



# Hernando-Citrus

## Metropolitan Planning Organization

### Regular Meeting

### Minutes - Draft

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August 7, 2025

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## CALL TO ORDER

MPO Board Chair, Rebecca Bays, called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m on Thursday, August 7, 2025, at the Lecanto Government Building, 3600 W. Sovereign Path, Room 166, Lecanto, Florida. The meeting was publicly noticed on the Hernando County, Citrus County, and Hernando-Citrus MPO websites.

### MEMBERS PRESENT

Rebecca Bays, MPO Chair, Citrus County Commissioner  
Jerry Campbell, Hernando County Commissioner  
Steve Champion, Hernando County Commissioner  
Ryan Amsler, MPO Board Alternate Member, Hernando County Commissioner  
Jeff Kinnard, Citrus County Commissioner  
Tom Craig, MPO Board Alternate Member, City of Inverness  
Joe Meek, Mayor, City of Crystal River  
Elisa Joyner, Non-Voting Advisor, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7

### MEMBERS ABSENT

John Allocco, Hernando County Commissioner  
Brian Hawkins, MPO Vice Chair, Hernando County Commissioner  
Christa Tanner, Mayor, City of Brooksville  
Gene Davis, Councilman, City of Inverness

### OTHERS PRESENT

Bob Esposito, MPO Executive Director  
Mary Elwin, MPO Coordinator  
Joy Turner, MPO Executive Assistant  
Mike Cowan, Assistant County Attorney, Hernando County  
JW McKethan, City of Brooksville Councilman  
Katina Kavouklis, Florida Turnpike Enterprise

### Invocation

### Pledge of Allegiance

### MPO Board & Staff Introductions

The Pledge of Allegiance and the introductions of the Board and staff followed the Invocation.

**Enter Proof of Publication into the Record**

A quorum was declared, and Ms. Turner noted for the record that the public notice for the meeting was posted in accordance with the adopted policies.

**APPROVAL/MODIFICATION OF AGENDA (Limited to Board and Staff)****Motion**

A motion was made by Mayor Meek to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Champion and the motion passed 6-0.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Joe Meek
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Steve Champion
<b>AYES:</b>	Rebecca Bays, Jerry Campbell, Jeff Kinnard, Steve Champion, Joe Meek, and Ryan Amsler
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Christa Tanner, Brian Hawkins, and John Allocco

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES**

Review and Approval of the June 5, 2025, Meeting Minutes of the Hernando-Citrus Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Board

[16060](#)**Motion**

A motion was made by Commissioner Amsler to approve the June 5, 2025, meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kinnard and the motion passed 6-0.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Ryan Amsler
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Jeff Kinnard
<b>AYES:</b>	Rebecca Bays, Jerry Campbell, Jeff Kinnard, Steve Champion, Joe Meek, and Ryan Amsler
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Christa Tanner, Brian Hawkins, and John Allocco

**PRESENTATION**

Presentation by the MPO Board's General Planning Consultant, Benesch & Associates, on the Draft Citrus County FY 2026-FY 2035 Transit Development Plan (TDP)

[16231](#)

*[It is noted for the record that MPO Board alternate member for the City of Inverness, Tom Craig, arrived at the meeting.]*

Mr. Esposito introduced Kayla Huetten, AICP, Senior Planner, MPO General Planning Consultant with Benesch & Associates. Ms. Huetten delivered a presentation on the draft Citrus County FY 2026-FY 2035 Transit Development Plan (TDP), a required document for receiving State Block Grant funding. She explained that the revenue sources outlined on

page 17 of the presentation include a combination of Federal, State, and local funds. Additionally, 1%-2% of the total revenue is generated from farebox collections (ridership-based funds).

The Board discussed the need for a cost-benefit analysis comparing the operation of a countywide transit system to alternative transportation solutions. One proposed alternative was offering travel vouchers for services such as Uber or Lyft. MPO staff acknowledged the request. Chair Bays opened the floor for Board and public comments; no comments were received.

## **CITIZENS COMMENTS**

There were no citizen comments.

## **MPO DIRECTOR COMMENTS**

Mr. Esposito shared the following updates:

- Mr. Esposito attended the Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC) meeting on Thursday, July 24, in Orlando. A draft copy of the MPOAC/MPO Overview sheet highlighting the roles of the MPOAC and MPOs was provided to the MPO Board. This material was provided by Amanda Carpenter, the new Executive Director of MPOAC.
- The MPO staff participated in the Florida Metropolitan Planning Partnership (FMPP) meeting on Wednesday, July 23, 2025, in Orlando.
- In order to prevent having no voting representation at future meetings, Mr. Esposito reiterated the need for member jurisdictions to consider adding all their board/council members as additional or 2nd alternates for the SCTPA and the MPO Board.
- The fully executed transportation disadvantaged planning grant agreements were received from the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged (CTD) on July 25, 2025, and entered into the record (Citrus Agreement #G3C96 for \$26,447 and Hernando Agreement #G3D11 for \$27,440).
- At the request on Commissioner Kinnard, the MPO will be issuing a purchase order to conduct Traffic Counts for Citrus County (71 locations) and providing a level-of-service analysis.
- The Notices to Proceed have been issued for updates to the Complete Streets and Congestion Management studies.
- Commissioner Allocco asked if the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) could add reflectors at Cortez Boulevard and Sheriff Mylander Way, as turning there at night is difficult. FDOT explained that recent equipment issues kept the new street lighting off which made the area darker. Once the lights are restored this week, FDOT will reassess the intersection. Commissioner Champion expressed concern about the visibility of pavement markings, particularly on concrete pads. He noted that the markings are difficult to see in rainy conditions and that vehicle recognition systems struggle to detect them. He requested that FDOT consider darker-colored striping for improved visibility.
- FDOT is obtaining the equipment to add a west bound left-turn signal at north US 41 and CR 491. The southbound and westbound left-turn movements do not meet the required thresholds and will not be modified at this time.
- SR50 (Cortez Boulevard) widening from Cobb Road to west of Buck Hope Road is completed.
- US 41 widening from S of Withlacoochee Trail Bridge to N or Sportsman Point

construction is scheduled to begin in 2027  
(<https://www.fdottampabay.com/project/473/257165-4-52-01>).

- To use the County Attorney's time more efficiently and reduce MPO expenses, Mr. Esposito asked the MPO Board members if the Attorney needed to attend every meeting. The Board agreed by consensus that regular attendance was unnecessary. Legal questions can be addressed by phone or after meetings as needed.
- Mr. Esposito shared that on July 29, 2025, the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) approved the installation of "*No Thru Trucks-Local Delivery Only*" signage along CR 48 at the Withlacoochee River Bridge (Citrus County side) and at the intersection of CR 48 and US 41 (downtown area of Floral City). Sumter County has also implemented similar roadway signage. These efforts should limit the truck traffic that comes from and goes to I-75, specifically as it travels through the downtown area of Floral City on CR 48 (Orange Avenue).
- A ribbon-cutting ceremony is being planned for the next phase of the Suncoast Parkway. MPO staff will provide the Board with event details as they become available.

## BOARD COMMENTS

There were no further comments from the Board.

## ADJOURNMENT

Chair Bays adjourned the meeting at 2:11 p.m.

### Motion

A motion was made by Commissioner Champion to adjourn the meeting. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kinnard and the motion passed 7-0.

<b>RESULT:</b>	<b>ADOPTED</b>
<b>MOVER:</b>	Steve Champion
<b>SECONDER:</b>	Jeff Kinnard
<b>AYES:</b>	Rebecca Bays, Jerry Campbell, Tom Craig, Jeff Kinnard, Steve Champion, Joe Meek, and Ryan Amsler
<b>ABSENT:</b>	Christa Tanner, Brian Hawkins, and John Allocco

## UPCOMING MEETING:

The next regular meeting of the Metropolitan Planning Organization Board is scheduled for Thursday, September 4, 2025, beginning at 1:30 pm, in the Lecanto Government Building, 3600 W. Sovereign Path, Room 166, Lecanto, Florida. A quorum will be necessary to approve federally required documents.

### ITEMS PRESENTED DURING THE MEETING

16307

1. PowerPoint Presentation for the Citrus County Transit Development Plan
2. Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC) and MPO Overview Handout (Draft)