

**Florida MPO Advisory Council
Meeting of the Governing Board
July 29, 2021
Orlando, Florida
Meeting Minutes**

Governing Board Members in Attendance:

IN-PERSON (GOVERNING BOARD – A TOTAL OF 18 WITH 9 MAKING AN IN-PERSON QUORUM):

Commissioner Nick Maddox, Capital Region TPA, Chair
Vice Mayor Robert Weinroth, Palm Beach TPA, Vice-Chair
Commissioner Bill Dozier, Bay County TPO
Commissioner Sandy Johnson, Broward MPO
Commissioner James Herston, Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO
Commissioner William McDaniel, Collier MPO
Commissioner Robert Bender, Florida-Alabama TPO
Mayor Joanne “Cookie” Kennedy, Forward Pinellas
Commissioner Terry Burroughs, Heartland Regional TPO
Commissioner Susan Adams, Indian River County MPO
Councilmember Fred Forbes, Lee County MPO
Commissioner Mayra Uribe, MetroPlan Orlando
Councilmember Valerie Hanchar, Ocala/Marion County TPO
Mayor Dick Rynearson, Okaloosa-Walton TPO
Mayor Pro Tem Nat Birdsong, Polk TPO
Commissioner Chris Cloudman, River to Sea TPO
Councilmember Andrea Young, Space Coast TPO
Councilmember Stephanie Morgan, St. Lucie TPO

IN-PERSON (OTHERS):

Jeff Kramer, MPOAC, Center for Urban Transportation Research, USF
John Waldron, MPOAC
Paul Gougelman, MPOAC General Counsel
Abra Horne, Florida Department of Transportation
Alison Stettner, Florida Department of Transportation
Gerald Goosby, Florida Department of Transportation
Scott Philips, Florida Department of Transportation
Mary Beth Washnock, Bay County TPO
Greg Slay, Capital Region TPA
Gary Harrell, Charlotte County - Punta Gorda MPO
Austin Mount, Florida-Alabama TPO
Whit Blanton, Forward Pinellas
Brian Freeman, Indian River County

Marybeth Soderstrom, Heartland Regional TPO
Michael Woods, Lake-Sumter MPO
Rob Balmes, Ocala/Marion TPO
Carl Mikyska, Pasco MPO
Don Scott, Lee County MPO
Gary Huttman, MetroPlan Orlando
Andrew Uhler, Palm Beach MPO
Chandra Fredrick, Polk TPO
Georganna Gillette, Space Coast TPO
Peter Buchwald, St. Lucie TPO
Dave Hutchinson, Sarasota/Manatee MPO
John Kaliski, Cambridge Systematics
Alison Flue, Kimley-Horne
Mark Reichert, Member of the Public

VIRTUAL (GOVERNING BOARD – A TOTAL OF 3 THAT CANNOT CONTRIBUTE TO A QUORUM):

Commissioner Vanessa Baugh, Sarasota/Manatee MPO
Commissioner Jeff Kinnard, Hernando/Citrus MPO
Commissioner Josh Bake, Lake-Sumter MPO

VIRTUAL (OTHERS):

Christen Miller, CUTR

• CALL TO ORDER

Commissioner Nick Maddox, Chair, Capital Region TPA, called the meeting to order at 3:03 p.m. All were asked to rise for the Pledge of Allegiance. All in attendance introduced themselves. Those attending online were then given an opportunity to introduce themselves.

A motion to allow online members to participate in the meeting due to the extraordinary circumstances of COVID-19 was made by Vice Mayor Robert Weinroth, Vice-Chair, Palm Beach TPA, and seconded by Mayor Dick Rynearson, Okaloosa-Walton TPO. The motion was approved unanimously.

• APPROVAL OF MINUTES: JANUARY 28, 2021 MEETING

Vice Mayor Robert Weinroth, Vice-Chair, Palm Beach TPA, moved to approve the minutes of the April 29, 2021, MPOAC Governing Board meeting. Mayor Joanne “Cookie” Kennedy, Forward Pinellas, seconded. The motion carried unanimously.

• PUBLIC COMMENTS

No public comments were made.

• EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

A. UPWP REPORT

Mr. Jeff Kramer, Interim MPOAC Executive Director/Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR), presented the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) Report showing expenditures and budget for the fourth quarter of the state fiscal year 2021 (April-June 2021).

Mr. Kramer reported that the MPOAC completed last fiscal year under budget. He attributed this to the reduction in travel resulting from COVID-19 travel restrictions and lower labor costs as a result of the changes to the MPOAC Executive Director position.

B. LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Mr. Jeff Kramer, Interim MPOAC Executive Director/Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR), presented an update of federal legislative activity. The US House of Representatives has fully approved a reauthorization of the federal transportation law, which is named the Investing in a New Vision for the Environment and Surface Transportation in America (INVEST in America) Act (currently called the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act). The US Senate reauthorization bill is currently named the Surface Transportation Reauthorization Act and had not yet been passed by the full Senate.

Mr. Kramer presented on the ongoing bipartisan discussions for a water and transportation infrastructure bill. He provided a summary chart of areas being discussed in the bill, noted that the discussions were moving fast and that some of the items presented in the slide had changed just in the past few hours. The bill would provide a total of \$550 billion in new federal funds for water and transportation infrastructure, including \$110 billion for roads, bridges, and major transportation projects. Other transportation-related areas receiving funding in the bill include \$66 billion for passenger and freight rail, \$39 billion for transit infrastructure, \$25 billion for airports, \$17 billion for ports, \$11 billion for safety projects, \$7.5 billion for electric vehicle infrastructure, \$5 billion for low emission busses, and \$1 billion for redesigning or demolishing transportation that divided communities in the past (as is the case with many Interstates across the country).

Vice Mayor Robert Weinroth, Palm Beach TPA, asked how the funds will flow into the state transportation system. Mr. Kramer responded that it is unclear at this time because the bill is not yet written. It is presumed that the funds will flow in a similar manner to past surface transportation program funds – they will be broken up by the distribution formula and then allocated by mode/program as outlined in the infrastructure bill. An update of the long range transportation plan (LRTP) and transportation improvement program (TIP) will be needed to accommodate these funds. It is a cooperative process, therefore the state and the MPOs would be amending their respective documents to accommodate the flow of these federal funds.

• AGENCY REPORTS

A. FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Ms. Abra Horne, Metropolitan Planning Administrator, presented the FDOT Agency Report and reviewed recent FDOT activities of note for the MPOs and their partners.

Ms. Horne shared that FDOT has set up a New Starts Program presentation on August 12 and August 13. Both days will have the same content. Ms. Horne shared that FDOT is beginning to plan for the Florida Metropolitan Planning Partnership (FMPP) meeting, the proposed dates of which are December 3rd or December 10th of this year. FDOT is seeking action from the MPOAC to identify 1.5 to 2 hours of content and is looking to move to quarterly meetings. There were no member comments or questions on this item.

Ms. Horne updated the meeting attendees on several upcoming and ongoing projects. These updates included the following:

- Upcoming projects
 - The October MPOAC meeting will include presentations on census and revenue estimating methodologies.
 - TransPlex safety meetings will be held during the five Fridays in October.
 - The Vital Few safety series is being planned.
 - There will be three more safety series with a peer exchange hosted with FHWA's assistance.
- Ongoing projects
 - In August, MPO liaisons will be trained on the UPWP template and thresholds.
 - On July 28th, an email was sent to MPO liaisons informing them about the extension of the Transportation Research Board (TRB) Communicating with John & Jane Q Public Competition deadline to August 15th. Florida MPOs are encouraged to look at the submission information and consider sending any notable practices.

B. FLORIDA DIVISION OF FEDERAL HIGHWAY ADMINISTRATION

There was no Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) presentation for this meeting. Key updates in the last quarter have already been sent via email.

• BUSINESS ITEMS & PRESENTATIONS

A. MPOAC LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES AND POLICY POSITIONS

Mr. Jeff Kramer, MPOAC Interim Executive Director, shared that the 2022 Florida Legislative session will begin with committee meetings in the Fall of 2021 and the full legislative session will begin on January 11, 2022.

The MPOAC develops a set of legislative priorities and policy positions every year ahead of the following year's legislative session. The legislative policy positions included in this meeting packet are the culmination of staff recommendations and review by the Staff

Directors' Advisory Committee. The MPOAC Policy and Technical Committee met on July 7, 2021, and developed a draft set of legislative priorities and policy positions.

Commissioner Maddox suggested that the MPOAC Governing Board members vote on each policy position separately. There were no objections. Chair Maddox asked the MPOAC Governing Board members if they had any recommendations for the order of the legislative priorities and policy positions. No recommendations were made to change the order.

The recommendations from the July 7th Policy and Technical Committee meeting include (a reminder that all positions start with the phrase "The MPOAC supports State Legislation that"):

- Revising current Position 1 as follows:
 - Amending the position to read "Supports an increase in transportation investment through dedicated and sustainable funding, including innovative financing options; encourages partnerships between public and private entities; and facilitates the expedited delivery of projects."
 - Adding language to the Key Recommendations emphasizing support for an electric vehicle registration fee and opposing reductions in local option transportation revenue sources.
- Deleting language in Position 5 to maintain consistency with the policy positions of the Florida Public Transit Association (FPTA) and to address minor grammatical errors.

Mr. Kramer noted that, once approved, the 2022 MPOAC Legislative Priorities and Policy Positions will be published as a glossy brochure for distribution to MPOs, state legislators, and MPOAC partner organizations. The brochure will also be posted to the MPOAC website.

Policy Position #1

Vice Mayor Robert Weinroth, Palm Beach TPA, expressed concern over the MPOAC taking a position that affirmatively declares charging more for electric vehicles (EVs) and requested to strike the wording in support of an EV registration fee until more research is done.

Councilmember Stephanie Morgan, St. Lucie TPO, expressed her support for the recommendation to emphasize support for the EV registration fee.

Councilmember Morgan suggested the following edit to bullet #7: "Fund the Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) at a predictable level of a minimum of \$250 Million per year."

Members discussed their support for or against the recommended addition to policy position #1 (relating to an EV registration fee). Several members acknowledged that additional revenue streams are needed and that revenue replacement should be the focus of bullet #3.

Members asked for clarity on existing studies to identify how revenue would be recovered to fill the financial gap. Mr. Kramer stated that they would be stepping back from a position that is held that all vehicles, regardless of funding source, should be contributing to the transportation system. The proposed language recognizes that EVs wouldn't be charged

more than internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles and that they are currently not contributing because they do not pay gas tax.

Several members of the MPOAC Governing Board expressed their support for the position to identify a strategy to ensure that EVs contribute their fair share of transportation revenue. The discussion included the potential for generalizing the position to prevent singling out EVs.

Commissioner William McDaniel, Collier MPO, moved to approve policy position #1 as written. Councilmember Stephanie Morgan, St. Lucie TPO, seconded. The motion passed with 17 votes in favor and 1 opposed.

Commissioner William McDaniel, Collier MPO, moved to edit policy position #1 bullet #7 to add “a minimum of \$250 Million per year”. Councilmember Stephanie Morgan, St. Lucie TPO, seconded.

Discussion

Meeting attendees discussed the feasibility of a \$250 million per year minimum if historically Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) funding has not reached that amount. Commissioner Maddox explained that the specified minimum would serve as a benchmark for the legislature and brings about awareness of the MPOAC’s expectation for TRIP funding. The meeting attendees discussed funding sources for the TRIP and the feasibility of adding funding sources in the future.

The motion passed unanimously.

Policy Position #2

Councilmember Stephanie Morgan, St. Lucie TPO, asked for clarification as to why the term “hands-free” was not used in the recommended language for the policy position. Mr. Jeff Kramer, MPOAC Interim Executive Director, explained that the language used in the policy position maintains consistency with the law. Members continued to discuss the wording used in the policy position.

Mayor Pro Tem Nat Birdsong, Polk TPO, moved to approve policy position #2 as written. Commissioner Mayra Uribe, MetroPlan Orlando, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Policy Position #3

Vice Mayor Robert Weinroth, Vice-Chair, Palm Beach TPA, moved to approve policy position #3 as written. Commissioner William McDaniel, Collier MPO, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Policy Position #4

Commissioner Mayra Uribe, MetroPlan Orlando, moved to approve policy position #4 as written. Vice Mayor Robert Weinroth, Vice-Chair, Palm Beach TPA, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Policy Position #5

Vice Mayor Robert Weinroth, Vice-Chair, Palm Beach TPA, moved to approve policy position #5 as written. Councilmember Stephanie Morgan, St. Lucie TPO, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Policy Position #6

Commissioner William McDaniel, Collier MPO, moved to approve policy position #6 as written. Commissioner Robert Bender, Florida-Alabama TPO, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Policy Position #7

Commissioner William McDaniel, Collier MPO, moved to approve policy position #7 as written. Commissioner Mayra Uribe, MetroPlan Orlando, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

Commissioner William McDaniel, Collier MPO, reminded the meeting attendees that these are policy initiatives that the MPOs take to their legislatures, stating that they are not carved in stone.

Commissioner Maddox asked the group if there was any dissent or comment on the priorities. No additional comments were made.

Councilmember Fred Forbes, Lee County MPO, made a motion to approve the 2022 MPOAC legislative priorities and policy positions to include any amendments. Councilmember Valerie Hanchar, Ocala/Marion County TPO, seconded. The motion passed unanimously.

B. MPOAC MEETING DATES FOR CALENDAR YEAR 2022

Mr. Kramer reminded the members that the MPOAC Governing Board adopted a methodology for selecting meeting dates at their October 29, 2020 meeting. The adopted methodology states:

“In order of priority:

1. Hold the meetings on the 5th Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday in the months of January, April, July, and October.
2. If there was no 5th Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday available in the months of January, April, July, or October, then MPOAC meeting would move to the 4th Thursday of January, April, July, and October.”

Additionally, it was decided that the MPOAC would announce the meeting dates for the upcoming year at the July MPOAC quarterly meetings or earlier and that meetings will be held in Orlando unless otherwise directed by the MPOAC Governing Board.

Applying the adopted MPOAC meeting date methodology, the MPOAC will meet in Orlando, FL on the following dates in the calendar year 2022:

- January 27
- April 28
- July 28
- October 27

Mr. Kramer noted that 2022 included no 5th Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday in the appropriate months and that all meetings in 2022 would be held on the 4th Thursday of January, April, June, and October.

Commissioner Mayra Uribe, MetroPlan Orlando, made a motion to approve the proposed MPOAC quarterly meeting dates for the calendar year 2022. Vice Mayor Robert Weinroth, Palm Beach TPA, seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

C. CONSOLIDATED PLANNING GRANT RESOLUTION

Mr. Kramer opened by noting that the MPOAC and FDOT had been discussing creating a Consolidated Planning Grant (CPG) program in Florida for several years and that FDOT was in the final steps for kicking off the program ahead of the next Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) cycle. He indicated that passage of an MPOAC resolution in support of the CPG program would indicate appropriate statewide support for the program as required by FHWA. He then introduced Ms. Abra Horne, Metropolitan Planning Administrator, FDOT Office of Policy Planning, who presented additional details on the CPG Program and the proposed MPOAC Resolution off support.

Ms. Horne stated that the CPG program will be implemented next year. FDOT staff made a CPG presentation at the MPOAC Policy and Technical Subcommittee meeting on July 7, 2021, as background for the CPG Resolution being considered by the MPOAC. At that meeting, FDOT requested a recommendation for approval of the CPG Resolution, which was provided.

During her presentation, Ms. Horne shared the CPG roadmap and its benefits, CPG documents, the funding process, and CPG and MPO allocations. She also walked the membership through the elements of the proposed resolution.

Commissioner William McDaniel, Collier MPO, made a motion to approve the MPOAC Resolution 2021-02 relating to the endorsement of a Consolidated Planning Grant (CPG) program. Vice Mayor Robert Weinroth, Palm Beach TPA, seconded. The motion was approved unanimously.

D. REVIEW OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE MPOAC/FDOT MOU AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR JOB DESCRIPTION

Mr. Don Scott, MPOAC Staff Directors' Advisory Committee Chair/Lee County MPO, presented the recommendations for the MPOAC/FDOT memorandum of understanding (MOU) and Executive Director job description.

The MPOAC Governing Board, at the April 29, 2021 meeting in Orlando, FL, directed the MPOAC Policy and Technical Subcommittee to provide information for the MPOAC Executive Director job description and for strategies to address the arrangement with FDOT and associated issues. The subcommittee met on June 4 and July 7, 2021, to discuss the MPOAC Executive Director position and to make a recommendation for the MPOAC Governing Board to consider. The subcommittee developed a draft framework for a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the MPOAC and the FDOT to provide guidance to the roles of the respective organizations as well as a draft job description for the MPOAC Executive Director position.

Mr. Scott shared the recommended changes made at the MPOAC Staff Director's Advisory Committee meeting. These changes included the following:

- Edit the travel statement to include "extensive travel is required..."
- Reword the general statement to add "...currently working contractually through the Center for Urban Transportation Research at the University of South Florida."
- Edit the position duties and travel statement to read "~~At least 25% up to approximately 50% of the Executive Director's time~~ The position will require working in Tallahassee and visiting individual MPOs around the State and other transportation meetings and conferences. The position is currently based out of Tallahassee, but at the direction of the MPOAC Governing Board, the position may also utilize another FDOT facility as a satellite office less than half the time, travel would not be reimbursed ~~be flexible re-located to a FDOT facility in other cities either used either as satellite offices or on a more permanent basis.~~"

It was clarified that that Staff Directors would recommend approval by the Governing Board. It was further clarified that the MPOAC Executive Director position will be based in Tallahassee, but can be flexible with approval by the Governing Board. The decision to keep the position in Tallahassee was made to provide the potential for flexibility with remote work, while also clarifying that the MPOAC will not incur travel costs for travel to and from a flexible work location. The meeting attendees discussed the Executive Director's salary. It was explained that additional clarification is needed from FDOT regarding the MPOAC Governing Board's ability to request a raise for the Executive Director.

The meeting attendees discussed the pros and cons of keeping the MPOAC Executive Director position in Tallahassee versus a flexible location. The discussion included the following:

- The ways in which the potential flexibility may impact the size of the candidate pool

- Whether or not the MPOAC should give more emphasis to the position location or the candidates' qualifications
- Ensuring that, if the location is flexible, candidates understand that the position requires a certain amount of time in Tallahassee and traveling to various locations around the state.
- The impact of including performance measures that stipulate a maximum amount of time spent in Tallahassee.
- The budgetary impacts of a flexible work location.

Vice Mayor Robert Weinroth, Palm Beach TPA, made a motion to:

1. Approve the MPOAC Executive Director's job description with the suggested edits discussed by the Staff Director's Advisory Committee;
2. Approve the initial framework for agreement between FDOT and the MPOAC;
3. Delegate authority to the MPOAC Executive Committee to prepare a timeline for recruitment of an Executive Director, prepare a shortlist of candidates, conduct interviews, and recommend in order of preference, a list of finalists for MPOAC Governing Board approval; and
4. Direct the Policy & Technical Subcommittee to undertake recommendations to amend the MPOAC Strategic Directions Plan.

Mayor Pro Tem Nat Birdsong, Polk TPO, seconded.

Discussion

It was clarified that the wording "... but at the direction of the MPOAC Governing Board, the position may be flexible re-located to a FDOT facility in other cities either used either as satellite offices or on a more permanent basis..." would remain in the job description. Meeting attendees discussed the travel budget. It was stated that, at some point in the future, the MPOAC will need to analyze the costs of a flexible work location as compared to a Tallahassee-based location.

The motion passed unanimously.

E. STRATEGIC INTERMODAL SYSTEM (SIS) POLICY PLAN UPDATE

Mr. Gerald Goosby, Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) Planning Manager, shared details of the SIS Policy Plan update process and seek input from the MPOAC membership to inform the update.

The Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) is Florida's high priority network of transportation facilities important to the state's economy and mobility. The Governor and Legislature established the SIS in 2003 to focus the state's limited transportation resources on the facilities most significant for interregional, interstate, and international travel. The SIS is the state's highest priority for transportation capacity investments and a primary focus for implementing the Florida Transportation Plan (FTP). The FTP was updated in 2020 and the FDOT is in the process of updating the SIS Policy Plan.

In his presentation, Mr. Goosby explained how the SIS policy plan is developed, the plan elements, focus areas, and presented a set of policy questions. Among the ideas for improving urban mobility and connectivity was to provide flexibility for the use funds designated for the SIS to make improvements on non-SIS facilities if such an improvement enhances the performance on the SIS network. It was noted that this has been a priority position of the MPOAC for many years and a welcome proposal. Mr. Goosby completed his presentation by presenting the next steps in the SIS policy plan update. FDOT is conducting outreach to MPOs, Regional Planning Councils (RPCs), and modal partners. The draft plan update is anticipated to be available in November 2021 for review by the FTP/SIS Implementation Committee. A 30-day public comment period will be included after the review, with the final plan update completed in January 2022 followed by policy implementation.

- **MEMBER COMMENTS**

Mr. Don Scott, MPOAC Staff Directors' Advisory Committee Chair, shared that the members of the Staff Directors' Advisory Committee discussed hybrid meeting options and Green Hotels. They will have more information moving forward. Members asked that the meetings remain in the area near the airport and discussed options for hybrid meetings.

- **ADJOURNMENT**

The next meeting of the MPOAC Governing Board will be on October 28, 2021. A meeting notice will be sent out at least one month prior to the meeting date.

The Chair adjourned the meeting at 4:58pm