

**MARTIN METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
BICYCLE AND PEDESTRIAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (BPAC) MEETING**
Martin County Administrative Building Commission Chambers
2401 SE Monterey Road
Stuart, FL 34996
www.martinmpo.com
(772) 221-1498

Monday, September 9, 2024 @ 2:00 pm

MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 2:00 PM by Pinal Gandhi-Savdas.

2. ROLL CALL

Brittany Truong, Administrative Assistant, called roll.

Members in Attendance:

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas
Julie Preast
Bonnie Moser
Don Fabricy
Mike Bocchino
Arlette Cataldo

Excused Members:

Michele Barnett Occhino
Michael MacLeod
Hal Forslund
Bradford Davey

Members Not in Attendance:

Dawn Arvin
Jody Garrett

Staff in Attendance:

Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator
Ricardo Vazquez, Principal Planner
Margie Tamblyn, Senior Planner
Lucine Martens, Planner
Brittany Truong, Administrative Assistant

Others in Attendance:

Thomas Miller, FDOT
Shelby Coke, Coke Consulting, LLC.
Tony Norat, FDOT-District 4

Kelly Budhu, FDOT-District 4
Vanita Saini, FDOT-District 4
Michael Melendez, FDOT-District 4
Julie Bjornson, Member of the Public
Nathan Bjornson, Member of the Public
Tara Auth, Member of the Public
Shannon Keifhaber, Member of the Public

A quorum was present.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Julie Preast and was seconded by Don Fabricy. The motion passed unanimously.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

A motion to approve the BPAC Meeting Minutes of June 10, 2024, was made by Bonnie Moser and seconded by Julie Preast. The motion passed unanimously.

5. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC –

Julie Bjornson spoke on behalf of her son Nathan Bjornson. She spoke about the safety concerns her son faces as he rides his bike on Cove Road toward Dixie Highway, he has been hit at least 6 times riding along this corridor. She stated that in each of these crashes the vehicles do not stop once they hit her son. Ms. Bjornson then spoke of not having adequate shelter for individuals who utilize a bike as their sole means of transportation especially with severe weather. She asked about adding shelters to the bus stops, improving lighting, and providing additional signage for cyclists and pedestrians.

Bonnie Moser provided comments about the design of roundabouts and how adjusting the angle of approach would improve visibility for pedestrians and cyclists especially in the region of Port Salerno Ms. Bjornson described. The current design of many roundabouts in our area do not make drivers slow down. Ms. Moser recommends that when we light corridors utilizing pedestrian scale lighting to improve safety. Julie Preast suggested to Ms. Bjornson to find out which police officer represents where she lives to express her concerns directly to that individual and see what the officer may be able to do.

6. AGENDA ITEMS

A. FY25 – FY29 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) – ROLL FORWARD AMENDMENT #1

Beth Beltran, MPO administrator, introduced the MPO's new Senior Planner - Margie Tamblyn. Ms. Tamblyn then presented the FY25–FY29 Transportation Improvement

Program (TIP) – Roll Forward Amendment #1. She explained that a roll forward amendment is done every year so that the TIP matches what is in FDOT's Work Program. It is rolling forward the funds that were not used in the previous fiscal year to the current fiscal year.

A motion to approve the Roll Forward Amendment was made by Mike Bocchino and was seconded by Bonnie Moser. The motion passed unanimously.

B. FY25 – FY29 TIP – MODIFICATION #1

Margie Tamblyn presented the FY25 – FY29 TIP – Modification #1. The purpose of this modification is to change the project limits of one of the segments of the SR-710 Widening Project. The project limits are changing from “FPL Access Road to Allapattah Road” to “FPL Access Road to SW Van Buren Avenue”. The reason for this is because the road currently changes from four to two lanes at SW Van Buren Avenue and would allow a more natural transition. Beth Beltran added that FDOT had extended their project limits and we wanted to be consistent with their Work Program.

Julie Preast inquired if there had been any feedback from the citizens of Indiantown on the project. Ms. Beltran stated the SR-710 Widening Project has been the MPO's #1 Priority Project and that the extension of the limits are so that the entire corridor would be widened to four lanes as that small section would still be two lanes if it were not included. The Village of Indiantown, she continued, is supportive of this modification.

A motion to approve the FY25-FY29 TIP – Modification #1 was made by Julie Preast and was seconded by Arlette Cataldo. The motion passed unanimously.

C. FY26 – FY30 LIST OF PROJECT PRIORITIES (LOPP) MODIFICATION

Margie Tamblyn presented the FY26-FY30 List of Project Priorities (LOPP) – Modification. Ms. Tamblyn explained that this is to make sure the List of Project Priorities (LOPP) matches the currently adopted Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

A motion to approve the FY26-FY30 LOPP Modification was made by Julie Preast and was seconded by Mike Bocchino. The motion passed unanimously.

D. FUNCTIONAL CLASSIFICATION UPDATE

Ricardo Vazquez explained that Functional Classification process is done every ten years after the US Census. Mr. Vazquez explained that the Functional Classification is used to categorize roads based on how they serve transportation needs. The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) requires roads to be categorized properly to determine if a road is eligible to receive Federal funding. The process starts with FDOT who conducts the initial review and proposed Functional Classification. Then the local governments review the information and either concur or makes changes. Next the MPO approves the Functional Classification and signs the official maps. Lastly, the map goes back to FDOT and FHWA for the final approval.

Bonnie Moser inquired about if ownership of a roadway changes with a new Functional Classification. Mr. Vazquez stated that ownership remains the same for the roadways, this designation just will dictate whether a roadway is eligible for federal funds.

Julie Preast asked if the rural roadways matched up with the Urban Service Area Boundary. Mr. Vazquez stated he was not sure about that; Ms. Beltran provided more background about the Urban Service Boundary which does not affect whether a road is eligible for federal funding. Ms. Preast thanked the MPO for their efforts with the Functional Classification Map and working to get Martin County's roadways more federal funding.

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas looked for more information on where Dixie Highway fell for this classification. She expressed concerns with trying to change the character of the street. Ms. Beltran stated that changing the character of the roadway has more to do with FDOT's context classification.

A motion to approve the Functional Classification Update was made by Mike Bocchino and seconded by Julie Preast. The motion passed unanimously.

E. SR-A1A/SE OCEAN BLVD ROAD SAFETY AUDIT (RSA)

Margie Tamblyn introduced the Road Safety Audit Project and invited Shelby Coke (Coke Consulting, LLC.) and Thomas Miller (FDOT) to discuss the item. Thomas Miller gave a brief introduction of Road Safety Audits and shared that FDOT is approaching these audits proactively. Mr. Coke explained that a road safety audit is different than a regular safety audit. An RSA is conducted by an independent multidisciplinary team who also works with stakeholders. There is a formal examination of the corridor and intersection conditions. This differs from a safety study because a safety study is conducted only by a team of experts. It is also data driven and focused on crash analysis and field review.

During the field review, it was noted that there needed to be updated maintenance of pedestrian facilities. This included damaged sidewalks and foliage blocking pedestrian paths. There was also excessive speeding from the bridge. In addition, it was noted that there is a corridor wide issue with faded crosswalk markings and missing raised pavement markings (RPMs). At the end of the road safety audit there were two different kinds of recommendations. Corridor-wide recommendations and spot recommendations.

Julie Preast discussed previous ideas of including a midblock crossing along A1A/SE Ocean Blvd. and asked if this idea is still being pursued. Ms. Beltran provided history of the midblock crossing study and stated that FDOT found the midblock crosswalk to not be warranted. Ms. Preast asked how we bring the midblock crossing back to the forefront and if it was included in the current report. Mr. Miller stated that it was not included in the report as it was not considered a short-term improvement. He then suggested reaching out to Traffic Operations to conduct a midblock crossing analysis. The Traffic Operations office would also oversee conducting a Speed Study. Mr. Miller stated that he is within the Safety Office.

Don Fabricy complimented the FDOT team on the Road Safety Audit as they had picked

up on many things he sees daily. He expressed wanting to change the speed limit on the bridge to be lower and would like to see a midblock crossing. Mr. Fabricy asked about next steps since the safety audit is complete. Mr. Miller stated that short term and mid-term improvements will be completed within a year.

Ms. Beltran spoke briefly about the Technical Advisory Committee's (TAC) comments regarding this study. She then shared that the TAC accepted the report with the comments of conducting a future speed study along this corridor and the BPAC members could make a motion to propose a speed study as well, if they see fit.

Arlette Cataldo discussed that she is consistently on this roadway segment and has experienced many issues. Ms. Cataldo expressed concerns with safety for pedestrians and cyclists along the corridor as there is overgrown vegetation, aggressive drivers, and uneven pavement. She believes that cameras, ticketing, and education would be a good tactic to curb aggressive driving, overgrowth into paths, and other issues faced by pedestrians and cyclists. Mr. Miller shared that education is very important for safety of people who walk and bike.

Bonnie Moser stated that since the last time the BPAC had met a cyclist was fatally struck on the Evans Crary Bridge. Ms. Moser asserted that the way in which we design our roadways has consequences; if this individual had protection from cars while he was biking, his family may not be mourning today. She then discussed her background in the transportation sector sharing that she has completed many Road Safety Audits in her previous employment with the Georgia Department of Transportation. Ms. Moser expressed her disappointment with the recommendations posed by FDOT; she stated that she was not sure if any of the ideas listed would reduce crashes. She shared that we already are aware that the signs are not working as people continue to speed. Bonnie identified that narrowing lanes, a tactic typically used to slow the speed of cars, was not mentioned along this corridor that has lanes at times as wide as 14 feet. Ms. Moser recommends narrowing the right lane to provide a buffer to cyclists as well as some kind of barrier (i.e., armadillos or flex posts). Ms. Moser also suggested hardened centerlines to discourage left turns in some locations where making a left-hand turn is unsafe. Despite it being outside of the study area, Ms. Moser commented that the slip lanes at the foot of the Evans Crary Bridge are dangerous as they encourage speeding and a lack of awareness for our vulnerable road users. Ms. Moser would like to see a speed study that extends to Palm Beach Road as the roadway has about 13,000 cars per day and is overdesigned with 5 lanes that are 14-foot-wide lanes. She made a final comment sharing that she bikes regularly, but does not do so on SE Ocean Blvd. As transportation to the meeting, she biked and crossed by the Library on Monterey Road. Ms. Moser mentioned that where she crossed is where she believes a midblock crossing was found to not be warranted by FDOT. She shared that although we may not have the numbers to justify a midblock crossing, people often will not cross because they do not feel safe, but they often have the desire to cross which she believes should be taken into consideration. Mr. Miller thanked Bonnie Moser for her comments.

COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC

Tara Auth who lives on SE Krueger Parkway around the corner from the Road Safety

Audit study area and reports that she does not feel safe having her children cross the street. Ms. Auth stated that she has friends and family that live on either side of the street and that they will get into their car to visit with them rather than crossing the street on bike or foot with young children. She expressed that she would never allow her children to cross East Ocean Blvd. Ms. Auth stated that she wants to advocate for safe streets and the ability for individuals to bike to downtown Stuart safely.

Shannon Keifhaber discussed that she has been thinking about having safer streets along East Ocean to Monterey Road and they were excited to learn more about this study. She states that the approach into downtown Stuart with streetscaping and narrowed lanes makes it more difficult to speed which she would like to see that continued on East Ocean Blvd. Ms. Keifhaber shared that few recommendations that excited her were the addition of a median and reduction of lane widths. She described crossing East Ocean Blvd as a terrifying experience.

A motion to approve the SR-A1A Road Safety Audit – SR A1A/SE Ocean Blvd. from East of Monterey Road to West of the Evans Crary Bridge with the recommendation that a future speed or traffic study be conducted for the western segment of East Ocean Boulevard corridor was made by Bonnie Moser and seconded by Don Fabricy. The motion passed unanimously.

7. COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS –

Julie Preast stated that she has been concerned with the lack of lighting north of the Roosevelt Bridge on US-1. FDOT was supposedly working on the roadway, but the roadway has completed, and the lighting had not been improved. Ms. Beltran agreed to email Mr. Miller and he would investigate the project and share what information he found.

Bonnie Moser spoke about complaints that she had seen in the Stuart Mom's Facebook Group regarding students who are not within the bussing distance crossing major arterials such as US-1. Ms. Moser stated that any safety improvements that could be made would be wonderful; she plans to get more specific at the next meeting with a list of roadways that are a cause for concern for students. She also discussed an issue with aggressive drivers at the intersections of SE 10th Street and Palm Beach Road and Palm Beach Road and Monterey Road. Stuart Police are going to increase their enforcement in the areas, but since the roads are County owned, she wanted to bring it to the MPO's attention.

Julie Preast complimented FDOT on the condition of the Roosevelt Bridge as she had previously wrote a letter to FDOT asking for them to clear the debris off the bridge and they have kept the bridge clean. She stated that it is an important issue as debris often impacts the bicycle lane. Ms. Preast stated that bicycles are allowed on the sidewalk in her neighborhood.

Arlette Cataldo spoke about how she did not believe that you could bike on the bridge sidewalks as they are separated. Staff was asked to email for clarification about this concern of biking on bridge sidewalks.

Don Fabricy expressed his concerns with E-Bikes and that regulation is necessary for

safety. He also inquired if there are any regulations with E-Bikes in Martin County that we should be aware of. Mr. Vazquez stated that he thought there were talks of regulations being proposed regarding E-Bikes, but that MPO staff would reach out to let him know.

Beth Beltran stated that she spoke with Thomas Miller and Shelby Coke outside and they let her know that they intend to do two Road Safety Audits next year. She asked them if it would be possible for advisory committees to appoint a member to participate in the Road Safety Audits. She shared that this is helpful with communication and incorporating our stakeholders as well as committee members.

Bonnie Moser stated that she would like to participate in Road Safety Audits. Julie Preast nominated Bonnie to serve as BPAC's representative at future Road Safety Audits since she volunteered.

A motion to appoint Bonnie Moser as the BPAC representative on future RSA studies and field visits was made by Julie Preast and seconded by Mike Bocchino. The motion passed unanimously.

8. NOTES - None

9. NEXT MEETING

- Joint CAC/TAC/BPAC – October 7, 2024

10. ADJOURN – Pinal Gandhi-Savdas adjourned the meeting at 3:32 P.M.

Prepared by:

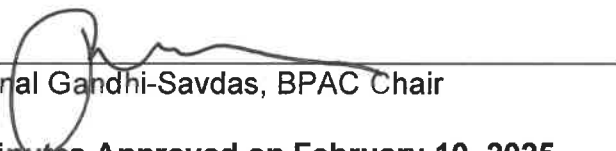


Margie Tamblyn, Senior Planner



Date

Approved by:



Pinal Gandhi-Savdas, BPAC Chair



Date

Minutes Approved on February 10, 2025

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