

**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, June 09, 2025 @ 1:00 pm

MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 PM by Julie Preast.

2. ROLL CALL

Susan Ortiz, Administrative Assistant, called roll.

Members in Attendance:

Julie Preast

Bonnie Moser

Don Fabricy

Michele Barnett Occhino

Mike Bocchino

Yvette Goodiel

Excused Members:

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas

Bradford Davey

Hal Forsland

Members Not in Attendance:

Jason Bultman

Michael MacLeod

Staff in Attendance:

Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator

Ricardo Vazquez, Principal Planner

Margie Tamblyn, Senior Planner

Lucine Martens, Planner

Susan Ortiz, Administrative Assistant

Others in Attendance:

Amanda Ashby, Ardurra

Vanity Saini, FDOT

Mike Melendez, FDOT

Tyrone Monte, Resident

A quorum was not initially present at the start of the meeting. The Committee proceeded with Item C, as it was designated for discussion only. During this time, Michael Melendez arrived at 1:10 PM, followed by Bonnie Moser and Mike Bocchino at 1:15 PM. With their arrival, a quorum was established, and the Committee proceeded accordingly.

3. APPROVE AGENDA

A motion to approve the agenda was made by Julie Preast and was seconded by Michele Barnett Occhino. The motion passed unanimously.

4. APPROVE MINUTES

- **BPAC Meeting – February 17, 2025**

A motion to approve the BPAC Meeting Minutes of February 17, 2025 was made by Bonnie Moser and seconded by Mike Bocchino. The motion was passed unanimously.

- **Joint CAC/BPAC Meeting – May 7, 2025**

A motion to approve the Joint CAC/BPAC Meeting Minutes of May 7, 2025 was made by Don Fabricy and seconded by Yvette Goodiel. The motion was passed unanimously.

5. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC – Two members of the public entered the room at 2:05PM

Tyrone Monte expressed concerns regarding the proposed shared-use path associated with the Cove Road project. He highlighted the potential safety risks for senior residents who would be required to cross a multi-lane roadway to exit the complex. Additionally, Mr. Monte inquired about the regulation of e-bikes along the path, emphasizing the need for clear guidelines to ensure pedestrian safety.

Alejandro Hernandez expressed that he would like to see an improved cycling network. He discussed a few locations in which he would like to see bicycle facilities improved. As a Palm City resident and cyclist, he shared his ideas for where cycling loops could be added both in Palm City and Stuart. He mentioned that he had a list of where he would like to see improvements. Mr. Hernandez emphasized the importance of maintaining safe and efficient connectivity for cyclists in Martin County.

6. AGENDA ITEMS

C. COVE ROAD PRESENTATION

Margie Tamblyn introduced the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) project manager and consultant to provide an update on the Cove Road widening project. FDOT

project manager, Vanita Saini introduced herself and Amanda Ashby of Ardurra, who would lead the presentation. Ms. Ashby proceeded to present to the committee.

During the meeting, Ms. Preast asked how the presentation was received by residents of Tres Belle. Ms. Saini responded that there was no opposition. Ms. Priest also emphasized that larger roundabouts tend to be safer when sufficient right-of-way is available, and Ms. Ashby noted that some space may exist to accommodate this.

Ms. Moser raised a question about the need for exclusive right-of-way, to which Ms. Ashby explained that concerns about traffic backing up at the gated neighborhood entrance prompted the request.

Ms. Goodiel expressed uncertainty about the landscaping process, noting the absence of landscape elements in the plans. Ms. Saini clarified that landscaping would be coordinated with the County and that roundabouts are required to include landscaping. Ms. Goodiel also pointed out the lack of shade trees, and Ms. Moser supported the idea of adding greenspace by narrowing lane widths where feasible. Ms. Saini reiterated that the County is responsible for landscaping but mentioned that the State could contribute approximately \$200,000 toward those efforts.

Ms. Preast highlighted the need for shade along this corridor as the temperatures in South Florida may not be conducive to walking without some relief from the trees. Ms. Preast inquired about how to ensure the County is informed of the vegetation priority. Vanita responded that FDOT has mechanisms to assist with such coordination.

Mr. Fabricy asked whether landscaping could be used instead of a noise wall. Ms. Saini explained that surveys would be conducted, and if residents opposed the wall, it would not be installed.

Finally, Ms. Goodiel asked about transit options. Ms. Beltran noted that there is no bus route along Cove Road, though other transportation modes, such as freight, had been considered in the planning process.

A. FY25-FY29 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM (TIP) MODIFICATION #2

Ms. Beltran introduced Margie Tamblyn, MPO Senior Planner, who presented the details of the TIP Modification. Ms. Tamblyn explained that this is the second modification to the FY 2025-2029 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). The modification is necessary to ensure consistency between the MPO's TIP and the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP). Two projects require updates to funding allocations: State Road (SR) 710 and Willoughby Boulevard Extension. Ms. Tamblyn concluded by recommending the item for approval and opened the floor for questions.

A motion to approve the FY25-FY29 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Modification #2 was made by Yvette Goodiel and was seconded by Don Fabricy. The motion passed unanimously.

B. FINAL DRAFT FY26-FY30 TRANSPORTATION IMPROVEMENT PROGRAM

Ms. Beltran introduced Margie Tamblyn, who presented the final draft of the FY26–FY30 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Ms. Tamblyn discussed the changes to the TIP which included the changing of project lengths for two projects (as requested by FDOT project managers), the shifting of funding from fiscal year 2026 to 2027 for SE Monterey Road from Palm City Road to 400 feet south of US-1, and the inclusion of the Capital Improvement Plan from Sewall’s Point. No public comments had been received regarding the FY26-FY30 TIP. She shared that the final draft will be adopted at the upcoming Policy Board Meeting scheduled for June 16, 2025. Ms. Tamblyn concluded her presentation by inviting questions from the committee.

A motion to approve the Final Draft FY26-FY30 Transportation Improvement Program was made by Mike Bocchino and was seconded by Don Fabricy. The motion passed unanimously.

D. FY27-FY31 LIST OF PRIORITY PROJECTS

Ricardo Vazquez presented the FY27-FY31 List of Project Priorities, noting that the draft version had been reviewed in February and subsequently approved by the MPO Board before submission to FDOT. The SR-710 widening project remains central, with two segments already funded for construction and the remaining two still on the Priority List. During the February CAC and BPAC meetings, committee members recommended elevating Project #5 (the SR-710/CR-609 signal and turn lane improvements) to position #3 to place SR-710-related projects together and emphasize their urgency.

During the discussion, Mike Bocchino raised a question about whether projects listed on the LOPP as “pedestrian improvements or bicycle improvements” are considering the rise of electric bikes and scooters. He wanted to know if these newer modes of travel are being factored into planning efforts. In response, Mr. Vazquez explained that the term “pedestrian/bicycle improvements” is intentionally broad. The specific design elements are typically addressed during the PD&E or Design phase, once the project moves forward. What matters most at this stage is that the project identifies a need for such improvements. As for electric bikes and scooters, Mr. Vazquez noted that local and State governments are still evaluating how best to integrate these technologies into the transportation network. This includes determining where these modes should operate and how to enhance safety with their growing presence in mind.

Don Fabricy asked whether Commerce Avenue has been considered as a potential alternative to US-1 in the area. In response, Mr. Vazquez clarified that the current project listed on the LOPP is limited to resurfacing work. It includes improvements such as drainage upgrades, shoulder additions, and a pedestrian crosswalk. While the scope does not currently address broader corridor planning or rerouting, Mr. Vazquez acknowledged that the idea of Commerce Avenue serving as an alternative route could be revisited in future discussions.

A motion to approve the FY27-FY31 List of Priority Projects was made by Bonnie Moser and was seconded by Mike Bocchino. The motion passed unanimously.

7. COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Bonnie Moser requested that MPO staff consider launching a “Back to School” safety campaign, with a particular focus on educating motorists. She emphasized the importance of proactive outreach as students return to school, highlighting the need for driver awareness in school zones and high-foot-traffic areas. Additionally, she urged the MPO to assist the City of Stuart in identifying pedestrian improvements along the Palm Beach Road Corridor. Although Palm Beach Road is a County-maintained roadway, it lies within the City of Stuart and has been repeatedly raised as a concern in recent City meetings. Ms. Moser’s comments reflect a push for collaborative efforts between jurisdictions to address pedestrian safety in areas with overlapping responsibilities.

Don Fabricy raised a question about the necessity of green-painted bike lanes and whether they offer any tangible safety benefits. In response, Michael Melendez explained that the green paint serves a critical function in roadway design. It enhances the visibility of bike lanes, especially at conflict points such as intersections and driveways, where motorists are more likely to cross paths with cyclists. The bright color acts as a visual cue, reinforcing the presence and priority of cyclists in shared spaces. Mr. Melendez emphasized that this treatment is widely recognized as a best practice in urban design, helping reduce collisions and improve compliance with lane usage by both drivers and cyclists.

Ms. Goodiel raised the issue of shade and shelter at bus stops throughout Martin County, emphasizing the urgency of addressing this need as summer approaches and temperatures rise. Her comments highlighted the importance of rider comfort and protection from the elements, particularly for those who rely on transit daily.

Ms. Prest noted that ongoing improvements along Commerce Avenue, especially in the Golden Gate area, are helping to strengthen the regional bike network. She underscored how these enhancements benefit residents who depend on active transportation options, reinforcing the value of multimodal connectivity in underserved areas.

Ms. Moser expressed concern about aggressive driving behaviors on Palm Beach Road and Ocean Boulevard, particularly near J.D. Parker Elementary School and Stuart Middle School. She pointed out that these corridors have been flagged in multiple city meetings and called attention to the safety risks posed to pedestrians and students.

8. NOTES

Mr. Vazquez shared the quarterly update of the MPO's Development Review Interactive map, noting that the most recent development data from the City of Stuart, Martin County, and Indiantown has been incorporated and is available on the MPO website.

Mr. Vazquez announced that the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Cost Feasible Plan Open House is scheduled for Monday, August 26, from 4:30 PM to 6:30 PM at the City of Stuart Commission Chambers. The event will provide an opportunity to review and provide comments on the Draft Cost Feasible Plan.

9. NEXT MEETING

- BPAC – September 8, 2025

10. ADJOURN – Ms. Prest adjourned the meeting at 2:35 P.M.

Prepared by:

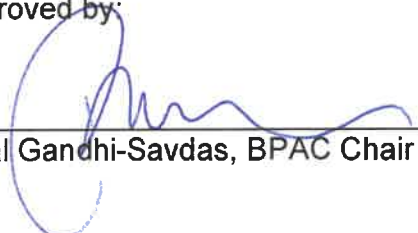


Susan Ortiz, Administrative Assistant




Date

Approved by:



Pinal Gandhi-Savdas, BPAC Chair



Date

Minutes Approved on September 8, 2025

The Martin MOP 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, Senior Planner (Title VI/Non-discrimination Contact) at (772) 223-7983 or rvazquez@martin.fl.us in advance of the meeting. Hearing-impaired individuals are requested to telephone the Florida Relay System at #711.