

## METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

A meeting of the Indian River County (IRC) Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) was held at 10:00 AM on Wednesday, April 13, 2022, in County Administration Building "B", Room B1-501, 1800 27<sup>th</sup> Street, Vero Beach.

**Note: Audio and video recordings of the meeting can be found at <http://www.ircgov.com/Boards/MPO/2022.htm>**

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

Commissioner Susan Adams, District 1  
Commissioner Joseph Flescher, District 2,  
Commissioner Joe Earman, District 3  
Commissioner Peter O'Bryan, District 4  
Commissioner Laura Moss, District 5  
Phil Matson, Community Development Director  
Bob Auwaerter, Councilmember, Town of Indian River Shores  
Honey Minuse, Councilmember, City of Vero Beach, **Vice Chairman**  
Rey Neville, Vice-Mayor, City of Vero Beach  
Ed Dodd, Councilmember, City of Sebastian, **Chairman**  
Bob McPartlan, City of Sebastian  
Gerald "Jerry" Renick, Councilmember, City of Fellsmere  
Brian Barefoot, Indian River County School Board

### **Others Absent:**

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

### **Staff in Attendance:**

Brian Freeman, MPO Staff Director  
Jim Mann, MPO Senior Planner  
Patti Johnson, MPO Staff Assistant III/Recording Secretary  
Andy Sobczak, IRC Assistant Community Development Director  
Scott Johnson, IRC IT Department  
Rich Szyrka, IRC Public Works Director  
Jason Brown, County Administrator

### **Others Present:**

Marsha Taylor, FDOT D4  
Kris Krehes, FDOT TC Operations  
Karen Deigl, Senior Resource Association  
Becky Afonso, Florida Bicycle Association  
William Roll, Kimley-Horn Associates

Mark Mathes, City of Fellsmere  
Molly Steinwald, Florida Department of Health  
Mike Johannsen, Bob Bruce, Indian River Neighborhood Association (IRNA)  
Amy Banov, Sandy Dekker, Bike Walk Indian River County (BWIRC)  
Barry Barker, Dave Hunter, Larry Luedtke, de Lessine Paul, Larry Erskine, Rosemary Sanford,  
John Crosby, Danny Jaye, Charlotte & Sarah C., Vero Cycling  
Tim Glover, Friends of Sebastian  
Kelly Jackson, Indian River Pioneer Farms  
John Frederick Lang, St. Johns Improvement District (SJID)  
Joseph Paladin, Darlene Mauro, Jeanette Anderson, Scott Oberlink, Ervin Cartwright, Rich  
Votapka, Scott Johnson, Stan Klinefelter, Interested County Residents

### **Call to Order**

Chairman Dodd called the meeting to order at 10:01 AM. It was noted that there was a quorum present.

### **Approval of Minutes of the MPO Meeting February 9, 2022.**

*Action Required*

Chairman Dodd asked if there were any additions or corrections to the MPO meeting minutes of February 9, 2022. There were none.

**ON MOTION by Mr. Auwaerter, and SECONDED by Ms. Minuse, the members voted (11-0) to approve the minutes of the Metropolitan Planning Organization February 9, 2022 meeting, as presented.**

### **Status Report of MPO Advisory Committees.**

*No Action Required*

Mr. Freeman reviewed his memorandum, dated April 5, 2022, 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.

### **Recognition of the Bicycle Volunteer of the Year.**

*No Action Required*

*Mr. Szpyrka entered @ 10:20 AM*

Mr. Freeman opened the presentation by giving some background on this award. Mr. Freeman introduced Amy Banov, President of Bike Walk Indian River County (BWIRC), Becky Afonso, Executive Director of Florida Bike Association (FBA), and Mr. Larry Ludetke, award recipient.

Ms. Banov showed a power point presentation, a copy of which is on file in the MPO office. During this presentation, Ms. Banov gave the history of BWIRC and their role in the community.

Ms. Afonso continued the recognition by reciting the recommendation letter sent to her by Mr. Hugh Aaron. Ms. Afonso read the nomination letter highlighting Mr. Ludetke's accomplishments and involvement with BWIRC. Mr. Ludetke was presented with the award and pictures were taken. Mr. Ludetke thanked everyone who has helped him and made this possible.

*Commissioner Flescher entered @ 10:20 AM*

**Review of Progress Report and Reimbursement Invoice #2 for the 2021/22 TD Planning Grant.**

*Action Required*

Mr. Freeman stated this is the periodic progress report and reimbursement invoices for program activities for the planning grant contract period from October 1, 2021 to December 30, 2021.

Chairman Dodd opened the floor for 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 Flescher, the members voted (12-0) to approve the Progress Report and Reimbursement Invoice #2 for the 2021/22 TD Planning Grant, as presented.**

**Review of Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) Annual Evaluation Report for FY 2020/21.**

*Action Required*

On February 24, 2022, the TDLCB approved the CTC annual evaluation report, recommended 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.

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 Dodd opened the floor for comments from the board.

**ON MOTION BY Commissioner Earman, and SECONDED by Commissioner Flescher, the members voted (12-0) to approve the Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) Annual Evaluation Report for FY 2020/21, as presented.**

**Approval of the Final FY 2022/23-2023/24 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).**

*Action Required*

Mr. Freeman, MPO Staff Director, gave a brief overview explaining the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and provided a short power point presentation. A copy of this presentation is on file in the MPO office.

Mr. Freeman explained the UPWP is required by state and federal regulations and covers a two-year period, which is two state fiscal years. The number of tasks will be reduced down from twelve to seven. Federal funding is received through grants as well as state and local sources. Some of the highlights which occurred during the current UPWP, the MPO adopted the 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), annual update of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), a Land Use Visioning Study and performed annual updates to the Transit Development Plan (TDP).

Projects over the next couple of years will include: a wrap up of the Visioning Study, a major update of the TDP, this is undertaken every five years, an update to Title VI Nondiscrimination Policy, and the Community Characteristics Report with the new census data, the annual update to the TIP, and the Bicycle/Pedestrian Plan.

Chairman Dodd opened the floor for additional comments from the board.

Mr. Renick and Mr. Neville would like to have corridor studies included for the City of Fellsmere and Vero Beach, respectively. Mr. Matson expounded on what is involved in this process and suggested getting with the General Planning Consultants (GPC) to find out the cost and other details. Once that is done it could be brought back to the MPO for approval. Should the MPO be inundated with requests, staff may have to do some type of prioritization. Mr. Neville would also like to study the separation of grade for railroad crossings.

**ON MOTION BY Mr. Barefoot, and SECONDED by Ms. Minuse, the members voted (12-0) to approve the Final FY 2022/23-2023/24 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP), as presented.**

**Presentation on Land Use Visioning Study.**

*Action Required*

Mr. Freeman introduced Mr. William Roll, from Kimley-Horn & Associates, who provided a presentation on the Land Use Visioning Study. A copy of this presentation is on file in the MPO office.

Mr. Freeman stated the MPO will be conducting additional workshops in the month of May. There will be multiple workshops and they will be held at various locations and times.

Chairman Dodd opened the floor for additional comments from the board.

Commissioner O'Bryan thanked Mr. Roll for the presentation. Commissioner O'Bryan stated concerns on the scoring for the rural lands, he would like to see the rural lands preserved.

On affordability, an example of the issues we face with that in the Gifford community is the redevelopment of the site of the former Gifford Gardens apartments. Medical facilities should also be factored in as well as schools for the western areas (west of 58<sup>th</sup> Avenue), instead of paying a huge cost for a flyover at Aviation Blvd. and filling up the 37th Street. Commissioner O'Bryan stated he is supportive of the land use and policy changes such as the accessory dwelling units (ADU), increase flexible uses to land, ag land (help land owners try to get more value from their lands) extend the urban service area, give utilities time to get infrastructure built to handle the demand as well as transportation hubs, south county and Oslo. Commissioner O'Bryan would like to see the May workshop offer an evening meeting. All in all Commissioner O'Bryan felt that this has been a pretty good process and everyone involved has done a great job.

Commissioner Moss would like to ensure the scope of services includes outreach meetings are not limited to one-way conversations and allow more community involvement. There was a huge turnout for the Technical Advisory Committee so the interest of the community is there.

Ms. Minuse would like to see a diversity of locations and Mr. Freeman responded we are in the process of securing various locations.

Mr. Freeman commented the goal of these additional workshops will be to cover various locations and have them scheduled at different times of the day/evening to make it

more convenient for public participation.

Chairman Dodd remarked the objectives of the workshops might involve modifying the document before it comes back to the MPO and Mr. Freeman concurred.

Mr. Neville feels that a lot of people were concerned about this because they didn't fully understand what the objective was. I think they thought the land use regulations were going to be changing like this and we hadn't considered the amount of density, by doing this, this and this, and what the consequence would be with utilities, transportation, roadways, etc. By adding more people, we will need to add more than two bridges. Potentially this might include another bridge across the lagoon.

Chairman Dodd feels the overall planning process, as part of the steps that follow are modifying the comp plan, which is a long drawn out public process doesn't happen overnight without public comment. Modifying the land development regulations have to match the comp plan changes, which is another long process. Hopefully the public will become more involved. Each municipality will have to deal with whatever comes out of this visioning process and the impact to them. Chairman Dodd views this as a positive thing and feels the public has missed an opportunity by not participating in these workshops. It is definitely not an unreasonable thing to look at multiple workshops in the future. There will be a motion to approve the scope of work, not approving the document of work.

Commissioner Flescher concurred that the various municipalities need to be involved and actively get the word out to their residents. This is a visioning process, this is our future.

Mr. Matson agrees with the last five or six comments he has heard, it is gratifying to see the Board understands what we are trying to achieve. Maybe the recommendation should be changed to authorize staff, up to a certain amount (\$10k, \$20k, etc.), for the next round of outreach.

Mr. Renick stated he totally agrees, this is a monumental task we're taking on here. We should definitely take our time and not try to rush it along or be inclusive. So adding to the budget is not a big deal in the grand scheme of things.

Commissioner Adams stated the importance of keeping the goal in mind and there are going to be multiple steps involved. Look into potential uses and compare what we have and what can be done. Furthermore, it is important to include the western and southern areas. It is important to bring in property owners and get their views. This is going to be a long process but we are off to a good start. Development is going to happen, it is important to plan for the future.

Mr. Freeman commented the Evaluation Appraisal Report (EAR) and Comprehensive Plan updates are scheduled to begin over the summer.

Ms. Minuse would like to see the Town of Orchid and Indian River Shores included in these outreach events.

Commissioner Earman agrees with the Commissioners and feels it is important to look at schools, medical facilities, transportation hubs, etc.

Chairman Dodd would like to see the land use map updated, which are part of the EAR and the comp plan update process.

Mr. Matson commented the visioning principles are a good base for starting.

Mr. Barefoot said the School Board has met with consultants on the possibilities of building more high schools.

Mr. Roll added more outreach is needed and stated it appears the consensus is to increase the funding and add additional outreach workshops.

Chairman Dodd reiterated the motion on the floor is to accept the Scope of Services, not the actual study.

Mr. Matson suggested the motion to include “additional funding to support the outreach efforts”.

Chairman Dodd opened the floor for additional comments from the public.

Ms. Kelly Jackson said she would like to see more focus on local and regional goods and possibly include “tiny homes”. We need to focus on environmental friendly

Mr. Joe Paladin stated that the urban service line controls what happens, and possibly add another bridge.

Mr. Bob Solari noted that family housing is a cost burden for 50% of families, post-COVID. Increase the scope of work.

Mr. Tony Brown said infrastructure is important and it is necessary to have the pertinent individuals in those meetings.

Mr. Paul Morris stated that bicycle riders need more “bike-friendly” roads as well as education on bicycle safety.

Mr. Rich Vtopka said that medical issues are important. The current hospital is in a flood zone and the population near I-95 is growing, a medical facility out west would be a plus.

Ms. Laura Ibrahim commented she would like to see solar farms combine with edible landscaping

Mr. Dave Cerchie said there definitely needs to be more community involvement; input from the county is valuable.

There being no further discussion, the item was opened for a motion.

**ON MOTION BY Ms. Minuse, and SECONDED by Commissioner Moss, the members voted (12-0) to approve the Scope of Services for the Land Use Visioning Study to involve all cities (having workshops in all cities) and to increase the Scope of Services funding up to \$40,000, as amended.**

Chairman Dodd stated anyone wishing more information on the Visioning Study and wanting to view the pertinent documents should go to the MPO webpage. Mr. Freeman added if you left your email address on the sign-in sheet you would receive updates regarding the future workshops. Also on the MPO website is a link where you can sign up to receive communications regarding the visioning study and other projects.

#### **TIP Amendment.**

##### *Action Required*

Mr. Freeman stated this item was added to the agenda late yesterday based on a letter received from FDOT showing the projects proposed to receive funding from the American Rescue Plan (ARP). There is approximately \$116 million dollars in funding from the ARP projects in this amendment. These projects are already in the TIP, but the funding will allow these projects to have their schedules advanced.

- The first is the Oslo Road Interchange; this is being advanced from FY26 to FY23.
- The four-lane widening of Oslo Road, between 58<sup>th</sup> Avenue and I-95, is currently funded for right-of-way acquisition but not construction, now being proposed for construction funding in FY23.
- Rehabilitation on the east end of the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge, currently scheduled for FY24, is also being moved up to FY23.

FDOT is requesting the MPO approve an amendment to the TIP reflecting these changes. Mr. Freeman expressed his apologies for the format, but the document came in late yesterday.

**ON MOTION BY Commissioner O'Bryan, and SECONDED by Ms. Minuse, the members voted (12-0) to approve FDOT's Amendment to the TIP, as presented.**



**Other Business.**

*No Action Required*

**Comments from the Public.**

Commissioner Flescher would like to commend the MPO on their outreach efforts concerning the land use visioning workshops, especially with those first meetings. It's hard to reach the public when no one is having a newspaper delivered, or with the radio they are listening to Sirius or other satellite services. Commissioner O'Bryan has mentioned it in BCC meetings, Commissioner Moss has brought it up and when he was Chairman he mentioned on it on the radio.

*Mr. Jason Brown departed @ 12:15 PM*

Mr. Auwaerter asked, with FDOT moving up some of these projects, is there a status update on the 17<sup>th</sup> Street Bridge. Mr. Matson stated an email will be sent out in the near future with the information.

**Adjournment**

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 12:17 PM.