

**Florida MPO Advisory Council  
Meeting of the Governing Board  
October 28, 2021  
Orlando, Florida  
Meeting Minutes**

**Governing Board Members in Attendance:**

IN-PERSON (GOVERNING BOARD – A TOTAL OF 13 WITH 9 MAKING AN IN-PERSON QUORUM):

Commissioner Nick Maddox, Capital Region TPA, Chair  
Commissioner Sandy Johnson, Broward MPO  
Commissioner James Herston, Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO  
Commissioner Robert Bender, Florida-Alabama TPO  
Commissioner Karen Seel, Forward Pinellas  
Councilmember Fred Forbes, Lee County MPO  
Commissioner Mayra Uribe, MetroPlan Orlando  
Mayor Dick Rynearson, Okaloosa-Walton TPO  
Commissioner Phillip Walker, Polk TPO  
Commissioner Chris Cloudman, River to Sea TPO  
Commissioner Vanessa Baugh, Sarasota/Manatee MPO  
Councilmember Andrea Young, Space Coast TPO  
Councilmember Stephanie Morgan, St. Lucie TPO

IN-PERSON (OTHERS):

Jeff Kramer, MPOAC Interim Director/CUTR  
Paul Gougelman, MPOAC General Counsel  
Tia Boyd, CUTR  
Karen Brunelle, Federal Highway Administration  
Romero Dill, Florida Department of Transportation  
Abra Horne, Florida Department of Transportation  
Paula San Gregorio, Florida Department of Transportation  
Alison Stettner, Florida Department of Transportation  
Erika Thompson, Florida Department of Transportation  
Bryan Calteka, Broward MPO  
Greg Slay, Capital Region TPA  
Brandy Otero, Collier MPO  
Scott Philips, Collier MPO  
Don Scott, Lee County MPO  
Gary Huttman, Metroplan Orlando  
Nick Lepp, MetroPlan Orlando

Rob Balmes, Ocala/Marion MPO  
Dawn Schwartz, Okaloosa-Walton TPO  
Chandra Fredrick, Polk TPO  
Colleen Nicoulin, River to Sea TPO  
Dave Hutchinson, Sarasota/Manatee MPO  
Peter Buchwald, St. Lucie TPO  
Don Scott, Lee County MPO  
Mark Reichert, Member of the Public  
Yvonne Bough

**VIRTUAL (GOVERNING BOARD – A TOTAL OF 3 THAT CANNOT CONTRIBUTE TO A QUORUM):**

Tim Stanley, Heartland TPO  
Commissioner Mary Alford, Gainesville MTPO  
Commissioner Craig Estep, Lake-Sumter MPO

**VIRTUAL (OTHERS):**

Austin Mount, Florida-Alabama TPO  
Gary Kramer, Florida-Alabama TPO  
Scott Koons, Gainesville MTPO  
Cathy Kendall, Federal Highway Administration  
Justin Hall, Florida Department of Transportation  
Dana Reiding, Florida Department of Transportation  
Anna Taylor, Florida Department of Transportation  
Kellie Smith, Florida Department of Transportation  
Dave Muntean, Kittelson & Associates, Inc.  
Daniel Crotty, Sepi, Inc.  
Mary Ann Rozengard, Stokes Creative Group, Inc.’

**1 CALL TO ORDER**

Commissioner Nick Maddox, Chair, Capital Region TPA, called the meeting to order at 3:00 p.m. and a quorum was determined. All in attendance introduced themselves. Those attending online were then given an opportunity to introduce themselves.

Persons attending online were asked to type their questions and comments into the meeting chat box.

The meeting attendees stood for the pledge of allegiance.

A motion to allow online members to participate in the meeting due to the extraordinary circumstances of COVID-19 was made by Commissioner Robert Bender, Florida-Alabama TPO,

and seconded by Commissioner James Herston, Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO. The motion was approved unanimously. The motion was then rescinded because no MPOAC Governing Board members were present online at the time, though three members later joined the meeting online.

As a result, Commissioner Robert Bender, Florida-Alabama TPO, made a motion to reinstate the motion allowing online members to participate in the meeting due to the extraordinary circumstances of COVID-19. Commissioner James Herston, Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO, seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

## 2 APPROVAL OF MINUTES: JULY 29, 2021 MEETING

Commissioner Vanessa Baugh, Sarasota/Manatee MPO, moved to approve the minutes of the July 29, 2021 meeting of the MPOAC Governing Board. Commissioner James Herston, Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO, seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

## 3 PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were made.

## 4 EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

- UPWP REPORT

Item 4A, UPWP Report, was deferred to the MPOAC budget discussion under item 6B.

- LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Mr. Kramer presented an update of federal and state legislative activity of interest to the MPOAC membership.

The legislative session starts on January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2021 and ends on March 11<sup>th</sup>, 2022, unless there are extensions. The legislative committees have begun meeting and approximately 766 bills have been submitted to date, but Mr. Kramer noted that this number is changing quickly. Previously, the number of bills typically exceeds 1000. The bills of interest to the MPOAC membership include the following:

- HB179: Photographic Enforcement of School Bus Safety
- HB 127: First Responder Roadway Safety
- HB 157 and SB 398 Companion Bill: Transportation Projects

- Modifies the language related to the State Transportation Trust Fund (STTF) that caps spending from the trust fund on public transportation project at 25% of the value of the overall STTF
- SB 426: Amends Section 339.175, F.S. to dissolve the Tampa Bay Area Regional Transit Authority (TBARTA) and the Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC), which has been rebranded as the Sun Coast Transportation Planning Alliance (SCTPA).

The printed version of MPOAC legislative priorities has been provided here at the meeting and has been mailed to MPO offices across the state. The legislative summary from the 2021 Florida session has been posted on the MPOAC website.

The Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act was extended on October 1st, 2021 to October 31st, 2021. Unless Congress approves an additional extension or a replacement for the FAST Act, there will be a furlough of federal employees whose positions are funded from the Highway Trust Fund (HTF) and a pause in federal funding for transportation projects that have not already been approved.

Mr. Kramer shared his email address ([kramer@usf.edu](mailto:kramer@usf.edu)) for those with questions. Questions received by Mr. Kramer regarding the legislative update will be recorded.

- HONORING STEVE DIEZ

Mr. Kramer led a brief remembrance and moment of silence for Steve Diez, former Hernando/Citrus MPO Executive Director

- THANK YOU

Mr. Kramer thanked FDOT staff, including Alison Stettner, Abra Horne, Paula San Gregorio, Romero Dill, and Erika Thompson, the MPOAC Staff Directors, and Chair Don Scott for their support during his time as the MPOAC Interim Executive Director.

## 5 AGENCY REPORTS

- FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Ms. Abra Horne, FDOT Metropolitan Planning Administrator, presented the FDOT Agency Report and reviewed recent FDOT activities of note for the MPOs and their partners.

Ms. Horne shared that Erika Thompson, FDOT, has assisted in scheduling the Florida Metropolitan Planning Partnership (FMPP). The meeting will be held on January 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>,

2022. Ms. Thompson is developing a preliminary list of topics for the meeting and the FDOT Office of Policy Planning (OPP) is asking for interactive ideas to include in the meeting. An email was sent to the MPO staff directors asking for topics and sharing a preliminary list of topics.

Ms. Horne discussed three upcoming projects:

- The Consolidated Planning Grant (CPG) is estimated to be completed by the end of 2021.
- The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) template is estimated to be completed by mid-November 2021.
- The UPWP thresholds is estimated to be completed by the end of 2021.

Ms. Horne shared that later in the meeting she will provide an update on FDOT actions to address this year's federal planning findings and a schedule for Census information.

#### • FLORIDA DIVISION OF FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

Ms. Karen Brunelle, Director of Project Development, Florida Division, Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), updated the members on the activities of the Florida Division Office of FHWA and brought forward information of importance to the membership.

The statewide planning findings and approval report for 2021 were included in the meeting agenda packets. Ms. Brunelle shared that Florida was recognized for three noteworthy practices 1) partnerships, 2) public involvement, and 3) transit.

Meeting attendees were informed that there was one corrective action regarding an MPO not adopting transit safety targets, but that the MPO adopted transit safety targets at the end of September. The documentation is still under review and a letter will be sent out once the corrective action is resolved. FHWA made three recommendations, which include the following:

- 1) UPWP template, thresholds, and tracking of non-PL funds.
- 2) Improve the STIP project descriptions and timeliness when submitting the materials for the planning findings review.
- 3) More frequent all-partner communication between FHWA, MPOs, and FDOT to enhance the planning process.

#### Transportation Performance Measurement (TPM)

Ms. Brunelle thanked those who participated in the Target Establishment Survey and the Freight Assessment Survey. All surveys were completed on time and no extensions were needed.

Ms. Brunelle shared the following updates with meeting attendees:

- May - FHWA published updated TPM performance data.
- July - FHWA determined that the transit asset management plan (TAMP) was consistent with federal requirements.
- August - FDOT confirmed that they were going to use the National Performance Management Research Data Set (NPMRDS) for the PM2 and PM3 activities and set the 2021 safety targets at zero.
- September - FHWA determined compliance with the National Highway System (NHS) bridge condition.
- October - FHWA determined that Florida was in compliance with the Interstate System pavement condition.
- Florida TPM Training
  - Training held in October
    - Advancing TPM and Decision-Making Seminar – How to Use Data to Tell the TPM Story and Establish Targets.
    - The South Regional Assessment Management Peer Exchange.
  - Upcoming training
    - Unmanned Aircraft System (UAS) Interactive Workshop will be held virtually in November.
    - TAMP training will be held in November, December, and January.
    - The MPO Target Setting Study Peer Exchanges will be held in December.
- TPM Activities
  - The end of December is the end point for the PM2 and PM3 data collection period.
  - February 27, 2022 is the deadline for MPO action to adopt their own safety targets or accept the FDOT safety targets.

## 6 BUSINESS ITEMS & PRESENTATIONS

Commissioner Mayra Uribe, MetroPlan Orlando made a motion to move agenda items 6E and 6C. Councilmember Fred Forbes, Lee County MPO, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

### • MPOAC EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR SELECTION

The MPOAC Governing Board, at the July 29, 2021 meeting in Orlando, FL, delegated authority to the MPOAC Executive Committee to prepare a timeline for recruitment of an Executive Director, prepare a shortlist of candidates, conduct interviews, and recommend in order of preference, a list of finalists for MPOAC Governing Board approval. An advertisement for the MPOAC Executive Director position was posted to the State of Florida People First employment website, the MPOAC website, the AMPO website, and the NARC website on September 14, 2021 with an October 5, 2021 closing date. The Committee met

on October 11, 2021 to review 15 resumes, prepare a shortlist of candidates, and select applicants to be formally interviewed. A total of 2 candidates were interviewed on October 28, 2021. Based on resumes and interviews, the MPOAC Executive Committee identified a finalist for Governing Board approval. Mr. Don Scott, MPOAC Staff Directors' Advisory Committee Chair, presented this agenda item.

The MPOAC Staff Directors' Advisory Committee recommended approval of Mark Reichert as the MPOAC Executive Director to the MPOAC Governing Board.

Councilmember Andrea Young, Space Coast TPO, made a motion to approve Mark Reichert to be hired as the MPOAC Executive Director. Commissioner Vanessa Baugh, Sarasota/Manatee MPO, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Mark Reichert spoke to the group and expressed his excitement at being selected as the MPOAC Executive Director and shared his email ([mreichert2101@comcast.net](mailto:mreichert2101@comcast.net)) with the meeting attendees.

Commissioner Maddox, Chair, charged Mr. Reichert with creating a vision for the MPOAC moving forward. He encouraged Mr. Reichert to be innovative and encouraged the MPOAC membership in supporting the development of that vision.

The meeting attendees discussed the following:

- Shortening the legislative policy positions to streamline and improve how the MPOAC promotes its positions (funding, revenue streams, etc.).
- Increasing awareness about the MPOAC to other board members and other organizations.
  - Promoting the MPOAC as the experts and leaders in transportation.
  - Using memberships to support common goals and garner support for the MPOAC's stance.
  - Emphasizing the importance of commonality and comradery between organizations with overlapping goals and interests.

Commissioner Maddox discussed the MPOAC strategic plan, highlighting the need for the meeting agendas to mirror the strategic plan and aligning with the strategic plan priorities. He encouraged the Governing Board members to consider what needs to be changed, how the MPOAC can be innovative, and how it can reach the established goals in 3-5 years.

- FUTURE MEETING LOCATION AND HYBRID MEETING OPTIONS

The MPOAC will meet four times during calendar year 2022 (January 27, April 28, July 28, and October 27). The October 2021 meeting of the MPOAC is being held at a new venue (the Renaissance Orlando Airport Hotel) to comply with state requirements to secure “green lodging” accommodations when possible. Additionally, the Staff Directors’ Advisory Committee requested that the October 2021 meeting be conducted as a hybrid meeting to accommodate members that are unable to attend due to COVID 19 precautions and to provide an alternative method for the public to attend the meeting. The MPOAC has not secured a meeting venue for the calendar year 2022 meetings. This agenda item provides members with an opportunity to express their opinions on the Renaissance Orlando Airport Hotel as a meeting venue for calendar year 2022 and to discuss the relative value of continuing a hybrid meeting format given additional costs associated with the format and the potential impact it may have on achieving a quorum. Mr. Don Scott, MPOAC Staff Directors’ Advisory Committee Chair, presented this agenda item.

The MPOAC Governing Board Members were informed that the MPOAC Staff Directors’ Advisory Committee made a motion requesting the MPOAC Executive Director find hybrid meeting formats for the 2022 MPOAC meetings.

Councilmember Fred Forbes, Lee County MPO, made a motion to approve the MPOAC Staff Directors’ Advisory Committees recommendations. Commissioner Sandy Johnson, Broward MPO, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- MPOAC BUDGET DISCUSSION

Ms. Alison Stettner, Director, FDOT Office of Policy Planning, presented a financial update for the MPOAC including existing contracts and a Unified Planning Work program (UPWP) and budget summary. Membership dues and continuity of operations protocols will be included in the presentation. The MPOAC procurement process will also be discussed.

Overview

Ms. Stettner explained the current structure for financial oversight, financial responsibilities of the MPOAC Governing Board, and provided a UPWP review using the new UPWP budget template currently under development. The UPWP budget template was shared with meeting attendees to reference during the presentation.

On September 1, 2021, FDOT took full financial control of the MPOAC's finances. The budget highlights shared by Ms. Stettner are as follows:

- \$332,000 was allocated for salaries.
- There are 5 existing contracts – MPOAC Interim Executive Director, general planning support, FTA 5305(d), the MPOAC Institute for Elected Officials, and legal.
- A total of 6 legal invoices were unpaid and a total of 5 planning invoices were unpaid from FY 2020-2021. Some of these invoices had accrued interest, but both the University of South Florida and the law firm of Weiss Serota waived all accrued interest. The MPOAC is now paid up to date for the planning and legal contracts.
- Several membership dues that were unpaid are now paid.
- Progress reports have been submitted. Progress report reviews are coordinated with Mr. Don Scott in his role as Chair of the Staff Directors' Advisory Committee to ensure that activities align with the expectations of the MPOAC. Once approved, invoices are submitted for payment.

The MPOAC has memberships with the following organizations:

- Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) paid February 2021.
- Floridians for Better Transportation (FBT) submitted October 2021.
- Florida Public Transportation Association (FPTA) invoice due November 2021.
- Intelligent Transportation Systems of Florida (ITS – FL). Invoice due January 2022, but was not paid in 2021.
- National Association of Regional Councils (NARC) paid October 2021.
- The total cost membership dues is \$170,692.16.

#### Procurement

There are several contracts expiring on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2022 and the MPOAC Interim Executive Director contract expires on December 31, 2021. Options for procurement include exempt, exempt multiple for universities and Regional Planning Councils, and request for proposals (RFPs) for a competitive contract. Ms. Stettner explained the timeline for each procurement type. The exempt schedule takes approximately 3 months and the RFP takes approximately 7 months. The Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) could help with the exempt contracts, but not the RFP.

The meeting attendees were updated on the balances of each contract and contract history. Ms. Stettner recommended that the MPOAC evaluate each contract.

Courses of action need to be decided for the following:

- Procurement type
- Type of services and work
- Memberships and dues

- Financial procedures and evaluations for consultants
- Continuity of operations

### Discussion

Commissioner Maddox, Chair, shared that the MPOAC Executive Committee members discussed the need for a Financial Policies and Procedures Committee. The Financial Policies and Procedures Committee will be tasked with creating a financial policies and procedures handbook. Alison Stettner, FDOT, shared that the document needed to be drafted by January and approved in April. Commissioner Maddox asked the Governing Board members and Staff Directors to email staff to volunteer for the committee.

Commissioner Vanessa Baugh, Sarasota/Manatee MPO, made a motion for the establishment of a Financial Policies and Procedures Committee including volunteers from the Staff Directors' Advisory Committee and the Governing Board, and staffed by Mark Reichert, MPOAC Executive Director with support from Allison Stettner, FDOT. The committee will draft a financial policies and procedures handbook for review and recommendation by the Staff Directors' Advisory Committee and review and approval by the MPOAC Governing Board in April 2022. Commissioner Robert Bender, Florida-Alabama TPO, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner Mayra Uribe, MetroPlan Orlando, made a motion for the MPOAC Executive Committee to serve as the Bylaws Committee to make any necessary changes to the bylaws. The committee will bring forth recommended changes for review and recommendation by the Staff Directors' Advisory Committee and review and approval by the MPOAC Governing Board. Councilmember Fred Forbes, Lee County MPO, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Alison Stettner shared that the Department will look into the financial practices and assign a liaison to monitor invoices and contracts to ensure federal and state compliance.

Don Scott shared that the MPOAC Staff Directors' Advisory Committee recommended that the MPOAC Governing Board select the exempt multiple procurement option, task the MPOAC Policy and Technical Committee with developing the needed scopes, and renew existing memberships as identified, and task the MPOAC Executive Director with providing detailed budget updates at each MPOAC meeting as a standing item.

Councilmember Fred Forbes, Lee County MPO, made a motion to approve the MPOAC Staff Directors' Advisory Committees recommendations and for the Financial Policies and Procedures Committee to discuss how to address the identified financial concerns, identify long-term solutions for the MPOAC's financial needs, and review the MPOAC procedures to

ensure that they align with the MPOAC's future vision. Commissioner Mayra Uribe, MetroPlan Orlando, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

- FEDERAL PLANNING FINDINGS

Federal Highway Administration/ Federal Transit Administration (FHWA/FTA) approval of the Statewide Transportation Improvement Program (STIP) must include a finding that the process from which the STIP was developed is consistent with the provisions of federal rule related to the statewide transportation planning process. The findings from this annual assessment are contained in a summary report. The summary report accompanied a September 30, 2021 letter approving the Fiscal Year 2021/22-2024/25 STIP. The report recognized three noteworthy practices, one corrective action, and offered three recommendations for FDOT's consideration to improve the program. Ms. Abra Horne, Metropolitan Planning Administrator, FDOT Policy Planning Office, presented this item.

#### Corrective Action

The Public Transportation Agency Safety Plan (PTASP) final rule requires MPOs, in coordination with transit providers and the State, to set their initial transit safety targets, agree upon specific written provisions for transit safety measures with the State and public transportation providers, and include transit safety measures and targets in all Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs) and Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) after July 20, 2021. A few MPOs in the state did not meet that deadline, but have subsequently addressed this issue. As noted by Karen Brunelle as part of the FHWA agency report earlier in the meeting, the documentation is still under review and the corrective action is pending resolution until that review is completed.

#### Recommendations

The following recommendations and FDOT actions to implement those recommendations were presented by Ms. Horne:

- UPWP
  - FHWA/FTA Recommendations – Complete a template for use in the FY22 MPO UPWPs, finalize UPWP revision thresholds so that they are in place prior to implementation of the Consolidated Planning Grant (CPG) process, and continue working with Federal partners to clarify the planning funds table (PL, STBG, 5305, CMAQ, TA, etc.) to account for any funding discrepancies between the STIP and MPO TIPs.
  - FDOT Action – The UPWP template and UPWP thresholds are on target to be completed by the end of 2021. The monthly tracking sheets for PL and non-PL funds will continue to be provided.

- STIP Documentation
  - FHWA/FTA Recommendation – standardized and recurring communication between FDOT Central Office and Districts and improved coordination and information exchange between FDOT, MPOs and transit agencies, and develop a realistic schedule that allows sufficient time for review of supporting documentation for the STIP and Statewide Planning Finding.
  - FDOT Action – Monthly messages and on-line training are being put in place to improve communication between FDOT Central Office and the Districts and a new mutually agreeable schedule is being developed to allow for more time for federal review.
- Partner Communication
  - FHWA/FTA Recommendation – continued improvement communicating with all federal planning partners.
  - FDOT Action – Innovative strategies to communicate with partners are being developed, including virtual office hours for MPOs and liaisons to provide improved access to the FDOT OPP team.

### Successes

The following noteworthy activities for FDOT were presented by Ms. Horne:

- Partnership – including making process improvements to address federal partner concerns and working on ways to share practice innovations through training and peer exchanges.
- Public Involvement and Outreach – FDOT coordinated with federal partners to develop a successful hybrid meeting approach
- Transit – FDOT updated TBEST (Transit Boardings Estimation and Simulation Tool), a GIS-based scenario planning tool, integrating socio-economic, land use, and transit network data.

### • 2020 CENSUS UPDATE

On behalf of Mr. Joel Worrell, Transportation Data Inventory Manager, FDOT Transportation Data and Analytics Office, Ms. Abra Horne, presented information on the 2020 Census schedule and resources.

Ms. Horne provided a little background, noting that urban areas are revised every 10 years based on population counts from the decennial Census and urban boundaries are adjusted to be consistent with Census data and transportation needs. She continued by saying Census information is not released all at once, but on a schedule over a period of months/years. May 2021 was the first release of the apportionment results from the Census and August 2021 was the second release of Census data products.

Ms. Horne highlighted the following proposed changes for the 2020 Urban Areas data:

- Adoption of housing density unit threshold instead of population density with new minimum thresholds,
- Increase minimum threshold to qualify as an urban area from 2,500 people to 10,000 people or 4,000 housing units,
- Cease distinguishing between different types of urban areas,
- Refined urban area delineation for jumps, hops, and low-density areas, and
- Use worker flow data to split and adjust boundaries or adjacent urban areas.

Ms. Horne shared the estimated Census implementation timeline, which included:

- Publication of the urban area criteria final rule in Fall/Winter 2021.
- Publication of a list of qualifying urban areas (with boundaries) in Spring/Summer 2022.
- Transportation Management Area (TMA) designation in Fall 2022 and states revisit the statewide PL distribution formula before October 2022.
- MPOs adjust MPAs to include new urban area boundaries before next MTP update, after October 1, 2022, or within 4 years of new urban area boundary designation
- If identified, new MPOs designated by Governor in Spring/Summer 2023.
- New TMAs must adopt a congestion management plan and Governor approves adjusted urban area boundaries in Spring 2024.
- New MPOs adopt Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTPs) and Transportation Improvement Programs (TIPs) in Spring/Summer 2026.

Ms. Horne shared that FDOT Central Office will make tools available and share the resources posted on the FDOT Website.

## 7 COMMUNICATIONS

The Consolidated Planning Grant resolution transmittal was included in the agenda package.

## 8 MEMBER COMMENTS

No member comments were made.

## 9 ADJOURNMENT

The next meeting of the MPOAC Governing Board will be January 27, 2022. A meeting notice will be sent out at least one month prior to the meeting date.

Adjournment 4:19 p.m.