

**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, February 17, 2024 @ 2:00 pm

MEETING MINUTES

1. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order at 1:00 PM by Pinal Gandhi-Savdas.

2. ROLL CALL

Susan Ortiz, Administrative Assistant, called roll.

Members in Attendance:

Pinal Gandhi-Savdas

Julie Preast

Bonnie Moser

Don Fabricy

Michele Barnett Occhino

Michael MacLeod

Excused Members:

Jason Bultman

Mike Bocchino

Bradford Davey

Members Not in Attendance:

Hal Forslund

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:

Robert Lopes, FDOT

Tanya Kristoff, Lochnel

Brad Salisbury, FDOT

Erik Ferguson, Martin County

A quorum was present.

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

A motion to approve the BPAC Meeting Minutes of September 9, 2024, was made by Michele Barnett Occhino and seconded by Don Fabricy. The motion passed unanimously.

5. COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC – None

6. AGENDA ITEMS

A. ELECTION OF OFFICERS

Beth Beltran provided an overview of the election process, noting that officer elections are held annually in February for committees, including the Technical Advisory Committee and the Citizens Advisory Committee. She stated that often times the Chair and the Vice Chair positions remained consistent. A motion was made to retain the current Chair Pinal Gandhi-Savadas and Julie Preast as the Vice Chair.

A motion to approve Pinal Gandhi-Savadas as Chair and Julie Preast as Vice Chair was made by Bonnie Moser and was seconded by Don Fabricy. The motion passed unanimously.

B. SAFETY TARGETS

Margie Tamblyn introduced Ricardo Vazquez, who presented the annual safety targets for review and approval.

A motion to approve the Safety Targets was made by Julie Preast and was seconded by Bonnie Moser. The motion passed unanimously.

C. TRANSPORTATION ALTERNATIVES PROGRAM (TAP) PROJECT APPLICATION

Margie Tamlyn invited Keith Baker, a representative from Martin County Capital Projects, to present an application for the Fisherman's Cove sidewalk project. The project aims to improve pedestrian infrastructure in the neighborhood through funding from the 2025 FDOT Transportation Alternatives program.

Julie Preast raised concerns regarding the stability of the 2025 FDOT Transportation Alternatives grant, given current political uncertainties in Washington, D.C. Keith Baker responded, stating that while he could not provide absolute certainty, infrastructure-related funding—such as roads, bridges, and pedestrian projects—tends to be more stable and less likely to be affected by broader federal disruptions. Ms. Beltran shared insights from the Safe Streets Summit, noting concerns over federal funding stability, particularly for Complete Streets initiatives and charging station programs. She emphasized the importance of continuing to pursue funding opportunities despite potential risks, acknowledging that Federal Highway Administration audits may be expected.

Ms. Barnett-Occhino asked for clarification on whether the grant has been allocated, to which Mr. Baker confirmed it is an application process rather than an awarded grant. Ms. Gandhi-Savdas inquired about funding availability if the full requested amount is not granted. Mr. Baker explained that these funding sources are typically fully funded, but if partial funding were to occur, the county would evaluate covering the difference.

Don Fabricy raised concerns about parked cars obstructing sidewalks, noting that some driveways align with the proposed sidewalk route. He asked whether provisions exist to prevent parking from blocking pedestrian access. Mr. Baker clarified that on-street parking is not included in the project design, but driveway setbacks were considered. Under Martin County code, residents will not be ticketed for parking in driveways unless it involves a commercial vehicle. Mr. Baker said that this is a common issue in sidewalk projects but noted that some driveways will still allow safe pedestrian passage, depending on their width. He reassured that the county evaluates this factor in every sidewalk project.

Ms. Moser noted that the existing street width is 24 feet, which is unusually wide for a residential area. She suggested two potential solutions: 1, Narrowing the street width to create a more pedestrian-friendly environment and 2, Exploring on-street parking options to reduce roadway width, naturally slowing down vehicle speeds. Ms. Moser also proposed considering a yield street design, where parking is placed on both sides, requiring vehicles to slow down for safe passage. While she supports the sidewalk project, she emphasized that intersection safety remains a concern, especially if vehicles continue traveling at high speeds. Mr. Baker acknowledged the points and stated he will take them into consideration.

A motion to approve the Transportation Alternatives Program (TAP) Project Application was made with a condition that there was a review in exploring options for narrowing the roadway or adding on-street parking to enhance traffic calming, and recognizing that a narrower street could naturally slow vehicle speeds and improve pedestrian safety by Julie Preast and was seconded by Michele Barnett Occhino. The motion passed unanimously.

D. TITLE VI REPORT UPDATE

Ricardo Vazquez presented the annual Title VI and Non-Discrimination Plan update, a regular housekeeping item for the MPO. The plan outlines procedures for addressing

grievances and complaints related to race, religion, color, and other protected categories. A motion for approval was requested.

A motion to approve the Title VI Report Update was made by Michele Barnett Occhino and seconded by Julie Preast. The motion passed unanimously.

E. DRAFT FY27-FY31 LIST OF PROJECT PRIORITIES (LOPP)

Ms. Beltran introduced the Draft List of Project Priorities (LOPP), which is presented in February, with the final version expected in June. Ms. Beltran informed the committee that during last week's Citizens Advisory Committee meeting, members discussed safety concerns related to the SR 710 widening project, particularly considering two recent accidents, including one fatality over the weekend. In response to these concerns, the CAC recommended adjusting project prioritization by moving Project #5 to #3, ensuring safety-related projects receive higher priority.

Ms. Moser asked about the limits of the East Ocean Boulevard speed study. Ms. Beltran clarified that the focus is on the state road intersection to the bridge—specifically, from Monterey to the bridge. Ms. Moser inquired about a crosswalk near Fresh Market, prompting Ms. Beltran to explain that a previous study had evaluated the feasibility of a crosswalk at that location. The study found it reasonable to add a crossing between the two signals near the Fresh Market shopping center, connecting to an area with doctor's offices and diagnostic centers. Ms. Moser confirmed the location, referencing Dunkin' Donuts, and Ms. Beltran reiterated that the crosswalk would be situated between the two signals.

Ms. Beltran then proceeded to present the LOPP and Unfunded Safety Priority List. Ms. Beltran then introduced Erik Ferguson, the new Martin County Traffic Engineer, who presented the #1 Priority on the Unfunded Safety Priority List, the SE Dixie Highway Signal Improvements.

Ms. Preast inquired whether the study considers businesses and households east of the railroad tracks. Mr. Ferguson explained that the analysis is based on several factors, including the number of vehicles crossing the tracks, traffic volume on Dixie Highway, daily train frequency, percentage of trucks using the crossing and the presence of school buses. Ms. Moser highlighted the advantages of roundabouts during hurricanes, noting that they do not rely on electricity or operational maintenance like traffic signals do. She also shared her personal experience driving Dixie Highway frequently, pointing out that its lack of signals allows for consistent flow at a slower speed, making travel more efficient compared to US-1 during peak season. Ms. Moser emphasized that this predictable and steady movement is part of the roadway's character. Mr. Ferguson acknowledged the benefits of roundabouts, particularly on two-lane roads, but raised concerns about limited stopping space near railroad tracks, noting that 35 feet may not be enough for larger vehicles like tractor-trailers. Ms. Moser suggested a mini or compact roundabout with a traversable center, stating that it could provide more predictable traffic flow compared to signals. However, she acknowledged the challenge of placing roundabouts close to rail

crossings. Ms. Prest expressed enthusiasm for the proposed improvements, emphasizing hope that funding will be secured for the project.

Ms. Beltran confirmed that staff recommended approval of both the draft roadway priority list and the new safety local road priority list, including a proposed adjustment to move Project #5 up to #3. Ms. Prest supported grouping SR 710 projects together but raised concerns about residents on Cove Road, who have long awaited improvements. Beth clarified that Larry Sofield, the Citizens Advisory Committee Vice Chair, initially proposed shifting the SR 710 & Allapattah signal project to #3, citing greater safety concerns compared to Cove Road. Ricardo Vazquez also noted that Cove Road's project remains active, currently under PD&E, with funding for design secured.

A motion to approve the Draft FY27-FY31 List of Project Priorities and move project #5 up to #3 was made by Julie Prest and seconded by Bonnie Moser. The motion passed unanimously.

F. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT ANNUAL REPORT UPDATE

Ricardo Vazquez presented the Public Involvement Annual Report, a yearly assessment of the MPO's public engagement efforts. The report serves as a self-evaluation of outreach activities conducted with advisory committees and the community throughout the past year. He emphasized that public participation is a core component of the MPO's planning process, guided by the Public Participation Plan (PPP), which ensures ongoing feedback collection and integration into transportation planning and studies.

Ms. Prest praised the improvement in public involvement efforts over the years but raised a question about clicker-based voting, which provides immediate results compared to traditional feedback collection methods. Mr. Vazquez responded that the MPO does not currently have clickers and typically relies on consultants or sub-consultants to provide them during meetings.

A motion to approve the Public Involvement Annual Report Update was made by Julie Prest and seconded by Bonnie Moser. The motion passed unanimously.

G. FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (FDOT) SR-710 AND SW ALLAPATTAH ROAD WIDENING AND TRAFFIC SIGNAL PRESENTATION

Ms. Tamlyn introduced Brad Salisbury from FDOT, and Ms. Beltran noted that this presentation was specifically requested by the MPO Board as a discussion item.

Ms. Prest inquired whether the project is part of the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS), which Mr. Salisbury confirmed. She asked about feedback from Indiantown residents, and Mr. Salisbury noted that the project is still in its initial design phase, with public meetings and coordination planned. Ms. Prest raised concerns about the current 40 mph speed limit, suggesting that residents might prefer a reduction to 35 mph, especially given past concerns regarding trucks using Warfield Boulevard. Mr. Salisbury assured that community feedback would be considered before finalizing the speed limit. Ms. Prest

questioned the need for crosswalks and signalization, with Mr. Salisbury explaining that a warrant study is ongoing to determine whether a signal is necessary at Allapattah. The project area currently has a mid-block crossing southeast of Indianwood and a fire station signal, but no other signalized intersections.

Ms. Gandhi-Savdas asked about the width of the proposed sidewalks, to which Mr. Salisbury confirmed they are currently designed at 10 feet. He explained that this width was chosen conservatively, ensuring proper drainage without needing additional ponds. However, there is potential to expand to 12 feet, depending on feasibility. Ms. Gandhi-Savdas then questioned a travel lane measurement listed as 10.8 feet, prompting Ms. Salisbury to clarify that both lanes should be 11 feet and acknowledged the correction.

H. FDOT'S MONTEREY ROAD AT FEC RAILROAD CROSSING GRADE SEPARATION PROJECT

Ms. Tamblyn introduced Rob Lopes who presented the Monterey Road at FEC Railroad Crossing Grade Separation Project. Ms. Moser asked for clarification on the high, medium, low categorization, questioning whether it referred to cost or impact. Tanya Kristoff explained that the classification depends on the specific item being assessed. The rating is based on the number of affected properties, rather than cost.

Ms. Prest asked whether Concepts 9 and 10 were developed in response to the high and medium impact ratings of the previous alternatives. Ms. Kristoff explained that Concept 9 was created by reassessing the project location, considering residences, the airport, and runway constraints, and identifying additional possibilities to explore. Concept 10 emerged later, influenced by the need to incorporate a bridge and refine alternative options. Ms. Prest confirmed that Concept 9 may need to be excluded due to FEC railway considerations, but Ms. Kristoff noted that further details would be addressed in the next slide.

Ms. Moser expressed concern about the prioritization of airport requirements over residential neighborhoods, questioning why airport impacts might outweigh those affecting local homes. Ms. Kristoff responded that the FAA's safety regulations play a significant role, sometimes requiring adjustments that shift project plans, even when a previous alternative seemed preferable. She emphasized that all decisions must consider engineering, physical, natural, and social impacts, ensuring a balanced approach. Ms. Moser suggested that the evaluation process should include more detailed weight comparisons, rather than relying solely on a matrix, to clarify how community concerns are being factored against FAA requirements.

Mr. Fabricy asked about the required elevation for the road, to which Ms. Kristoff explained that to cross the railroad tracks, the road must be at least 23 feet in the air. To cross County Road A1A, the required elevation is 17 feet. The railroad's proximity makes it the critical location for elevation planning. Mr. Fabricy then asked about airport concerns regarding the 23-foot elevation, and Ms. Kristoff noted: Based on the most recent airport master plan, the project profile appears to stay below all approach surfaces and departure

slopes. The team will still need to meet with the airport to confirm there are no unforeseen conflicts. An FAA airspace study is underway, with results pending.

Ms. Moser sought clarification on Alternative 10, asking whether the FEC Railroad requires the removal of two crossings to accommodate the additional crossing. Ms. Kristoff confirmed that this is the current requirement from FEC. Ms. Moser expressed enthusiasm for Alternative 10, noting that it would enhance the transportation network and provide another travel option, potentially pulling traffic from Monterey and Dixie.

Ms. Moser attended the meeting at the 10th Street Community Center and acknowledged the group's efforts in addressing concerns. The right-in, right-out changes and other turning movements were seen as improvements to reduce confusion. Ms. Moser had concerns with #8 regarding the impact of running a roadway through a narrow residential street, potentially affecting homes. The need for continued attention and updates was emphasized, with hopes that someone could report back on developments.

Ms. Prest asked for clarification on the size of the land between Monterey and the new proposed road. She estimated it to be around 100 feet at the most. Ms. Kristoff noted that the extension was planned to accommodate airport regulations but clarified that if the airport decided against the connection, it wouldn't be built. Ms. Prest also questioned the purpose of the adjustment, asking whether it was solely to satisfy airport regulations. Ms. Kristoff explained that Concept 10 allows for a smoother transition without the confluence of multiple intersections (Dixie, Palm Beach, Monterey), ensuring better traffic flow and ramp-up space.

Ms. Kristoff added that the concept moves significantly away from the runways, improving both mobility and compliance with FAA regulations. Ms. Kristoff emphasized that Concept 10 pulls the roadway away from the community and provides a strategic alternative when addressing FAA concerns. Ms. Prest sought confirmation that the airport's entrance improvements were part of the reasoning behind the extension, to which Ms. Kristoff agreed. Ms. Kristoff noted that Concept 10 was moved forward in the process to allow a thorough comparison and ensure the most beneficial option for mobility, safety, and environmental impact.

Ms. Prest clarified that during the previous meeting, no concepts were officially presented. Ms. Kristoff stated that the first major public feedback opportunity will be in September 2025. Ms. Kristoff emphasized the importance of evaluating what is truly beneficial for mobility, safety, and environmental impact before finalizing a direction.

7. COMMENTS FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Michael McLeod raised concerns about rumble strips being placed in bike lanes, reducing cyclist safety. He noted that in areas such as A1A, Saint Lucie County, Highway 76, and 714 West of Citrus, rumble strips have encroached into bike lanes by a foot or more, making them hazardous for cyclists traveling at speeds of 15-20 mph. Mr. McLeod emphasized that while rumble strips are meant to improve vehicle safety, their deep grooves make bike lanes difficult or impossible to navigate safely. He suggested that discs (which provide vibratory feedback but are only ¼ inch high) could be a safer

alternative. Mr. McLeod also noted a lack of escape routes for cyclists, making it unsafe to transition into traffic lanes when necessary.

The meeting continued with a discussion on the concerns surrounding rumble strips and their impact on bike lanes. Mike Melendez, the interim Bike PED and Complete Streets Coordinator for District 4, assured attendees that District 4 was fully engaged on the issue and aware of ongoing concerns. He mentioned that meetings had taken place to address construction issues related to rumble strips and to ensure that future projects follow standards while considering existing bike facilities.

Brad Salisbury from DOT Design acknowledged that some rumble strips were placed incorrectly, significantly narrowing bike lane widths. He confirmed that the DOT was actively working with contractors on a remediation and correction plan. Given that A1A is a priority corridor due to high bicycle activity, efforts to correct improper placement are underway. Mr. Salisbury also noted that Kanner Highway was another location requiring adjustments. He reassured attendees that they had heard resident concerns and were expecting progress on corrections soon. Discussion continued and Brad Salisbury referenced earlier testing in Tallahassee with bike groups to ensure bicycle navigation over rumble strips was feasible.

Ms. Gandhi-Savdas brought up the possibility of shifting the meeting start time to 1:00 PM, noting that she sometimes has Commission meetings on Mondays. She mentioned briefly discussing this with Beth previously and wanted to check whether other committee members would be comfortable with the adjustment. The conversation confirmed that this change would only apply to the BPAC meeting, and attendees generally seemed open to the idea. The consensus emerged that the adjustment was feasible.

Ms. Moser brought up a recent observation regarding hardened center lines being added to intersections along US1, with the latest one appearing near the mall in Jensen Beach. These center lines, she explained, are designed to enhance pedestrian safety by preventing vehicles from turning improperly. Ms. Moser suggested that similar safety measures might be beneficial at additional locations, specifically at Kanner Highway and Dixie. She recounted an experience during school dismissal when large groups of high school students were crossing the intersection correctly, yet drivers were honking and cutting them off, creating an unsafe situation. Ms. Moser emphasized that despite the students following pedestrian signals, they were still being put at risk, reinforcing the need for additional safety interventions at school-adjacent intersections.

Mr. Fabricy inquired about safety improvements along East Ocean Boulevard. Ms. Beltran talked about the Roadway Safety Audit and recommendations that included a speed study and a pedestrian crosswalk between existing signals along East Ocean Boulevard. Mr. Fabricy acknowledged the importance of addressing these safety concerns proactively, ensuring that both pedestrian and roadway improvements align with community needs.

8. NOTES

Ricardo Vazquez took a moment to remind everyone about the ongoing Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) survey. Mr. Vazquez also provided details about upcoming open houses and urged attendees to share the survey with community members, neighbors, and friends, underscoring its importance in planning efforts.

9. NEXT MEETING

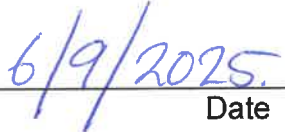
- Joint CAC/TAC/BPAC – April 7, 2025

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

Prepared by:




Susan Ortiz, Administrative Assistant




Date

Approved by:



Pinal Gandhi-Savdas, BPAC Chair



Date

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.