



**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, September 18, 2023 @ 9:00 am**

**MINUTES**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** – MPO Chair Troy McDonald called the meeting to order at 9:00 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** - Lucine Martens, MPO Planner, called roll.

**PRESENT:**

Troy McDonald, Chair  
Doug Smith, Vice Chair  
Commissioner Sarah Heard  
Commissioner Stacey Hetherington  
Commissioner Harold Jenkins  
Commissioner Christopher Collins  
Commissioner James Campo  
Council Member 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  
Martin County Board of County Commission  
City of Stuart Commission  
Town of Sewall's Point Commission  
Village of Indiantown Council

**EXCUSED ABSENCE:**

**Staff in Attendance:**

Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator  
Ricardo Vazquez, Senior Planner  
Joy Puerta, Planner  
Lucine Martens, Planner  
Anthony O'Neill-Butler, Administrative Assistant

**Others in Attendance:**

Jessica Josselyn, Kittelson & Associates  
Jeff Weidner, Marlin Engineering  
Christine Fasiska, FDOT-District Four

James Brown, FDOT-FTE  
Kelly Budhu, FDOT-District Four  
Jim Harp, Stuart Alliance Church  
Gerald Bolden, Corradino Group  
Ali Soule, Brightline  
Wendy Parker  
Channa Reynolds  
Cheryl Swink  
Joe Flanagan

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

## **5. APPROVE AGENDA**

**Agenda was approved with the following changes:**

**Item 8E, Draft 2045 Regional Long Range Transportation Plan, continued till October 23, 2023.**

**A motion to approve the Agenda was made by Commissioner Doug Smith and seconded by Commissioner Harold Jenkins, the motion passed unanimously.**

## **6. APPROVE MINUTES**

MPO Policy Board Meeting – June 19, 2023

**A motion to approve the MPO Policy Board Minutes of June 19, 2023 was made by Commissioner Sarah Heard and seconded by Commissioner Doug Smith, the motion passed unanimously.**

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

## **8. AGENDA ITEMS**

### **A. FY24 - FY28 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) ROLL-FORWARD AMENDMENT**

Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator, explained the TIP Roll-Forward Amendment. Each year, FDOT asks that those funds approved in the previous year that remain be “rolled forward” in order to be expended in the upcoming year. These funds are then incorporated into the current TIP. MPO staff recommended the approval of the roll-forward amendment.

**A motion to approve the FY24 - FY28 TIP Roll-Forward Amendment was made by Commissioner Stacey Hetherington and seconded by Council Member Susan Gibbs-Thomas, the motion passed unanimously.**

## B. FY23-FY24 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP) REVISION 2/AMENDMENT

Beth Beltran requested to authorize Resolution #24-01 and Revision #2. Revision #2 is an amendment since we are increasing the budget by \$150,963.00. MPO staff recommends that this increase in funding be added to Task 4 – Consultant Services for the “2050 Long Range Transportation Plan” line item and Task 6 - Transportation Systems Planning Consultant "Bicycle and Pedestrian Facility Map" line item as follows:

FY21-FY22 UPWP Close-out		
Bike/Ped map update	\$ 22,500	
FY21-FY22 UPWP Close-out		
2050 LRTP	<u>127,500</u>	\$150,000
CPG – FTA 5305 funds		<u>+ 963</u>
2050 LRTP		
TOTAL FY24 UPWP BUDGET INCREASE		\$150,963

The approval would include the UPWP amendment, a resolution approving the amendment, and the amendment to the MPO agreement with FDOT so they can include the funds into FY24. MPO staff recommended approval.

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

## C. FY24 - FY28 TIP MODIFICATIONS

Beth Beltran informed the Board of modifications needed to the adopted TIP at the request of FDOT to ensure we are consistent with the State Work Programs. The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) requested four modifications for the FY24 – FY28 TIP. The modifications are listed below:

- US1 @ Joan Jefferson (FM# 438345-2)
  - Revise project name to include US1 @ Ocean Blvd., revise description, length, and add \$60,000 (previously \$300,000) to FY2023/24 PE funds
- Cove Road from SR-76/Kanner Highway to US1 (FM# 441700-1)
  - Revise project description
- Intersection Lighting Retrofit Improvement (FM# 447002-1)
  - Revise project description and length
- Martin County FY2022/2023-2023/2024 UPWP (FM# 439328-4)
  - Amendment to add \$150,000 in PL funds to FY24

**A motion to approve FY24 - FY28 TIP Modifications was made by Commissioner Stacey Heard and seconded by Commissioner James Campo, the motion passed unanimously.**

## **D. US-1 AT SW PALM CITY ROAD INTERSECTION FEASIBILITY STUDY - ALTERNATIVES**

Joy Puerta, MPO Planner and Project Manager, introduced Gerald Bolden from The Corradino Group. Gerald Bolden explained the scope of services which included identifying and evaluating conceptual alternatives and gathering input from the public and relevant stakeholders to recommend an alternative to eliminate the uncontrolled right turn from southbound US-1 onto southbound SW Palm City Road and deter traffic from using SW Palm City Road. Additionally, two public workshops were hosted to gather feedback from the public as well as a meeting with the City of Stuart Commission, all of which resulted in the recommendation of Alternative #5.

A sixth alternative was also presented after receiving public input recommending that more traffic calming areas and pedestrian walkways would further improve the area. As such, the sixth alternative was added into each of the five alternatives.

Commissioner Doug Smith raised concerns with the chicane and his belief that the chicane is not going to slow down the speeds versus a hard right turn. Commissioner Sarah Heard asked about the estimated cost of the traffic calming. Commissioner Heard estimated the cost to be at least \$1 million dollars and suggested that those funds could buy a lot more enforcement and that enforcement and changing individuals driving habits is what needs to be done. Council Member Susan Gibbs-Thomas asked for clarification on the raised crosswalks and their effectiveness at slowing traffic. Council Member Gibbs-Thomas also requested that the Board be provided with an estimated cost for the traffic calming alternative. Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator, clarified that the Complete Streets proposal is not “all or nothing” and certain components can be selected to be included.

Commissioner Stacey Hetherington was concerned that people will not heed the crosswalk signs. Commissioner Hetherington likes Alternative #5 but thinks it may need more thought put into the pedestrian section. Commissioner James Campo wondered if the current pedestrian crossing signs have done the trick and, if not, why are we continuing to invest in them. He asked to hear more from the City of Stuart.

Chair Troy McDonald spoke about his many years working on Palm City Road and his many near accidents that he has personally encountered. Chair McDonald agreed with Commissioner Doug Smith that the hard right turn would be preferable but that the residents do not want that. Chair McDonald also agreed with Commissioner Sarah Heard on the expensive cost of traffic calming. Chair McDonald stated that he ultimately will go with what our residents want and fully supports Alternative #5.

Commissioner Campo moved to table due to unresolved issues and believed it would be premature to vote on this today. Beth Beltran stated that the City of Stuart has already agreed with the public to vote on Alternative 5 with the traffic calming. Beth Beltran further clarified that she is asking for a selection of an Alternative so that in December the consultant may come back with developed concepts to present a final report so the Board can discuss this as a potential priority in February. If the project were to be tabled, then it may be left off the priority list for another year.

**A motion to adopt Alternative #5 with traffic calming was made by Commissioner Harold Jenkins and seconded by Commissioner James Campo. Commissioner Doug Smith asked that the estimated cost be brought back so that they could see the detailed funding amounts for different types of traffic calming. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **E. DRAFT 2045 REGIONAL LONG RANGE TRANSPORTATION PLAN (RLRTP)**

Item E postponed till October 23, 2023.

#### **F. TRANSIT EFFICIENCY STUDY FINAL REPORT**

Lucine Martens, MPO Planner and Project Manager, introduced Jeff Weidner of Marlin Engineering who was joined by Jessica Josselyn of Kittelson & Associates. The purpose of this study was to describe the existing MARTY system (services and ridership); review the adopted Transit Development Plan (TDP), socioeconomic trends and travel patterns. The Transit Efficiency Study Final Report identifies various Transit Network Scenarios (some looking at ridership, some looking at coverage and some a combination of both ridership and coverage scenarios (hybrid scenario), and the cost analysis for these scenarios.

Commissioner James Campo raised concerns about the lack of ridership. Commissioner Campo believes there needs to be a much bigger marketing push to fill these empty busses. Commissioner Collins and Commissioner Jenkins agreed with Commissioner Campo's sentiments.

Council Member Susan Gibbs-Thomas cited the Local Coordinating Board for the Transportation Disadvantaged (LCB-TD) and its steadily growing numbers in riders. She also discussed the Indiantown Saturday Shuttle Service provided by the Senior Resource Association (SRA) through a grant from FDOT. The Saturday service also has an annual increase in ridership.

Chair Troy McDonald had concerns about the distance between bus stops and the routes that exclude many neighborhoods and employment opportunities and is looking forward to the completion of the study. Commissioner Doug Smith cited Indian River County and its success with their transit system, much to do with their successful marketing and enhancements. Commissioner Smith inquired about the costs of Uber and its partnerships with other rail systems. Ali Soule with Brightline was called to speak regarding the advancements and partnerships with Brightline and Uber. Ali spoke to the distance their customers travel to and from their stations. Brightline added a feature into their app where you can book an Uber for the last mile of their journey in lieu of their previous private fleet.

Commissioner Doug Smith asked what we spend on our bus transit system (\$2.2 million). Commissioner Smith, using the current Uber rate (\$14) by the 67,000 riders, calculated a total of \$938,000 if every trip was done with Uber. Commissioner Smith reiterated that he is a huge proponent of public transit systems but acknowledged that, for whatever reason, it is not used here in Martin County. Jeff Weidner with Marlin Engineering assured the Board

that his team is looking at solutions, while they are not available right now, they are looking at many different options, including marketing improvements.

**A motion to approve the Transit Efficiency Study Final Report was made by Commissioner Sarah Heard and seconded by Commissioner Christopher Collins, the motion passed unanimously.**

**\*Break at 10:40 a.m.\***

**\*Resumed at 10:48 a.m.\***

#### **G. PROFESSIONAL ASSISTANCE SUPPORT TASK SCOPE OF SERVICES**

Beth Beltran requested approval of Scope of Services for Professional Assistance Support. This task order provides four additional Open Houses or Listening Sessions in addition to the previous two that were approved for the TDP. A total of six Open Houses would cover all five Commission Districts in Martin County with two in District 3, one in Indiantown and one in Hobe Sound. The MPO will use its General Planning Consultants, MARLIN Engineering, Inc. and their sub-consultant Kittelson & Associates for this work effort.

Joe Flanagan, member of the public, arrived during discussion on item 8G, stating that he does not believe we will change the volume with the proposed changes for Palm City Road, but it will address the speed and that he had preferred Alternative #3 but supported Alternative #5 (Agenda Item 8D). He also stated that the MARTY is an amazing service that he uses regularly, and he challenges people to try it.

**A motion to approve the Professional Assistance Support Task Scope of Services was made by Commissioner Doug Smith and seconded by Commissioner Harold Jenkins, the motion passed unanimously.**

#### **H. HOBE SOUND NORTH CORRIDOR SUN TRAIL FEASIBILITY STUDY - FINAL REPORT**

Joy Puerta introduced Jeff Weidner with Marlin Engineering who sought approval of the final report. The MPO executed Resolution 18-04 to submit a Shared-Use Nonmotorized (SUN) Trail Program Grant Application to fund a Feasibility Study for a shared-use path from SE Osprey Street to SE Bridge Road. This shared use path would serve as a segment of the East Coast Greenway (ECG). Over the last two years the consultant (Marlin Engineering) has studied three alignments: SE Gomez Avenue, Dixie Highway and US-1. During the development of the study, input was received from agency and community stakeholders, the general public at three different Open Houses, MPO advisory committees and the MPO Board. The public chose the option for a separated pedestrian bike trail on the west side of US-1.

**A motion to approve the Hobe Sound North Corridor Sun Trail Feasibility Study - Final Report was made by Commissioner Harold Jenkins and seconded by Commissioner Doug Smith, the motion passed unanimously.**

## I. APPORTIONMENT PLAN UPDATE

Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator, requested the Board provide direction and authorize the MPO Administrator to prepare the MPO Apportionment Plan, including the development of an MPA boundary map, in accordance with State and Federal requirements, and present the Apportionment Plan and Resolution at the next MPO Board meeting in October for approval.

Based on the results of the 2020 Census and the growth in St. Lucie County, the increase in population density has warranted the request for a fifth County Commissioner to be added to the MPO Board.

**A motion to authorize the Apportionment Plan Update was made by Commissioner Doug Smith and seconded by Commissioner Harold Jenkins, the motion passed unanimously.**

## J. STATE ROAD (SR) - 710 UPDATE

Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator, introduced Christine Fasiska with FDOT District Four to give an update on the widening of SR-710. The top priority, which is the widening of SR-10 from southeast of Allapattah Road to SE 126<sup>th</sup> Boulevard, has been put into their systems. They are still looking for Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) funding for the widening and will be having a cost-feasible update at the end of the calendar year. The construction work for the left turn lane at SW Tommy Clements and SR-710 will start in Fall of 2023. They are also working on designing a right turn lane heading eastbound at SW Tommy Clements. Lastly, the realignment of SR-714 at SR-710 is now able to have its design move forward.

Chair Troy McDonald noted the recent fatality that occurred in the corridor.

Commissioner Doug Smith stated that the County has a legislative request in for \$5 million for SR-714 and SR-710 and that they have been assured that it has nothing to do with SIS funds and will not compete with our funds moving forward. Commissioner Doug Smith wanted to clarify that the process for funding that the County is pursuing would not result in any issues. Christine Fasiska, FDOT District Four, informed Commissioner Smith that the request would need to have the right limits and the right timing. Commissioner Smith had not heard that there was more than one owner and asked that the information be verified and brought back before the Board.

Commissioner Stacey Hetherington asked about the signalization at CR-609 and whether it could be accelerated or perhaps pulled out of the project and reclassified as a separate safety project. Commissioner Harold Jenkins referenced an email he forwarded to Beth Beltran from Forrest Yuengling from Indiantown. Commissioner Jenkins requested that Beth Beltran keep Mr. Yuengling informed of all the projects taking place in the area.

Council Member Susan Gibbs-Thomas echoed Commissioner Stacey Hetherington's sentiments regarding the signalization on SR-710 at CR-609 and its importance. Council Member Gibbs-Thomas made a point to Commissioner Jenkins that she would like to recognize the faithful contingent of Clementsville residents and that their representatives were in attendance today to ensure that this project is at the forefront.

Beth Beltran stated that the signal at CR-609 is identified in two of the MPO's Priorities, in SR-710 widening and the CR-609 resurfacing/intersection improvements project.

## **K. BRIGHTLINE PRESENTATION**

Beth Beltran introduced Ali Soule with Brightline who presented a Brightline video update. Ali Soule also provided an update on the Phase 2 activities. Brightline has begun their crew qualification, their simulated service demonstration, and their Orlando to Miami service will begin September 22, 2023.

Brightline is working with FDOT on the RAISE grant which will provide \$45 million for additional safety enhancements along the corridor. Brightline is also excited about the obligation to build a station in the Treasure Coast within the next 5 years and will begin more of a dialogue towards the end of the year.

Ali Soule also provided an update on the Brightline study for the St. Lucie River Bridge Replacement. The key benefits found from the study included the capability to expand from a single track to a double track, an increase in vertical and horizontal clearance, and that 92% of marine traffic would be able to pass when the bridge was closed. Brightline has received support for this initiative from Congressman Brian Mast, Congressman Daniel Webster, Congressman Darren Soto, the City of Stuart, Martin County, Florida Inland Navigation District, Florida Chamber, Stuart-Martin Chamber of Commerce, and the Palm City Chamber of Commerce. The anticipated schedule would take place over 51 months and would include a three-month demolition for the existing bridge.

Beth Beltran introduced **MPO Resolution #24-02** which mirrors the **Martin County Board of County Commissioners Resolution #23-8.24** with the provision that such grants do not compete with grants or funding for the MPO's #1 Priority: the widening of SR 710 from two lanes to four lanes from just south of County Road (CR) 609/SW Allapattah Road to the Martin/Okeechobee County line.

**A motion to adopt Resolution #24-02 was made by Commissioner James Campo and seconded by Council Member Susan Gibbs-Thomas, motion passed unanimously.**

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

**10. COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS** - Chair Troy McDonald wanted to mention the Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council's (MPOAC's) approval of the MPO funding plan and the effort by larger MPOs to change the funding scheme. As of now, the funding will remain the same where all MPOs receive a \$350,000 base. Chair McDonald also mentioned the legislatures continued effort to consolidate MPOs and the need to keep an eye on that.

## **11. COMMENTS FROM FDOT - None**



**12. NOTES**

- Steve Braun, District Four Secretary, sent a letter to the MPO stating that the Florida Department of Transportation will conduct a study of vehicular speeds and bicycle usage as part of Project FM# 448447-1 State Road (SR) 5/US 1 in Martin County-Resurfacing Restoration and Rehabilitation (3R) Project from 0.5 Miles South of SE Dixie Highway to South of SE Heritage Boulevard.

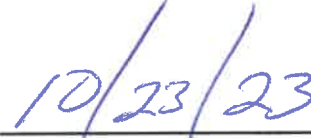
**13. NEXT MEETING**

MPO Board Meeting – October 23, 2023

**14. ADJOURNMENT: 11:38 AM**


**Approved by:**

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

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Prepared by:**

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

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Minutes Approved on October 23, 2023**

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 American with Disabilities Act or persons who require language translation services (free of charge) should contact Ricardo Vazquez, Senior 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.