



**MARTIN METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION  
POLICY BOARD MEETING**  
Martin County Administrative Building Commission Chambers  
2401 SE Monterey Road  
Stuart, FL 34996  
[www.martinmpo.com](http://www.martinmpo.com)  
(772) 221-1498

**Monday, April 8, 2024 @ 9:00 am**

**MINUTES**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** – MPO Chair Troy McDonald called the meeting to order at 9:02 a.m.
- 2. PRAYER** - Pastor Jim Harp, Stuart Alliance Church led the Invocation.
- 3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE** – MPO Chair Troy McDonald led the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 4. ROLL CALL** – Cheryl White called roll.

**PRESENT:**

Troy McDonald, Chair  
Doug Smith, Vice Chair  
Commissioner Sarah Heard  
Commissioner Stacey Hetherington  
Commissioner Kaija Mayfield  
Mayor Susan Gibbs-Thomas

**REPRESENTING:**

City of Stuart Commission  
Martin County Board of County Commission  
Martin County Board of County Commission  
Martin County Board of County Commission  
Town of Sewall's Point Commission  
Village of Indiantown Council

**EXCUSED ABSENCE:**

Commissioner Harold Jenkins  
Commissioner Christopher Collins

Martin County Board of County Commission  
City of Stuart Commission

**Staff in Attendance:**

Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator  
Ricardo Vazquez, Principal Planner  
Cheryl White, Transit Specialist

**Others in Attendance:**

Larry Sofield, Vice Chair of the Citizen's Advisory Committee  
Jim Harp, Stuart Alliance Church  
James Brown, FDOT Florida Turnpike Enterprise  
Jazlyn Heywood, FDOT Florida Turnpike Enterprise  
Henry Pinzon, FDOT Florida Turnpike Enterprise

Andrew Velasquez, FDOT Florida Turnpike Enterprise  
Ron Kareiva, FDOT District Four  
Kelly Budhu, FDOT District Four  
Robert Lopes, FDOT District Four  
Kristopher Kehres, FDOT District Four  
Kris McKirdy, FDOT District Four  
Chris Harris, FDOT District Four  
Bill Howell, Lochner Engineering

**A quorum was present for the meeting.**

## **5. APPROVE AGENDA**

**A motion to approve the Agenda was made by Commissioner Doug Smith and was seconded by Commissioner Sarah Heard. The motion passed unanimously.**

## **6. APPROVE MINUTES**

MPO Policy Board Meeting – February 26, 2024

**A motion to approve the MPO Policy Board Minutes of February 26, 2024, was made by Commissioner Sarah Heard and was seconded by Commissioner Doug Smith. The motion passed unanimously.**

## **7. PUBLIC COMMENTS - None**

## **8. AGENDA ITEMS**

### **A. FY23-FY24 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) AMENDMENT #2 – DE-OBLIGATION OF PL FUNDS**

Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator, explained that the de-obligation of Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) Planning (PL) funds is an FDOT process that releases federal funds previously authorized but not expended by the MPO. MPO staff estimates approximately \$254,000 for consultant services will not be expended by June 30, 2024. MPO staff requests that \$254,000 in PL funds be unencumbered and de-obligated in the FY23-FY24 UPWP and be made available in Year 1 of the next FY25-FY26 UPWP.

**A motion to approve the FY23-FY24 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Amendment #2 – De-obligation of PL Funds was made by Commissioner Doug Smith and was seconded by Commissioner Stacey Hetherington. The motion passed unanimously.**

### **B. TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) MODIFICATION #2**

Ms. Beltran introduced the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Modification #2 which is required to reflect the decreased amount due to the FY23-FY24 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) being amended to de-obligate funds for the FY25-FY26 UPWP.

**A motion to approve the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Modification #2 was made by Commissioner Doug Smith and was seconded by Commissioner Stacey Hetherington. The motion passed unanimously.**

### **C. DRAFT FY25-FY26 UPWP**

Ms. Beltran presented the Draft FY25-FY26 UPWP to the Committee members. Ms. Beltran noted that the final UPWP will be presented in the May meetings and that most of the funding for consultants is focused on the Long Range Transportation Plan, the US-1 Congestion Management Study, and a new quarterly update interval to the Development Review Interactive Map.

**A motion to approve the Draft FY25-FY26 UPWP was made by Commissioner Doug Smith and was seconded by Commissioner Stacey Hetherington. The motion passed unanimously.**

### **D. TITLE VI AND NONDISCRIMINATION POLICY AND PLAN UPDATE**

Ricardo Vazquez, Principal Planner, introduced the Title VI and Nondiscrimination Policy and Plan Update. The following updates were made to the Title VI and Other Nondiscrimination Policy and Plan:

- Updated the Martin County BOCC ADA webpage link
- Updated Table 1 – “Top Languages Spoken at Home in Martin County” with American Community Survey (ACS) 2022 5-year estimates
- Added events to the Title VI activity log

**A motion to approve the Title VI and Nondiscrimination Policy and Plan Update was made by Commissioner Doug Smith and was seconded by Commissioner Stacey Hetherington. The motion passed unanimously.**

### **E. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ANNUAL REPORT - 2023**

Mr. Vazquez presented the Public Involvement Annual Report which is used to help ensure public input is considered during the transportation planning process.

Commissioner Stacey Hetherington wanted to compliment the MPO on the significant improvements year over year by engaging more members of the public.

Commissioner Kaija Mayfield wanted to note that because the Martin MPO’s Facebook page is labeled as “Martin in Motion” it made it very difficult to find. Ms. Beltran advised that the Facebook page had been named after the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan and that it would be updated with the new 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan.

**A motion to approve the Public Involvement Annual Report - 2023 was made by Commissioner Stacey Hetherington and was seconded by Commissioner Doug Smith. The motion passed unanimously.**

## **F. TURNPIKE AND I-95 DIRECT CONNECTION PD&E STUDY PRESENTATION**

Ms. Beltran introduced Jazlyn Heywood with the Florida Turnpike Enterprise, who presented the Turnpike and I-95 Direct Connection PD&E Study.

Commissioner Doug Smith asked if there would be access to Bridge Road. Ms. Heywood advised that they would not be adding any connections to the Turnpike due to safety concerns. Commissioner Smith asked if it would be possible to move the interchange further south. Henry Pinzon, FDOT's Environmental Management Engineer, advised that the area being presented was identified as the best possible area for this interchange. Commissioner Smith wanted to challenge the team to take another look and see about adding an offramp and onramp for the Turnpike at Bridge Road, specifically recalling that years ago, he sat with the experts who had presented a study for I-95 and Kanner Highway that would take out a hotel and a restaurant and the team was able to find a solution that did not remove those facilities.

Mayor Susan Gibbs Thomas added to Commissioner Smith's sentiments, offering that the interchange be placed further north of Bridge Road so that an individual getting on or off I-95 at Bridge Road could easily switch to the Turnpike.

Andrew Velasquez, FDOT Florida Turnpike Enterprise Staff, mentioned that individuals who want access to the Turnpike from Bridge Road could simply use the Indiantown Road interchange. Mr. Velasquez went on to offer to bring back a previous alternative that added an onramp and offramp, but that it may impact Bridge Road. Commissioner Smith commented that the initial idea that spurred this interchange was to remove the congestion and traffic from the Indiantown Road interchange, so suggesting just using the Indiantown Road interchange for the individuals off Bridge Road goes against the initial reason for this project.

Chair McDonald and Commissioner Smith both stated that Martin County residents should be getting something out of this if there is something to get. Commissioner Smith added that he thinks the project needs to go back before it moves forward and perhaps some additional alternatives need to be looked at.

Commissioner Sarah Heard encouraged FDOT to do as much public involvement as possible, mentioning the Town of Jupiter Island as well as the Board of County Commissioners.

Commissioner Kaija Mayfield wanted to note that the signage on the Turnpike needs some work, near the Indiantown Road interchange. Commissioner Mayfield also stated that, if the people in the Bridge Road area aren't clamoring for it, then an onramp or offramp should not be added, stressing that highway exits and entrances tend to proliferate growth.

Ms. Beltran wanted to recommend that FDOT come back to the MPO after going to the Town of Jupiter Island, the Board of County Commissioners, and the general public input. Ms. Heywood stated that they are planning to take these two alternatives to a public meeting in June and will revise their concepts based on all the feedback they receive. Ms. Heywood continued, stating that once this process is done, they also go to an external

engineer, give them the current concepts and feedback, and let them draft a concept.

Commissioner Smith raised concerns that if these two alternatives are the only alternatives shown to the public, the public will not have the opportunity to understand or know that there are additional options. Commissioner Smith encouraged FDOT to come back to the County Commission as well as the various Boards to receive additional input from Martin County. Commissioner Smith reinforced that he will continue to push for additional options, including an onramp and offramp, and encouraged that we do it right the first time.

Mayor Gibbs Thomas wanted to note that, based on the development projections she has seen for western Martin County, the numbers presented in the presentation are not accurate and are much higher.

## **G. DEVELOPMENT REVIEW INTERACTIVE MAP UPDATE**

Mr. Vazquez introduced the presented the Development Review Interactive Map Update to the Committee. The Development Review Interactive Map was developed to show County and municipal land developments. This information assists the MPO and its Policy Board in making decisions related to MPO project priorities. It also serves as a vital resource for many departments and agencies.

Chair McDonald complimented the map and was glad to see the data from Indiantown now included.

## **H. SR-710 UPDATE**

Ms. Beltran introduced Ron Kareiva from FDOT District Four to provide an update on the SR-710 projects. The widening projects have been going through the consultant selection process. The intersection relocation project for SR-714 has design ongoing with right of way funded, however, construction remains unfunded.

Chair McDonald wanted to know if SR-710 was planning to be widened in Okeechobee County. Ms. Beltran advised that it is not funded but it is still on their priority list.

Mr. Kareiva continued, stating that the Tommy Clements left turn lane project is currently under construction and once that is completed, the right turn lane will immediately begin construction.

Mayor Gibbs Thomas asked who would take care of appropriately maintaining the brush vegetation at the Tommy Clements intersection. Kristopher Kehres, Treasure Coast Operations Engineer, stated that this was originally included in the scope of the project, but it was not being done in a timely manner, so they used their internal maintenance to get it done. Mr. Kehres continued, stating that this area is part of an easement and there is also a canal on either side which presents an issue with clearing the brush vegetation. Mayor Gibbs Thomas asked who would continue to maintain this area once the construction phase of the project is completed. Mr. Kehres advised that there is an Asset Manager who will maintain this area and agreed to send an email to confirm this and will inform the Board.

Commissioner Smith asked how long it would take to begin on the right turn lane at Tommy Clements once the left turn lane is completed. Mr. Kehres advised that they will be using their "push button" program which will allow them to provide one of their existing contractors a work order to quickly begin work. Commissioner Smith asked that Mayor Gibbs Thomas be kept apprised of the status of construction.

**9. COMMENTS FROM ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS – None**

**10. COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS**

Commissioner Stacey Hetherington wanted to make everyone aware of the well-attended community meeting at South River Village where they discussed the traffic issues impacting this area. Commissioner Hetherington stated that there will be a permanent delineator that will be more visually appealing and will assist with the issues affecting the community. Commissioner Hetherington further stressed that there is still a desperate need for safety improvements and that they are advocating for a traffic light. Commissioner Hetherington also asked FDOT if they could provide any speed feedback signs as they are very much needed on Kanner Highway.

**11. COMMENTS FROM FDOT - None**

**12. NOTES - None**

**13. NEXT MEETING**

MPO Board Meeting – May 6, 2024

**ADJOURNMENT: 10:20 AM**

Approved by: *SIGNED FOR*

*Troy McDonald*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Troy McDonald, Chair

*5/6/24*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

Prepared by:

*Anthony O'Neill-Butler*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Anthony O'Neill-Butler, Administrative Assistant

*5-6-2024*  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Minutes Approved on May 6, 2024**

The Martin MPO solicits public participation without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status. Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or persons who require language translation services (free of charge) should contact Ricardo Vazquez, Principal Planner (Title VI/Non-discrimination Contact) at (772) 223-7983 or [rvazquez@martin.fl.us](mailto:rvazquez@martin.fl.us) in advance of the meeting. Hearing-impaired individuals are requested to telephone the Florida Relay System at #711.