



Hernando-Citrus

Metropolitan Planning Organization

Regular Meeting

Minutes - Final

June 5, 2025

CALL TO ORDER

MPO Board Vice Chair, Brian Hawkins, called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m., on Thursday, June 5, 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

Brian Hawkins, Vice Chair, Hernando County Commissioner
Jerry Campbell, Hernando County Commissioner
John Alocco, Hernando County Commissioner
Steve Champion, Hernando County Commissioner
Jeff Kinnard, Citrus County Commissioner
Gene Davis, Councilman, City of Inverness
Robert Holmes, City of Crystal River, Alternate
Suzanne Ziegler, Non-Voting Advisor, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7

MEMBERS ABSENT

Rebecca Bays, Chair, Citrus County Commissioner
Christa Tanner, Mayor, City of Brooksville

OTHERS PRESENT

Bob Esposito, MPO Executive Director
Mary Elwin, MPO Coordinator
Joy Turner, MPO Executive Assistant
Victoria Anderson, Assistant County Attorney, Hernando County
Siaosi Fine, Florida Turnpike Enterprise
Katina Kavouklis, Florida Turnpike Enterprise
Emmeth Duran, Florida Department of Transportation, District 7 Safety Office

Motion

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

RESULT:	ADOPTED
MOVER:	Steve Champion
SECONDER:	Jeff Kinnard
AYES:	Brian Hawkins, Jerry Campbell, Robert Holmes, Gene Davis, John Allococo, Jeff Kinnard, and Steve Champion
ABSENT:	Rebecca Bays, and Christa Tanner

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 Commissioner Champion to approve the agenda. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kinnard and the motion passed 7-0.

RESULT:	ADOPTED
MOVER:	Steve Champion
SECONDER:	Jeff Kinnard
AYES:	Brian Hawkins, Jerry Campbell, Robert Holmes, Gene Davis, John Allococo, Jeff Kinnard, and Steve Champion
ABSENT:	Rebecca Bays, and Christa Tanner

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Review and Approval of the May 1, 2025, Meeting Minutes of the [15968](#) Hernando-Citrus Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Board

Motion

A motion was made by Commissioner Kinnard to approve the May 1, 2025, meeting Minutes. The motion was seconded by Councilman Davis and the motion passed 7-0.

RESULT:	ADOPTED
MOVER:	Jeff Kinnard
SECONDER:	Gene Davis
AYES:	Brian Hawkins, Jerry Campbell, Robert Holmes, Gene Davis, John Allococo, Jeff Kinnard, and Steve Champion
ABSENT:	Rebecca Bays, and Christa Tanner

PRESENTATION

Presentation by the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) Traffic Safety Program Engineer on High Friction Surface Treatment for Intersections

[15969](#)

Emmeth Duran, PE RSP21, Traffic Safety Program Engineer with the Florida Department of Transportation's District 7 Safety Office, made a presentation regarding high friction surface treatment (HFST). HFST is a specialized pavement treatment designed to significantly enhance friction, thereby reducing crashes and injuries at locations where high friction is crucial, such as sharp curves, ramps, and intersections. He reported that applying HFST decreases stopping distances and helps motorists maintain better control in both dry and wet driving conditions. This treatment involves adding a high-quality aggregate and polymer to the pavement to increase its friction. Since pavement friction is a critical factor contributing to traffic crashes, HFST serves as an effective strategy to nearly double the pavement's friction levels, ultimately reducing vehicle stopping distances.

Mr. Duran reviewed the safety statistics for fatalities and serious injuries between 2023 and 2024 from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District 7. Commissioner Allococo inquired about what measures Pinellas County, which is densely populated, were implementing to achieve a significantly lower number of motorcycle fatalities and injuries compared to other counties, such as Hillsborough, Pasco, Hernando, and Citrus. Mr. Duran explained that education through outreach events plays a crucial role as it focuses on helmet use, traffic laws, and the necessary endorsements for motorcycle operators. He also emphasized that while engineering improvements can help reduce vehicle accidents, effective enforcement and education are essential to improving safety statistics.

Commissioner Allococo inquired about the first installation date of High Friction Surface Treatment (HFST), whether there had been any increase in maintenance in areas where HFST was applied, and if heavy vehicles traveled along those locations. Mr. Duran responded that the first installation in FDOT District 7 took place in 2019, no additional maintenance has been noted, and heavy vehicles are indeed using those areas.

Mr. Esposito inquired whether High Friction Surface Treatments (HFST) are considered when resurfacing pavement in areas with a high number of safety incidents. Mr. Duran responded that HFST is evaluated especially at curves and intersections to identify potential candidates.

Commissioner Allococo noted that intersections marked with excessive reflective paint can create a slick surface, especially when wet. In response, Mr. Duran stated that high-friction pavement markings are being considered for future applications to address Commissioner Allococo's concerns.

Referring to slide 20 of the presentation, Commissioner Allococo requested data on the warnings and citations issued by both the Citrus and Hernando sheriff's offices. Vice Chair Hawkins suggested that HFST should be included as part of the planned intersection widening project at the intersection of SR 50/Cortez and Barclay Avenue. Additionally, Commissioner Kinnard requested an electronic copy of the presentation.

ACTION ITEMS

Public Hearing to Review and Adopt by Roll Call Vote the FY2026-FY2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)-Draft

[15789](#)

Mr. Esposito reviewed the agenda item for the Hernando-Citrus FY2026-FY2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for adoption. He noted that this is a Public Hearing and that a Roll-Call vote was required.

Vice Chair Hawkins asked if there was anyone in the audience wishing to speak on this matter. No one from the audience came forward.

Motion

A motion was made by Commissioner Champion to adopt the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for FY2026-FY2030. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kinnard, and a Roll-Call vote carried the motion 7-0.

RESULT: **ADOPTED**

MOVER: Steve Champion

SECONDER: Jeff Kinnard

AYES: Brian Hawkins, Jerry Campbell, Robert Holmes, Gene Davis, John Allococo, Jeff Kinnard, and Steve Champion

ABSENT: Rebecca Bays, and Christa Tanner

Approval of Resolutions 2025-3 and 2025-4, and Authorization for MPO Executive Director to Execute Fiscal Year 2026 Grant Award Agreements for Citrus and Hernando Counties from the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged

[15689](#)

Motion

A motion was made by Commissioner Kinnard to approve Resolutions 2025-3 and 2025-4 and authorize the MPO Executive Director to execute Fiscal Year 2026 grant award agreements for Citrus and Hernando Counties from the Florida Commission for the Transportation Disadvantaged. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Champion and the motion passed 7-0.

RESULT:	ADOPTED
MOVER:	Jeff Kinnard
SECONDER:	Steve Champion
AYES:	Brian Hawkins, Jerry Campbell, Robert Holmes, Gene Davis, John Allococo, Jeff Kinnard, and Steve Champion
ABSENT:	Rebecca Bays, and Christa Tanner

CITIZENS COMMENTS

There were no citizen comments.

MPO DIRECTOR COMMENTS

Mr. Esposito shared the following updates:

- Mr. Esposito attended the Transportation Management Area (TMA) and the Sun Coast Transportation Planning Alliance (SCTPA) meetings on Friday, May 23, 2025, in Tampa. Provided to the MPO Board is a copy of the draft SCTPA minutes. Additionally, attached is the 2050 Regional Long Range Transportation Plan overview in which several aspects of the Hernando-Citrus MPO are highlighted. He noted that the liaison and alternate liaison were not able to attend the meeting. Councilman Tom Craig from the City of Inverness offered to attend; but was not able to because he is not named as an alternate for the SCTPA and therefore, had no voting rights. Out of the 6 MPOs, Hernando-Citrus was the only MPO without voting representation.
- In order to prevent having no voting representation at future meetings, Mr. Esposito asked the member jurisdictions to consider adding all of their board/council members as additional or 2nd alternates for the SCTPA and the MPO Board. This will help ensure that a quorum exists at the meetings for voting on action items. If there is no quorum, and a deadline is impending, an emergency meeting would have to be called. Mr. Esposito noted that the MPO Board is only having meetings when there is business to conduct to meet State and Federal deadlines. Mr. Esposito was asked to contact the Chairs of the member jurisdictions to request additional alternates be appointed to the MPO Board, SCTPA, and the MPOAC. The MPO Board will then ratify any appointments.
- SR50 (Cortez Boulevard) widening from Cobb Road to west of Buck Hope Road will be completed in the summer of 2025 (<https://www.fdottampabay.com/project/334/416733-2-52-01>). The intersection at Cobb Road and Jefferson Street should be fully open to traffic June 6, 2025, weather permitting.
- US 98/SR 50 Repaving from south of Jasmine Drive to Mondon Hill Road is currently underway with an estimated completion of later 2025 to early 2026 (<https://www.fdottampabay.com/project/994/447948-1-52-01>). US98/SR 50 Repaving from Spring Lake Highway/Mondon Hill Road to Lockhart Road is scheduled to be complete mid-August.
- Suncoast Parkway 2 Phase 3A (from CR 486 to CR 495) construction to start June 2025. The last phase (3B from CR 495 to US 19) begins construction in the fourth quarter of 2025.
- US 41 widening from SR 44 to Withlacoochee Trail Bridge is scheduled for completion in the summer of 2025 (<https://www.fdottampabay.com/project/446/257165-3-52-01>).

- US 41 widening from S of Withlacoochee Trail Bridge to N or Sportsman Point construction is scheduled to begin in the fall of 2026 (<<https://www.fdottampabay.com/project/473/257165-4-52-01>>).
- Gospel Island and SR44 - the poles for the traffic signal are up (resurfacing is underway and estimated completion is spring of 2026, FDOT Project #448040-1-52-01 & 443981-1-52-01).
- There will be an Association of Metropolitan Planning Organizations (AMPO) conference in Providence, Rhode Island on September 15-19, 2025. This conference provides the opportunity to meet with representatives throughout the country on transportation planning. The anticipated cost to attend the conference (registration \$820, hotel, air travel, and meals) is approximately \$3,200. Mr. Esposito provided the MPO Board with a copy of the draft agenda with items highlighted. He indicated that he would need Board approval for travel out-of-state. Vice Chair Hawkins requested that future travel requests be included as Consent Agenda items.

Motion: A motion was made by Commissioner Champion to approve out-of-state travel on September 15 through 19, 2025, for Mr. Esposito to attend the AMPO conference in Providence, Rhode Island. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Kinnard and the motion passed 7-0.

- MPO staff will participate in the Florida Metropolitan Planning Partnership (FMPP) meeting, Wednesday, July 23, 2025, in Orlando.
- Mr. Esposito will attend the MPOAC meeting, Thursday, July 24, 2025, in Orlando (currently, it is an in-person event, not virtual).
- Upcoming planning projects: Traffic Count in Hernando, an update for the Level of Service Analysis for Hernando, Congestion Management Plan Update, and Complete Streets Update.

BOARD COMMENTS

- Vice Chair Hawkins shared that he has received a spreadsheet utilized in the Hernando County Concurrency Management System for roads that depicts their level of service. Nothing above a Level of Service C category is reflected in the spreadsheet, and a new analysis will be completed after July 1 [by the MPO's General Planning Consultant].
- Commissioner Allococo requested gas tax revenue statistics for Hernando County and Citrus County for the last three years. *[Subsequent to the meeting, Mr. Esposito forwarded this information to Commissioner Allococo.]*
- Vice Chair Hawkins thanked the state and local partners that attended the meeting, the citizens in attendance, MPO staff, and the presence of law enforcement.

ITEMS DISTRIBUTED DURING THE MEETING

[16059](#)

1. Hernando-Citrus Metropolitan Planning Organization Financial Report for the Quarter Ending March 31, 2025, of the Unified Planning Work Program (State Fiscal Years 2025 & 2026)
2. Sun Coast Transportation Planning Alliance (SCTPA) Leadership Group, Friday, May 23, 2025, Meeting Summary
3. 2050 West Central Florida Regional Long-Range Transportation Plan
4. Preliminary Agenda for the 2025 AMPO Annual Conference, September 15-19, 2025

UPCOMING MEETING:

The next regular meeting of the Metropolitan Planning Organization Board is tentatively scheduled for Thursday, July 10, 2025, at 1:30 pm, in the Lecanto Government Building, 3600 W. Sovereign Path, Room 166, Lecanto, Florida. [Subsequent to this meeting, the July 10, 2025, meeting was cancelled. The next meeting is scheduled for August 7, 2025.]

The meeting agenda and back-up material are available online at www.hernandocounty.us

ADJOURNMENT

Vice Chair Hawkins adjourned the meeting at 2:34 p.m.

Motion

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

RESULT: **ADOPTED**

MOVER: Steve Champion

SECONDER: John Allococo

AYES: Brian Hawkins, Jerry Campbell, Robert Holmes, Gene Davis, John Allococo, Jeff Kinnard, and Steve Champion

ABSENT: Rebecca Bays, and Christa Tanner