

## METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

A meeting of the Indian River County (IRC) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) was held at 10:00 AM on Wednesday, March 10, 2021, conducted through Zoom, and hosted in County Administration Building "B", Room B1-501, 1800 27<sup>th</sup> Street, Vero Beach, Florida for those unable to attend virtually.

**Note: Audio and video recordings of the meeting can be found at <http://www.ircgov.com/Boards/MPO/2021.htm>**

### **MPO Members in Attendance:**

Commissioner Susan Adams, District 1  
Commissioner Joseph Flescher, District 2, Chairman  
Commissioner Joe Earman, District 3  
Commissioner Peter O'Bryan, District 4  
Commissioner Laura Moss, District 5  
Brian Foley, Mayor, Town of Indian River Shores  
Honey Minuse, City of Vero Beach  
Rey Neville, City of Vero Beach  
Ed Dodd, Mayor, City of Sebastian  
Bob McPartlan, City of Sebastian  
Brian Barefoot, Indian River County School Board

### **MPO Members via Zoom:**

Mary Jane Benedetto, Town of Orchid (non-voting member)

### **Members Absent:**

Gerald "Jerry" Renick, City of Fellsmere (excused)

### **Staff in Attendance:**

Brian Freeman, MPO Staff Director  
Jim Mann, MPO Senior Planner  
Jon Howard, MPO Senior Planner  
Phil Matson, IRC Community Development Director  
Rich Szyrka, IRC Public Works Director  
Jason Brown, County Administrator  
Patti Johnson, MPO Staff Assistant 3/Recording Secretary

### **Others Present:**

Michael Hicks, and John Podczerwinsky, FDOT  
Bob Auwaerter, Bike Walk of Indian River County (BWIRC)

Juliana Young, MPOCAC Chair  
Karen Deigl, Senior Resource Association  
Sgt. Doug MacKenzie, IRC Sheriff's Office  
Jan Verde, Tom Davis, Ervin Cartwright, and Paul Speas, Concerned Citizens

**Others present via Zoom:**

Trent Ebersole, McMahon & Associates  
Joe Schulke, SBS Engineers  
F. Hickson, Consor Engineering  
Tom Lanahan, Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council  
Laila Haddad, Media Relations Group, LLC  
William Roll, Kimley-Horn & Associates  
Noel Comeaux, Metro Analytics  
Ian Biava, TranSystems  
Manosh Varghese and Brian Fuller, Metric Engineering  
Victoria Williams, Maria Formoso, Anson Sonnett, Cesar Martinez, Nadir Rodrigues, Ronald Kareiva, Wibet Hay, and Robin Brisebois, FDOT  
Bumlauf, Malu's phone, and A Cosner Concerned Citizens

**Call to Order**

Chairman Flescher called the meeting to order at 10:00 AM. It was noted there was an in-person quorum present.

**Approval of Authorization for MPO and Advisory Committee Members to Exercise Video Conferencing Vote Options.**

*Action Required*

Mr. Freeman explained this is a continuation of the action approved by the MPO at its December 9, 2020 meeting. The motion was for a 90-day period that would allow the MPO and its advisory committee members participating by Zoom to vote, as long as there is an in-person quorum present. The proposal is to extend this for another 90-day period.

Chairman Flescher opened the floor for any additional comments from the board.

There being no further comments, the item was open for motion.

**ON MOTION by Commissioner Adams, and SECONDED by Mr. McPartlan, the members voted (10-1) to approve Authorization for MPO and Advisory Committee Members to Exercise Video Conferencing Vote Options, as presented. Commissioner Moss opposed.**

**Approval of Minutes of the MPO Meeting January 27, 2021.**

*Action Required*

Chairman Flescher asked if there were any additions or corrections to the MPO meeting minutes of January 27, 2021. There were none.

**ON MOTION by Commissioner Adams, and SECONDED by Mr. Foley, the members voted (11-0) to approve the minutes of the Metropolitan Planning Organization January 27, 2021 meeting, as presented.**

**Update on Safety and Operational Improvements at the Indian River Boulevard/Merrill Barber Bridge Intersection (SR 60).**

*No Action Required*

Mr. Freeman stated the Indian River Boulevard/Merrill Barber Bridge intersection is one of the busiest in the county, with approximately 40,000 vehicles a day going through. Just over a year ago, there was a deadly accident and since then FDOT and the County have made several changes at that intersection. Mr. Freeman introduced Ms. Nadir Rodrigues from FDOT and Trent Ebersole from McMahon & Associates who presented, via Zoom, some of the safety and operational improvements which have been implemented. A copy of this power point presentation is on file in the MPO office.

Ms. Rodrigues and Mr. Ebersole discussed the potential addition of turn lanes at the intersection and other improvements. After the road safety audit last year, two speed advisory signs and flashing beacons have been installed.

There were concerns based on the slides shown proposing the changes. The consensus of the board is they would like to have more information and in-depth studies completed before adding this onto the MPO Priorities List. Mr. Freeman replied the MPO would coordinate with FDOT to get more information and have additional studies performed.

**Status Report of MPO Advisory Committees.**

*No Action Required*

Mr. Freeman reviewed his memorandum, dated March 2, 2021, included in the agenda packet and on file in the MPO Office. He also noted the next meeting dates for the MPO and its advisory committees.

**Review of Progress Report and Reimbursement Invoice #2 for the 2020/21 Planning Grant.**

*Action Required*

It is required, as part of the Transportation Disadvantaged (TD) Planning Grant contract between the Indian River County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) as the Designated Official Planning Agency (DOPA) and the State of Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD), that periodic progress reports and reimbursement invoices be submitted. To comply with the CTD's requirements, staff has prepared a progress report and invoice for the period from October 1, 2020 to December 31, 2020.

Chairman Flescher opened the floor for any additional comments from the board.

There being no further comments, the item was open for motion.

**ON MOTION BY Commissioner O'Bryan, and SECONDED by Commissioner Adams, the members voted (11-0) to recommend approval of Progress Report and Reimbursement Invoice #2 for the 2020/21 Planning Grant, as presented.**

**Review of Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) Annual Evaluation Report for FY 2019/20.**

*Action Required*

On February 25, 2021, the TDLCB approved the CTC annual evaluation report, recommended that the MPO retain the Senior Resource Association as the county's CTC, and directed staff to forward the annual evaluation report to the MPO for its approval prior to submittal of the report to the state Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged.

Staff recommends that the MPO approve the attached CTC annual evaluation report, retain the Senior Resource Association (SRA) as the county's CTC, and direct staff to forward the report to the State Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged.

Commissioner Earman stated he recently attended the TDLCB meeting in his new role as Chairman and was very impressed with the comments received from the evaluation committee.

Ms. Deigl responded she is very grateful for the partnership with Indian River County and is very happy to hear the positive comments. It is the goal of the SRA to provide great customer service and appreciates the support received from the County.

Chairman Flescher commended Ms. Karen Deigl and her staff from the (SRA) for their hard work and dedication in providing a great service to the residents of Indian River County. It was also noted the decrease in complaints received which reflects on the level of service provided.

Chairman Flescher opened the floor for any additional comments from the board.

There being no further comments, the item was open for motion.

**ON MOTION BY Commissioner Earman, and SECONDED by Commissioner Adams, the members voted (11-0) to recommend approval of the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) Annual Evaluation Report for FY 2019/20, as presented.**

**Consideration of an Amendment to the FY 2020/21 – 2021/22 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).**

*Action Required*

Mr. Freeman explained this is an administrative item to make changes to the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and reflect how the State will be matching the Transit Planning Grant.

Chairman Flescher opened the floor for any additional comments from the board.

There being no further comments, the item was open for motion.

**ON MOTION BY Commissioner O’Bryan, and SECONDED by Commissioner Earman, the members voted (11-0) to recommend approval of the Amendment to the FY 2020/21 – 2021/22 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), as presented.**

**Consideration of the Public Transportation Grant Agreement (PTGA) with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for 49 USC CH. 53, Section 5305(d) Transit Planning Funds.**

*Action Required*

One of the tasks included in the MPO’s Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) is Task 3.2, Transit Planning. As indicated in the UPWP, these activities will be funded primarily through a Section 5305(d) grant from the Federal Transit Administration. For FY 2020/21, the MPO will receive \$84,553 in Section 5305(d) funds.

To receive the FY 2021/21 Section 5305(d) funds, the MPO must adopt the attached resolution authorizing the MPO Chairman to execute the amendment to the Public Transportation Grant Agreement.

Chairman Flescher opened the floor for any additional comments from the board.

There being no further comments, the item was open for motion.

**ON MOTION BY Commissioner O'Bryan, and SECONDED by Commissioner Adams, the members voted (11-0) to recommend approval of the Public Transportation Grant Agreement (PTGA) with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for 49 USC CH. 53, Section 5305(d) Transit Planning Funds, as presented.**

**Presentation by FDOT on the CR 510 Widening Project.**

*Action Requested by FDOT*

Mr. Freeman stated the CR 510 widening has been the number one priority of the MPO for many years. FDOT undertook a PD&E study a few years ago for this project and it was determined that a roundabout was the preferred alternative for the CR 510 and 66<sup>th</sup> Avenue intersection. Since the completion of these studies, there has been a considerable amount of progress made on the current project. Currently right-of-way acquisition is on schedule for the end of this year. At this point FDOT would like to receive an endorsement from the MPO on the roundabout before proceeding with the right-of-way acquisition. Mr. Freeman introduced Mr. Brian Fuller with Metric Engineering who conducted the presentation. A copy of this power point presentation is on file in the MPO office.

There will be a virtual presentation sponsored by FDOT on April 19<sup>th</sup> at 5:30pm.

There was some support for the roundabout but there was also concerns. The safety aspects, convenience of not having to sit and wait at the light and the impact of not having to rely on power, in case of a hurricane were positives. The issue with motorists learning how to maneuver through a roundabout and the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians were negatives. The consensus of the committee members was they would like more information and consider public input prior to making a decision. To address some of the concerns, suggestions were to hold public information/awareness campaigns and install some type of signalized pedestrian signs. Another issue that was voiced was the possibility of speeding resulting from this project.

There were several public comments including concerns the residents may not have accessibility to the public workshops and would like to postpone the decision until the public has an opportunity to attend and voice their thoughts and concerns at the April 19<sup>th</sup> workshop.

**ON MOTION BY Commissioner Earman, and SECONDED by Commissioner Adams, the members voted (11-0) to postpone any action on the proposed roundabout until the May 12, 2021 meeting.**

## **Consideration of a Scope of Services for Population, Development, and Rural Lands Visioning**

### *Action Required*

Mr. Freeman stated at this time, MPO staff is seeking input on the development of a scope of services for an examination of rural land policies, including an urban service boundary and transportation demand analysis. The visioning effort will include two public workshops, a review of comprehensive plan and development regulations, and development of multiple scenarios.

Mr. Freeman stated staff requests comments on the scope of services outline for rural lands visioning including an urban service boundary and transportation demand analysis.

Commissioner Adams feels the scope covers multiple scenarios and is a good idea. Commissioner O'Bryan recommends looking at how Babcock Ranch was handled successfully and would be a great example to follow. Mr. Matson concurred and would like to see this succeed.

Chairman Flescher opened the floor for any additional comments from the board.

There being no further comments, the item was open for motion.

**ON MOTION BY Commissioner Adams, and SECONDED by Mr. McPartlan, the members voted (11-0) to recommend approval of the Scope of Services for Population, Development, and Rural Lands Visioning, as presented.**

## **Other Business**

### **58<sup>th</sup> Avenue and College Lane Pedestrian Crossing**

Mayor Dodd asked if there was any progress on the above location. Chairman Flescher stated at the Board meeting yesterday an item came up concerning the intersection and an FP&L agreement. Mr. Szyrka stated regarding the study Public Works performed, the counts have come in very low. Staff is prepared to run the counts again to ensure there was not an anomaly.

### **Comments from the Public**

Ms. Jan Verde, a resident of Reflections, would like to have a safer left turn signal in operation at the intersection of Mirror Lake Drive and Schuman Drive. Ms. Verde feels this is an

unsafe turn and would like to have some adjustments made. Mr. Matson clarified the location as Schuman Drive and US #1, for Mr. Podczerwinsky to relay the information to FDOT Operations.

Mr. Paul Speas wanted to bring to the MPO's attention there are several broken sidewalks along that area needing repairs and trees that that require trimming. The trees are hanging over the sidewalk at several spots. Mr. Freeman replied that he would forward the information to FDOT's maintenance contractor regarding the damaged sidewalks. Mr. Szpyrka informed Mr. Speas that FDOT maintains that whole area, but to get with him after the meeting, he would give him his card and if Mr. Speas could send pictures of the affected areas, he will work with him to get this repaired.

Commissioner Earman inquired as to the status of the stop light at 8<sup>th</sup> Street and 66<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Mr. Szpyrka answered the design is 80-90% complete. The last warrant performed indicated it was not warranted. The warrants are updated on an annual basis to check for any changes.

Mr. John Podczerwinsky from FDOT wanted to address questions from the last MPO meeting regarding A1A resurfacing and the crosswalks. Mr. Podczerwinsky stated the crosswalks couldn't be installed prior to the resurfacing project. The plans production should occur in October of this year. The bid letting for this project is scheduled for February 2022 and construction notice to proceed is expected for May 2022. Two of the pedestrian crossings questioned are included in that resurfacing project. In addition, the extension of the left turn lanes on SR 656 and SR 60 should occur later this year.

Ms. Juliana Young, CAC Chair, would like to ask if the barriers located on SR 60 in the area of 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue might be removed while there isn't work currently being performed at that location. Mr. Szpyrka stated the lanes are not wide enough and the barriers will have to stay in place. Mr. Szpyrka said he would look at this area and see if some adjustments may be performed.

### **Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 11:59 AM.