bill requires that design & construction plans for the installation of crosswalks in school zones or on certain streets, roads, or highways to include certain traffic control devices; these devices include various beacons and lights that conform to standards set forth by the manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices. Effective July 1, 2026

# HB 239/SB 558: Standards for Storm Water Systems

Standards for Storm Water Systems: Requires storm water systems in counties & municipalities, respectively, to comply with specified DOT standards; provides inspection requirements for such systems; specifies that certain local standards are superseded; provides finding of important state interest. Effective Date: July 1, 2026

# HB 101/SB 356 Utility Terrain Vehicles

Utility Terrain Vehicles: Authorizes utility terrain vehicle (UTV) to be operated during all hours; authorizes operation of UTVs on certain roadways & on certain parts of State Highway System; authorizes DOT to prohibit use of UTVs under certain circumstances; authorizes persons possessing certain licenses to operate UTV; requires owners or operators of UTV to comply with certain requirements & regulations; authorizes county or municipality to restrict operation of UTVs under certain circumstances; provides civil penalties; requires DHSMV to issue license plate to owner or lessee of vehicle registered as UTV upon payment of certain taxes & fees; requires that license plates for UTVs comply with specified provisions. Effective Date: January 1, 2027

# HB 37/SB 260: Removal, Storage, and Cleanup of Electric Vehicles

Removal, Storage, and Cleanup of Electric Vehicles: Requires counties to establish daily administration fee for proper storage of certain electric vehicles; authorizes municipalities to establish daily administration fee for proper storage of certain electric vehicles; provides maximum amount for such fees; defines "daily administration fee" & "proper storage"; provides that motor vehicle insurers are not required to pay certain costs; provides that reasonable fee for service includes any daily administration fee. Effective Date: July 1, 2026

# SB 804: Electric Vehicle Registration Fees

Electric Vehicle Registration Fees; Defining the term “battery electric vehicle”; requiring the owner of a battery electric vehicle to pay certain annual registration fees; requiring that such fees be deposited into the State Transportation Trust Fund and used for planning, construction, maintenance and repair of public roads.

# SB 680/HB 653: Electric Vehicle Charging Taxation

Electric Vehicle Charging Taxation; Revising the definition of the terms “distribution company” and “utility service”; revising the definition of the term “retail sale”, etc. Effective Date: Upon becoming a law

# SB 548/HB 1139: Growth Management

Growth Management; Deleting an exception to an applicability provision relating to concurrency; requiring that a demonstrated-need study use plan-based methodology for a certain purpose; revising the voting threshold required for approval of an ordinance increasing an impact fee beyond certain phase-in limitations; prohibiting local governments and school districts from increasing impact fee rates beyond certain phase-in limitations by more than a specified percentage within a certain timeframe, etc. Effective Date: 7/1/2026

# HB 53/SB 1254: Rapid Rail Transit Compact

Rapid Rail Transit Compact: Authorizes Governor to execute rapid rail transit compact to study the feasibility of rapid rail transit service between Alabama, Florida, Louisiana and Mississippi, The compact would establish and create a joint agency called the Southern Rail Commission. Effective Date: July 1, 2026

# HB 243/SB 382: Electric Bicycles, Scooters, and Motorcycles

Creates an Electric Bicycle Safety Task Force adjunct to the Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles that will submit a report on legislative recommendations to the Governor and Legislature by October 1, 2026. Updates reporting requirements for crash reports involving electric bicycles, scooters and motorcycles and requires the state to maintain relevant statistics. Additionally, the bill updates penalties for operating certain classifications of electric bicycles.

# SB 910/HB 323: Parking on Public Property

Defines the terms public property and publicly owned buildings or facilities, requires local governments to issue refunds to owners of vehicles who pay a fee to park in certain circumstances, and prohibits vehicles from being towed or issued a traffic citation for a specified period after being parked on public property. Additionally, the bill prohibits local governments from allowing private businesses to use public property to operate fee based private parking.

# SB 1220/HB 1233: Transportation

Providing requirements for an infrastructure development and improvement component included in a port's strategic plan; requiring the Department of Transportation to coordinate with the Department of Commerce, specified ports, and the Federal Government for a certain purpose; revising duties of the Department of Transportation relating to airport systems in this state; providing that the department serves as the primary point of contact for statewide topographic aerial LiDAR procurement and certain cost sharing, etc. Authorizes compliant personal delivery devices on bicycle lanes, bicycle paths and roadway shoulders, except where prohibited.