



Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) Meeting

Marion County – Growth Services Training Room

2710 E. Silver Springs Blvd., Ocala, FL 34470

1:00 PM

MINUTES

Members Present:

Jim Belonger

Suzanne Mangram

Richard McGinley

Nick Mora

Steve Rudnianyn

Members Not Present:

Matt Fabian

Travis Magamoll

Michelle Shearer

Others Present:

Rob Balmes, Ocala Marion TPO

Shakayla Irby, Ocala Marion TPO

Kia Powell, FDOT

Rick Scherer

Item 1. Call to Order

Chairman Steve Rudnianyn called the meeting to order at 1:00pm.

Item 2. Roll Call

Administrative Assistant Shakayla Irby called the roll, and a quorum was present.

Item 3. Proof of Publication

Administrative Assistant Shakayla Irby stated the meeting had been published online to the TPO's website, as well as the City of Ocala, Belleview, Marion County, and Dunnellon's websites on October 28, 2025. The meeting had also been published to the TPO's Facebook and X pages.

Item 4. Consent Agenda

Mr. McGinley made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Ms. Mangram seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 5A. Election of 2026 CAC Chair and Vice Chair

Ms. Mangram nominated Jim Belonger for Chair and Richard McGinley for Vice Chair. Mr. Mora seconded the nominations, and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 5B. 2026 Meeting Schedule

Mr. McGinley asked whether a joint meeting between the Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) and the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) would be held in the upcoming year.

Mr. Balmes said he would discuss the possibility with the TAC and keep the CAC members informed. He noted that if a joint meeting were held, it would likely take place in June.

Mr. McGinley made a motion to approve the 2026 meeting schedule, including the possibility of a joint meeting with the TAC. Mr. Mora seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Item 5C. Navigating the Future 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP)

Mr. Balmes shared a presentation of the final presentation of the 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan. He thanked the committee members for their involvement throughout the process, which began in April 2024, and expressed appreciation for their participation in workshops, meetings, and for providing feedback and guidance. He noted that the purpose of the presentation was to walk through the document and planning process and to seek the committee's endorsement of the plan and a recommendation to the TPO Board for adoption on November 13.

Mr. Balmes provided a brief recap of the funding overview, noting that projected federal and state revenues for Marion County from 2031 to 2050 totaled approximately \$624.2 million, based on year-of-expenditure dollars. He added that local funding sources, including sales tax revenues, impact fees, and fuel taxes, were projected to generate approximately \$2.4 billion. He emphasized the importance of the sales tax as a significant benefit to future transportation projects. In total, he stated that the plan identified approximately \$3 billion in revenue for projects through 2050.

Mr. Balmes also reviewed the cost-feasible projects map, explaining that it reflected projects funded through federal, state, and local revenues through 2050. He noted that the majority of projects were locally funded, with some positioned for potential federal and state grant opportunities. Projects fully funded by federal and state sources were shown on the 2050 Cost Feasible Roadway Projects map.

Ms. Mangram asked about the status of the Marion Oaks Manor project near CR 42, specifically whether it appeared to be moving forward with the flyover and related improvements, or whether those elements were not included in the plan.

Mr. Balmes responded that the project was identified as fully funded, as the County was currently undertaking a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study. He added that once the study was completed, the focus based on direction discussed at a recent County Commission workshop was to pursue a design-build approach to advance the project more rapidly. He confirmed that the project was identified as a fully funded project in the Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP).

Mr. Balmes said the plan also identified several high-priority projects that were partially funded, noting that sufficient projected federal and state revenues were not currently available to fully complete them. He highlighted key corridors, including SR 200 from Citrus County to CR 484, U.S. 41, State Road 40, SR 326, portions of SR 40 and U.S. 301, and several interchange projects.

Mr. Balmes also discussed identified future study areas that had been referenced throughout the process. These included opportunities to improve east–west connectivity, a potential southeast connector, a West Beltway corridor study, and a potential future study of the SR 200 corridor. He explained that these areas were included as opportunities to further evaluate the transportation system through 2050 as funding and needs arose.

In addition, Mr. Balmes noted that the plan incorporated the current SunTran needs network for transit through 2050, consistent with SunTran’s adopted Transit Development Plan (TDP). He pointed out key focus areas, including the south and southwest portions of the county, the Belleview area, and identified microtransit zones. He added that SunTran was working toward updating its TDP within the next one to two years, and that the LRTP would be amended accordingly once that update was completed.

Mr. Balmes also stated that the final Active Transportation Plan, which was presented previously and adopted by the TPO Board on October 28, was included in the document. He explained that trail, bicycle, and sidewalk projects from that plan were incorporated and would be amended as needed.

Mr. Balmes reviewed the extensive public outreach conducted as part of the planning process, which began in April 2024. He summarized activities that included a kickoff public survey, community workshops in fall 2024, a second public survey, a second community workshop, and a public open house held on September 30 following the release of the draft plan. He reported approximately 680 responses to surveys and comment maps, about 1,900 total attendees at public meetings and workshops, and participation in 27 additional community meetings and events, such as civic organization presentations. He credited both the consultant team and TPO staff for strong outreach efforts, including social media engagement.

Mr. Balmes concluded by stating that the plan was scheduled to be presented for full TPO Board adoption the following Thursday and that staff was requesting the committee's endorsement of the plan.

Mr. McGinley made a motion to endorse the Navigating the Future 2050 LRTP and recommended TPO board adoption. Mr. Belonger seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously.

Item 6A. Fiscal Years (FY) 2026 to 2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Amendment #2

Mr. Balmes said that TIP amendments were typically reviewed by the CAC and TAC committees before being forwarded to the TPO Board for recommendation. He explained that, in this case, there was a need to expedite the amendment at the request of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), which asked that the TIP be processed in October. As a result, the amendment was taken directly to the TPO Board at its October 28 meeting.

Mr. Balmes stated that he wanted to bring the amendment to the committee's attention for informational purposes, so members were aware of all TIP amendments being processed. He explained that the amendment involved a change to the 49th Street interchange at I-75, specifically related to additional right-of-way. He noted that the project had previously been programmed at \$21.3 million for right-of-way, along with a small portion for design-build support.

Mr. Balmes said the project was updated to reflect \$59.4 million for right-of-way, along with a little over \$2 million in other prior-year funds. He explained that much of the funding came from prior-year sources and that the update was made so the project would reflect the current five-year snapshot for fiscal years 2026 through 2030 and align with FDOT's cost estimates.

Item 6B. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Fiscal Years (FY) 2027 to 2031 Tentative Work Program

Ms. Powell said she presented the District Five Tentative Work Program, which outlined the five-year plan for fiscal years 2027 through 2031. She explained that the program served as a roadmap for continued investment in and advancement of the transportation system over the coming years.

Ms. Powell stated that she shared the District Five website, noting that it included the virtual tentative work program, materials from the public hearing period, and detailed information about the plan. She added that the site provided county-specific reports, an interactive project map, and background on how the plan was developed, allowing users to learn more about projects across the district and region.

Ms. Powell explained that the Work Program was a needs-based, five-year plan that ensured the continued development and maintenance of Florida's transportation network. She noted that it was updated annually to reflect funding levels, priorities, and project progress, and that it covered highways, transit, seaports, airports, rail, and related planning, design, and construction activities.

Ms. Powell said that each district developed its own work program in coordination with local and regional partners and aligned it with the State's top investment priorities. She identified safety as the top priority, followed by system preservation and maintenance, capacity improvements to meet growth needs, and investments in aviation, transit, rail, ports, and other key systems.

Ms. Powell noted that the schedule for the current year was tighter due to the legislative session beginning in January, resulting in a compressed development cycle. She reviewed key dates, including the virtual public hearing held from October 20 through October 24, district submissions to Central Office on November 5, the public comment deadline of November 7, TPO objections due by November 21, and statewide review by the Florida Transportation Commission in December. She added that the statewide tentative final program was submitted to the Governor and Legislature in the spring, with final adoption of the five-year work program taking place on July 1.

Ms. Powell discussed several factors that influenced the District Five Work Program, including downward adjustments to statewide revenue projections, declining fuel tax revenues, a reduction in the transportation reserve surcharge, and legislative changes from HB 703 that reduced department revenues. She also addressed construction cost variability related to labor and material markets, noting that while some costs had stabilized, others remained unpredictable.

Ms. Powell explained that, given these financial considerations, the program focused on maintaining safety and preservation projects, minimizing disruptions through strategic phasing, preserving ongoing contractual commitments, and limiting the initiation of new project phases.

Turning to Marion County, Ms. Powell stated that the tentative five-year funding outlook included nearly \$500 million in total investment from fiscal years 2027 through 2031. She noted a significant increase in funding in 2030, driven primarily by two major projects: SR 40 from SW 110th Street to North/South SR 48, and SR 40 from the end of Ocklawaha to east of County Road 314. She said these projects represented major corridor improvements that enhanced mobility and safety for local and regional travelers.

Ms. Powell concluded by reviewing the funding breakdown for Marion County, noting that approximately 53 percent was dedicated to capacity improvements, 19 percent to preservation projects, 9 percent to multimodal investments including transit and aviation, nearly 9 percent to intersection improvements, 6 percent to bicycle and pedestrian projects, and the remaining balance to maintenance and miscellaneous projects such as rest area enhancements and landscaping.

Ms. Powell reviewed key projects and changes included in the Tentative Work Program, noting that comparisons to prior work programs were available on the District Five public hearing website. She explained that her overview focused on priority projects, newly added phases, and adjustments to previously adopted programming.

Ms. Powell highlighted the U.S. 41 widening project from SW 110th Street to north of State Road 40, which was intended to improve capacity and corridor operations. She noted that the design had transitioned from a suburban to an urban typical section south of State Road 40 to support a 45-mph target speed and that all required right-of-way had already been acquired. She discussed significant cost increases over time and explained that the project was approximately 90 percent designed. She added that FDOT was reviewing cost estimates and evaluating delivery strategies, including phased construction and additional cost-saving measures, while reaffirming the project's priority status for Marion County.

Ms. Powell also reviewed several intersection improvement projects, including U.S. 41 at NW 35th Street, U.S. 27 at NW 60th Avenue, and State Road 35 at State Road 464, along with their associated design and construction phases.

Ms. Powell discussed the addition of a truck parking facility project, which included design and construction phases and was identified as a multi-county effort involving Marion and Sumter counties. She also noted the inclusion of ten resurfacing projects totaling approximately \$92.2 million, as well as roadway resurfacing projects on State Road 35 and State Road 326.

Ms. Powell summarized several sidewalk projects near school areas, explaining that these projects were intended to improve pedestrian safety by reducing the need for students to walk along major roadways.

Ms. Powell concluded by addressing deferred and moved-out projects, explaining that some projects were shifted due to coordination with local agencies, scheduling adjustments, or prioritization needs. She clarified that certain projects were deferred by one or more years, while others were moved out of the five-year program but remained under consideration for future implementation.

Item 7. Comments by FDOT

Ms. Powell highlighted completed projects from October. She stated that the US 301 (SR 35) resurfacing project from north of CR 42 to north of SE 144th Place Road was completed, with final acceptance on October 10. She also noted that the SR 464 resurfacing project from US 301/US 27 to SR 35 was completed in October and received final acceptance on October 14.

Mr. McGinley asked whether there had been any discussion about expanding US 301 north of CR 42, noting that the roadway narrowed from four lanes to two lanes before entering Summerfield and then returned to four lanes.

Ms. Powell responded that she was not sure.

Ms. Powell briefly highlighted a Silver Springs Pedestrian Access video, explaining that it provided a behind-the-scenes look at unique project work completed by FDOT at Silver Springs State Park. She noted that the video had been highlighted across the department and shared it with the committee for informational purposes.

Ms. Powell concluded by highlighting the department's November safety campaign, Driving Rising, noting that National Seatbelt Day was observed on November 14. She reviewed information shown in the campaign materials regarding seatbelt use by vehicle type and occupant age and reminded attendees of the importance of wearing seatbelts, emphasizing that seatbelt use saves lives and helps keep everyone safe.

Mr. Mora asked Ms. Powell for an update on CR 484.

Ms. Powell said the redesign process for the current project had resulted in delays and that a long-term approach was being taken. In the meantime, she noted that the contractor continued to perform ongoing activities, including maintenance of traffic, erosion control, bridge monitoring, and neighborhood coordination. She added that it would be some time before construction activities resumed on CR 484.

Item 8. Comments by TPO Staff

There were no comments by the TPO staff.

Item 9. Comments by CAC Members

Mr. Mora asked whether the TPO would send meeting calendar invites for CAC meetings in 2026, and Ms. Irby responded that the meeting schedule and calendar invites would be sent.

Item 10. Public Comment

Mr. Rick Scherer, attending as a member of the public, asked whether any new flyovers over I-75 between Ocala and Wildwood were planned and inquired about the status of the bridge at SW 66th Street that had recently been struck and damaged.

Mr. McGinley responded that the flyover being discussed earlier was located at CR 42 and served the Marion Oaks area.

Chairman Rudnianyn noted that a study was underway for a potential east-west connector between CR 484 and SR 200.

Mr. Balmes said that Mike McCammon with FDOT had advised that the bridge at SW 66th Street would be replaced as part of the Moving Florida Forward program, with a larger and higher bridge planned.

Item 11. Adjournment

Chairman Rudnianyn adjourned the meeting at 1:58pm.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Shakayla Irby, TPO Administrative Assistant