



**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, October 23, 2023 @ 9:00 am**

**MINUTES**

- 1. CALL TO ORDER** – MPO Chair Troy McDonald called the meeting to order at 9:03 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** – Anthony O’Neill-Butler, MPO Administrative Assistant, called roll.

**PRESENT:**

Troy McDonald, Chair  
Doug Smith, Vice Chair  
Commissioner Harold Jenkins  
Commissioner Christopher Collins  
Council Member Susan Gibbs-Thomas

**REPRESENTING:**

City of Stuart Commission  
Martin County Board of County Commission  
Martin County Board of County Commission  
City of Stuart Commission  
Village of Indiantown Council

**EXCUSED ABSENCE:**

Commissioner Sarah Heard  
Commissioner Stacey Hetherington  
Commissioner James Campo

Martin County Board of County Commission  
Martin County Board of County Commission  
Town of Sewall’s Point Commission

**Staff in Attendance:**

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

**Others in Attendance:**

Steve Braun, FDOT  
James Brown, FDOT-FTE  
Kelly Budhu, FDOT-D4  
Sabrina Aubery, FDOT-D4

Jessica Rubio, FDOT-D4  
Mark Madgar, FDOT-D4  
Cesar Martinez, FDOT-D4  
John Krane, FDOT-D4  
Katie Kehres, FDOT-D4  
Kris Kehres, FDOT-D4  
Ronald Kareiva, FDOT-D4  
Damaris Williams, FDOT-D4  
Stewart Robertson, Kimley-Horn & Associates  
Jim Harp, Stuart Alliance Church  
Ronald Rose, Jensen Beach Chamber of Commerce  
Shawn Levihan, Daddec Consulting  
Paul Carballo, Metric Engineering  
Mario Tapia, Metric Engineering  
Forrest Yingling  
Cheryl Swink  
Kelly Budhu  
Laverne Williams

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

#### **5. APPROVE AGENDA**

**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 – September 18, 2023

**A motion to approve the MPO Policy Board Minutes of September 18, 2023, was made by Council Member Susan Gibbs-Thomas and was seconded by Commissioner Doug Smith. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **7. PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Ronald Rose, President of the Jensen Beach Chamber of Commerce, wanted to begin an ongoing discussion regarding a beautification project for US-1 between Bridge Road and the County line. Mr. Rose was curious as to what grants may be available for such a project and spoke to the project's potential to improve safety on this stretch of roadway.

#### **8. AGENDA ITEMS**

##### **A. FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION (FDOT) FY25 – FY29 DRAFT TENTATIVE WORK PROGRAM**

Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator, introduced Steve Braun, Secretary of FDOT-District Four, who presented and sought approval of the FY25-FY29 Draft Tentative Work Program

for Martin County. After FDOT receives approval from the MPO Board, FDOT-District Four will submit the Tentative Work Program for approval by the Legislature. The Work Program returns to the MPO in the spring as the basis for the coming year's Transportation Improvement Program (TIP). Mr. Braun spoke about the importance of safety during his presentation. Mr. Braun also highlighted the significant increase in costs over the prior fiscal year and the challenges that have been introduced.

Council Member Susan Gibbs-Thomas expressed how encouraged she was by the commitment to safety and the high priority for the State Road (SR) 710 project. Council Member Gibbs-Thomas further stated that time is lives on that road.

Commissioner Doug Smith inquired about the timeline concerning the right-of-way acquisition for the SR-710 Project and whether it was a funding or timing issue. Secretary Braun informed him that the timeline is affected directly by the design phase. The \$43 million has funded the programming of the design and the future right-of-way acquisition, but the purchase of right-of-way remains underfunded. FDOT will be looking at other options to address the funding shortfall. Commissioner Smith further inquired about the 20 projects funded directly by the Governor and the Legislature and wondered whether the SR-710 project could be elevated to the same level as these other 20 projects that the Legislature has prioritized and, if so, what process would the Board need to take to be on the same importance level. Commissioner Smith and Council Member Gibbs-Thomas emphasized the number of deaths that are happening every year on SR-710, especially considering FDOT's focus on safety.

Commissioner Smith then asked for a presentation on the Monterey Road Grade Separation project. Secretary Braun informed him that they had just hired a consultant for this project and that the Board should see something soon.

Commissioner Smith commented on the traffic signalization at US-1 and Constitution Boulevard and the necessity to keep it a priority.

Commissioner Smith finally inquired about the realignment of Alice Street with Wright Boulevard to which Ms. Beltran informed him that there would be a presentation at the next MPO Board meeting regarding the project.

Chair Troy McDonald echoed Commissioner Smith's sentiments regarding Alice Street and the FEC Railroad, citing the amount of traffic from Port St. Lucie that comes down Greenriver Parkway and the challenges that has raised. Chair McDonald further stated that he believes it would be safer to have Wright Boulevard and Alice Street combined into one which would also allow residents to get off Alice Street much more efficiently. Chair McDonald also echoed Commissioner Smith's comments on the Monterey Road grade separation. Chair McDonald asked about the timeline for the Willoughby Boulevard Extension. Secretary Braun advised him that the PD&E would likely take longer than three years, probably closer to five years. Secretary Braun also advised that there would be an upcoming presentation regarding the Monterey Road and FEC Railroad grade separation.

**A motion to approve the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) FY25 – FY29 Draft Tentative Work Program was made by Council Member Susan Gibbs-Thomas and was seconded by Commissioner Doug Smith. The motion passed unanimously.**

## **B. FLORIDA TURNPIKE ENTERPRISE FY25 – FY29 DRAFT TENTATIVE WORK PROGRAM**

Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator, introduced James Brown, MPO Liaison for the Florida Turnpike, who presented the Turnpike's Tentative Work Program for FY25-FY29. Included in the Work Program are projects such as the widening of the Turnpike through Martin County, and a project to improve traffic operations for north-south through trips that provide a connection between Interstate 95 (I-95) and Florida's Turnpike near the existing I-95/Bridge Road Interchange. Mr. Brown also noted that the Turnpike has over \$40 million allocated for Martin County projects such as widening and interchange improvements.

Commissioner Doug Smith asked when they would receive an update on the interchange between the Turnpike and I-95 as he does not want the project to advance too far without input. Mr. Brown advised him that the project is in the PD&E stage and that he would get with his team to get an update.

**A motion to approve the Florida Turnpike Enterprise FY25 – FY29 Draft Tentative Work Program was made by Council Member Susan Gibbs-Thomas and was seconded by Commissioner Doug Smith. The motion passed unanimously.**

## **C. APPORTIONMENT PLAN**

Beth Beltran presented the Draft Apportionment Plan. At the September 18, 2023, MPO Policy Board meeting, the Board gave staff direction to move forward with developing the Apportionment Plan, and to include an additional Board member from the Martin County Board of County Commissioners. The reasons for adding the fifth County Commissioner are developments impacting northern Martin County and recent updates to the 2045 Treasure Coast Regional Planning Model Version 5 (TCRPM5) requested by the St. Lucie Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) showing increases in traffic volume on CR-714/SR-714 (SW Martin Highway) and CR-609 (SW Allapattah Road). Adding the fifth County Commissioner will ensure that all areas of Martin County are included in the MPO's transportation planning process. MPO staff recommends approval for this item.

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

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

Beth Beltran introduced Stewart Robertson with Kimley-Horn & Associates who presented the Draft RLRTP. Mr. Robertson spoke about the effort of all three MPOs in the region and how the RLRTP will identify and prioritize the three counties' separate Long Range Transportation Plans (LRTP).

Commissioner Doug Smith asked why Village Parkway and its connection to Martin County was not included in the Regional Roadway Network. Mr. Robertson advised that the best

way to accomplish this would be to work with the City of Port St. Lucie to have them add a southern Village Parkway connection to their comprehensive plan so the Martin County section would have something to connect to. Commissioner Smith stated that it is already labeled on the St. Lucie side, and it should be shown on the Martin County side as Martin County is pushing for the connection. Chair Troy McDonald added that he agreed with Commissioner Smith and stressed the importance of this connection.

Council Member Susan Gibbs-Thomas raised her concerns regarding the Tier 1 ranking system and the “top ten” slide that did not include the SR-710 projects. Ms. Beltran advised that this slide does not accurately portray the new tiering system as there are no “top ten” Tier 1 projects. Commissioner Doug Smith added that this slide should be deleted from the document and the presentation.

**A motion to approve the Draft 2045 Regional Long Range Transportation Plan (RLRTP) was made by Commissioner Doug Smith and seconded by Council Member Susan Gibbs-Thomas with the comments that Village Parkway should be considered to be added as a regional roadway, that Slide B was to be deleted, and that if there are any further changes to this document, it be brought back to the Martin MPO Policy Board. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **E. DEVELOPMENT REVIEW INTERACTIVE MAP SCOPE OF SERVICES**

Beth Beltran introduced Ricardo Vazquez, MPO Senior Planner, who sought approval for the Scope of Services to continue to update and maintain the Development Review Interactive Map. This task corresponds with Task 3 of the FY23-FY24 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). The Martin MPO will be updating this map biannually.

**A motion to approve the Development Review Interactive Map Scope of Services was made by Commissioner Harold Jenkins and was seconded by Commissioner Doug Smith. The motion passed unanimously.**

#### **F. CR-713/SW HIGH MEADOW AVE PD&E STUDY PRESENTATION**

Beth Beltran introduced Damaris Williams with FDOT and Paul Carballo with Metric Engineering who presented the CR-713/SW High Meadow Avenue PD&E Study. The purpose of the CR-713/SW High Meadow Avenue Widening PD&E Study is to improve traffic capacity and safety issues currently present from I-95 to CR-714/SW Martin Highway. CR-713 serves as a key roadway that connects to I-95 interchange ramps to allow users to enter and exit Palm City. During the presentation, Mr. Carballo spoke about the high amount of rear-end collisions due to congestion and how this could result in an "F" level of service with a projected 69% increase by 2050. The project schedule will span two years and will include three public meetings, which are currently postponed, however, Mr. Carballo stressed the importance of the public's input. He noted that the design phase is funded for FY26, and the right-of-way phase is funded for FY28. Construction currently remains unfunded.

Beth Beltran added that the project's Public Involvement includes coming back to the MPO Advisory Committees and Policy Board.

#### **G. STATE ROAD (SR) - 710 UPDATE**

Beth Beltran introduced Ron Kareiva from FDOT who provided an update on the SR-710 project. Mr. Kareiva began by updating the Board on the interim improvements and short-term improvements on SR-710. Regarding the long-term interim improvements, the relocation of the SR-710 and SR-714 intersection has its design and right-of-way phases funded. Part of this will also include the reevaluation of the previous PD&E study which has already started. Regarding short-term improvements, a work order has been signed for signage and marking improvements. Mr. Kareiva noted that the Feasibility Study is finished, and the documentation is being finalized.

Commissioner Doug Smith asked about the PD&E study and was curious if they were still able to use the old PD&E study. Mr. Kareiva advised him that while we can use the older PD&E study, some of the information would need to be reevaluated and that this process was running concurrently with the design phase and, once the design has been finalized, they can begin the process of purchasing right-of-way.

Council Member Susan Gibbs-Thomas inquired about a start date for the improvements to the Clementsville community. Mr. Kareiva stated that it should be starting sometime in the final months of 2023 and that he will check and get back with the Board.

Forrest Yingling provided his input as a public citizen regarding the turn lane and the issue with the narrowness considering the high amount of traffic from Sebring. Mr. Yuengling also noted the guardrails that were installed and the difficulties it has made for traffic enforcement. Mr. Yingling then cited FDOT's prior presentations and was curious why so much funding had been spent on the widening of SR-76 when that road did not have, in his opinion, the same high death toll that SR-710 has. Chair Troy McDonald thanked him for his input and stressed the aggressive work the Board is doing to get this done. Council Member Gibbs-Thomas stated how much she appreciates the community and their efforts as they come out and attend these meetings and hold the Board accountable.

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

**10. COMMENTS FROM BOARD MEMBERS – Commissioner Doug Smith moved to ask Beth Beltran, MPO Administrator, to draft a letter to the County Commission relative to asking the delegation that any type of Legislative ask also include funding for right-of-way acquisition the SR-710 widening project. Seconded by Council Member Susan Gibbs-Thomas. The motion passed unanimously.**

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

#### **12.NOTES**

- Lucine Martens spoke on the Transit Development Plan (TDP) Survey and encouraged all in attendance to participate and share it with 5 other people.

**13. NEXT MEETING**

MPO Board Meeting – December 11, 2023

**ADJOURNMENT: 10:38 AM**

Approved by:

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

12/11/2023  
Date

Prepared by:

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

12-11-2023  
Date

**Minutes Approved on December 11, 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.