

**Collier Metropolitan Planning Organization  
Board of County Commission Chambers  
Collier County Government Center  
3299 Tamiami Trail East, 3rd Floor  
Naples, FL 34112  
November 14, 2025 | 9:30 a.m.**

**MEETING MINUTES**

**\*\*HYBRID REMOTE – IN-PERSON AND VIRTUALLY VIA ZOOM**

**1. CALL TO ORDER**

**Chair Kowal** called the meeting to order at approximately 9:30 a.m.

**2. ROLL CALL**

**Ms. Hansen** called roll and confirmed a quorum was present in the room.

**Members Present (in BCC Chambers)**

Commissioner Dan Kowal, *Chair*  
Council Member Linda Penniman  
Commissioner Burt L. Saunders  
Commissioner Chris Hall  
Commissioner Rick LoCastro  
Council Member Berne Barton  
Council Member Bonita Schwan

**Members Absent**

Commissioner William L. McDaniel, Jr.,  
Council Member Tony Pernas, *Vice-Chair*

**MPO Staff**

Anne McLaughlin, Executive Director  
Sean Kingston, Planner III  
Dusty Hansen, Planner II  
Suzanne Miceli, Operations Support Specialist II

**FDOT**

Jamie Driggers, District 1 Secretary  
Wayne Gaither, Director, District 1 Southwest Area Office  
Marcellus Evans, District 1 Community Liaison  
Erica McCaughy  
Jason Heironimus

### **Others Present**

Alberto Rodriguez, Collier County Human Resources Manager

Don Scott, Lee County MPO Director

Trinity Scott, Collier County Transportation Management Services Department Head

Scott Teach, Esq., Deputy County Attorney

Lorraine Lantz, Planning Manager, Collier County Transportation Planning

Anthony Matonti, Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)

Sonal Dodia, Jacobs Engineering

Bill Gramer, Jacobs Engineering

Jeff Kramer, Center for Urban Transportation Research

### **Others Present (Via Zoom)**

Colleen Ross, Jacobs Engineering

## **3. PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**Chair Kowal** led the Pledge of Allegiance.

## **4. APPROVAL OF THE AGENDA, PREVIOUS MINUTES AND CONSENT ITEMS**

### **4.A. Approval of October 10, 2025 Meeting Minutes.**

*Commissioner Hall moved to approve the agenda, previous minutes and consent items and Council Member Penniman seconded. Passed unanimously.*

## **5. PUBLIC COMMENTS FOR ITEMS NOT ON THE AGENDA**

None.

## **6. AGENCY UPDATES**

### **6.A. FDOT**

**Mr. Evans** reported that a public hearing on the Livingston Road Trail Extension from Radio Road to the Collier County line Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) study is scheduled for Tuesday, November 18, 2025, from 5 to 7 p.m., at North Collier Regional Park. A virtual public meeting will be held on Wednesday, November 19, 2025, from 5 to 6 p.m. A public hearing on the Old U.S. 41 Road PD&E study on Thursday, November 20, 2025, at Bonita Springs Recreational Center, with an open house between 5 and 6 p.m., and a presentation and formal testimony beginning at 6 p.m. An online attendance option will be available starting at 5:45 p.m. More information about the public hearings can be found on FDOT's [swflroads.com](http://swflroads.com) website.

**6.B. MPO EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

**Ms. McLaughlin** had nothing to report other than what was included on the agenda.

**7. CHAIR REPORTS**

**7.A. CITIZENS ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)**

**7.A.1. Citizens Advisory Committee Chair Report**

*The report was presented in writing.*

**7.B. TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (TAC)**

**7.B.1. Technical Advisory Committee Chair Report**

*The report was presented in writing.*

**7.C. BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN COMMITTEE (BPAC)**

**7.C.1. Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee Chair Report**

**Mr. Matonti** thanked Council Member Schwan for regularly attending BPAC meetings. At the last BPAC meeting, the Livingston Road Trail Extension PD&E study was thoroughly discussed. The project, which is an important component of a regional bicycle/pedestrian network, has been a topic of conversation at BPAC meetings for years. Some of the committee comments included safety and noise concerns about the trail being under power lines and adequate shading for the 11-mile trail. Concerns regarding emergency vehicle access to the trail were also discussed. The study includes alternative alignments and a no-build alternative. **Mr. Kingston** provided BPAC with a presentation on the Collier to Polk Regional Trail.

**Chair Kowal** asked **Mr. Matonti** if he had received data from the Sheriff's Office related to pursuit/enforcement of Collier County's recent bicycle/pedestrian ordinance amendment. **Mr. Matonti** responded that he had not, but the Sheriff's Office sometimes sends a liaison to attend BPAC meetings. **Chair Kowal** expressed that he hopes to get data from the Sheriff's Office every six months.

**8. REGULAR BOARD ACTION (ROLL CALL REQUIRED)**

**8.A. Approve an Amendment to the FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program – two new transit projects for operating assistance and capital to purchase vehicles/equipment and add the Railroad & Utilities phases to two existing roadway projects**

**Mr. Kingston** explained that FDOT had requested an amendment to the current Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) for the following four projects: (i) add Railroad/Utilities (RRU) phase to a resurfacing project at US 41 from north of Old US 41 to south of Gulf Park Drive; (ii) Add RRU phase to an intersection improvement project at US 41 and Golden Gate Parkway; (iii) add a new transit project to purchase vehicles/equipment for rural bus and facilities; and (iv) add a new transit project for operating assistance. The proposed amendment underwent a public comment period, as set forth in the MPO's Public Participation Plan, and was endorsed by the Technical and Citizens Advisory Committees at their last meetings.

**Commissioner Hall** asked what work is included in the RRU phase and whether it includes new improvements or modification to existing improvements. **Ms. Scott** responded that it is for existing improvements: for federally funded projects, the local utility provided can be reimbursed for relocation of existing utilities within the corridor. If County facilities are within the funded project, the County typically enters into an agreement with FDOT to get access to the funds.

*Commissioner Saunders moved to approve the TIP Amendment and Council Member Penniman seconded.*

**Roll Call Vote.**

**Chair Kowal** - Yes

**Commissioner Saunders** - Yes

**Commissioner Hall** - Yes

**Commissioner LoCastro** - Yes

**Council Member Schwan** - Yes

**Council Member Barton** - Yes

**Council Member Penniman** - Yes

*Passed unanimously.*

**9. REGULAR BOARD ACTION (NO ROLL CALL)**

**9.A. Review and Comment on Draft 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan**

**Ms. McLaughlin** explained that the entire draft 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) is completed and ready for Board review and comment. The draft, along with the Appendix and Technical Compendium, are available on the MPO's website. Staff would be seeking endorsement of the LRTP from the Technical and Citizens Advisory Committees at their next meeting.

**Ms. Dodia** provided a presentation on the draft 2050 LRTP (which can be viewed in the November 14, 2025 MPO Board Agenda).

A group discussion followed in which **Commissioner LoCastro** recommended that future presentations of cost-feasible projects include estimated costs. **Commissioner Hall** asked about the types of comments received during the LRTP public outreach, and **Ms. Dodia** explained that residents often seek

clarification, but overall feedback has been positive, with many appreciating the investment in transportation. Projects in eastern Collier County had drawn strong input, particularly emphasizing the importance of connectivity. **Commissioner Hall** also observed that residents frequently express concerns about congestion, which remains a challenge despite ongoing transportation projects, and suggested that new approaches could accelerate implementation. **Chair Kowal** added that with ten thousand new homes expected in eastern Collier County over the next five to ten years, ensuring effective connectivity will be critical. **Ms. McLaughlin** concluded by stating that the Board's comments indicated a need to schedule a more in-depth session on the topic of congestion with participation by County staff at a future Board meeting.

*Council Member Schwan moved to accept LRTP Draft Chapters 4, 6, and 7, and Commissioner Saunders seconded. Passed unanimously.*

#### **9.B. Recommendation to Provide Additional Staff Direction Regarding the MPO Executive Director Recruitment Process**

**Ms. McLaughlin** said there were a total of eleven applications and the goal was to confirm the top candidates for interview at the December 11<sup>th</sup> MPO Board meeting.

**Mr. Rodriguez** explained that Collier County Human Resources Division had collected rankings of the candidates from MPO Board members and reported that the three top ranked candidates are Carmen Monroy, Nicholas Danu, and Vinod Sandanasamy, and requested the Board's guidance for the December 11, 2025 interview process.

A group discussion followed, and it was agreed that time parameters for each interview should be set and that the salary would remain negotiable, with a ceiling of around \$140,000. The December 11<sup>th</sup> meeting would likely be moved up to 9 a.m. to ensure enough time for the interviews as well as the regular agenda items. The top three candidates would be notified about the interview.

### **10. PRESENTATIONS (MAY REQUIRE BOARD ACTION)**

#### **10.A. Center for Urban Transportation Research Report and Presentation on Collier and Lee MPO Consolidation Feasibility Study**

**Mr. Kramer** provided a presentation on the Center for Urban Transportation Research Report and Presentation on Collier and Lee MPO Consolidation Feasibility Study (which can be viewed in the November 14, 2025 MPO Board Agenda), mentioning that a survey would be circulated to local elected officials for response.

#### **10.B. FDOT FY 2027-2031 Draft Tentative Five-Year Work Program**

A video with information about the FDOT FY 2027-2031 Draft Tentative Five-Year Work Program was presented.

**Mr. Gaither** mentioned that FDOT recently held a public meeting for the FDOT FY27-31 Draft Tentative Five-Year Work Program with various opportunities for the public to participate from October 20-24, 2025. No objections to the Work Program were received. **Mr. Gaither** thanked **Ms. McLaughlin** and MPO staff for their work in support of the Work Program. A Call for Projects would be announced soon. The goal was that the FDOT FY27-31 Draft Tentative Five-Year Work Program would be adopted July 1, 2026.

**Ms. Scott** said Collier County appreciated FDOT's efforts to program the MPO's Strategic Intermodal System priorities through the Moving Florida Forward initiative in the FY26-31 Work Program but noted concerns with several project designs. She highlighted the need for operational and traffic analysis at the Immokalee Interchange, coordination of improvements within both FDOT's and the County's right-of-way, and attention to a stormwater pond site affected by the SR 29 "Loop Road" project. She also pointed out design issues with the I-75/Pine Ridge Rd Diverging Diamond project, including sidewalk and lighting gaps and the loss of a right turn at Napa Blvd. Although former FDOT District 1 Secretary L.K. Nandam committed to addressing these concerns, they remain unresolved. **Ms. Scott** asked the MPO Board to authorize **Ms. McLaughlin** to draft a letter for the Chair's signature expressing the Board's support for resolving these issues.

***Commissioner Saunders** moved to have the Collier MPO Director prepare a letter to FDOT for the MPO Board Chair's signature outlining the concerns raised by Ms. Scott, and **Council Member Penniman** seconded. Passed unanimously.*

## **11. DISTRIBUTION ITEMS**

None.

## **12. MEMBER COMMENTS**

**Commissioner Saunders** wished everyone a Happy Thanksgiving.

**Council Member Penniman** asked whether a merger of the Collier and Lee MPOs would provide a consolidated MPO with more clout than operating individually.

A group discussion followed, and discussion centered on whether consolidation of MPOs would increase influence, with recognition that funding formulas are population-based and would remain largely unchanged, though discretionary grants might offer more opportunity with a larger combined area. It was suggested that a merged MPO could strengthen relationships with legislative delegations by representing a broader region, although with imbalanced Board numbers across both MPOs the question of whether Collier MPO would have equal voice was raised. Timing was clarified as being entirely up to the jurisdictions, with prior legislative efforts prompting the current study, and comparisons were made to similar merger studies in other regions that remain ongoing without firm timelines.

Conversation also turned to initiating more collaboration between Collier and Lee Counties, including the idea of holding a joint County workshop to explore ways the Counties could work more

closely together, with suggestions that collaboration short of full consolidation could still yield benefits. Grant opportunities were discussed, with recognition that joint applications are possible even without a merger, and examples were given of other MPOs that have built safeguards into voting structures to prevent larger jurisdictions from dominating smaller ones.

Further clarification was provided on funding flows, which would be delegated by urbanized areas, the Cape Coral and Bonita Springs UZAs (a portion of the Bonita Springs UZA is located in Lee County), rather than counties. Questions about representation of Bonita Springs and Estero within Collier's boundary were addressed by explaining past interlocal agreements that divided responsibilities along county lines, with Collier receiving certain funds but not planning dollars, and transit dollars passed back to Lee. The importance of funding in advancing projects more quickly was also emphasized.

**Council Member Schwan** added that the Collier MPO Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee and Lee MPO Bicycle & Pedestrian Coordinating Committee hold joint meetings.

### **13. NEXT MEETING DATE**

**13.A.** December 11, 2025, Tentatively 9 a.m., Board of County Commissioners Chambers, 3299 Tamiami Trail East, Naples, FL 34112.

### **14. ADJOURN**

*There being no further business, **Chair Kowal** adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:03 a.m.*