



Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) Meeting
Marion County – Library Headquarters, Meeting Room B
2720 E. Silver Springs Blvd., Ocala, FL 34470
3:30 PM

MINUTES

Members Present:

Bob Titterington
Mickey Thomason
Noel Cooper
Loretta Shaffer (*arrived at 3:33pm*)
Eric Smith
Kia Powell
Christopher Zeigler

Members Not Present:

Ji Li
Dave Herlihy
Kenneth Odom
Chad Ward

Others Present:

Rob Balmes, Ocala Marion TPO
Liz Mitchell, Ocala Marion TPO
Sara Brown, Ocala Marion TPO
Jonathan Scarfe, FDOT
Kia Powell, FDOT

Item 1. Call to Order and Roll Call

Vice-Chairman Eric Smith called the meeting to order at 3:30pm and Secretary Shakayla Irby called the roll. A quorum was present.

Item 2. Proof of Publication

Secretary 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 3, 2023. The meeting had also been published to the TPOs Facebook and Twitter pages.

Item 3. Consent Agenda

Mr. Thomason made a motion to approve the Consent Agenda. Mr. Titterington seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 4a. 2023 Apportionment Plan

Mr. Balmes gave a brief presentation to the committee of the 2023 Apportionment Plan for the Ocala/Marion County TPO.

An Apportionment Plan presentation was made at the TPO board meeting on September 26. Although no action was taken at the board meeting, there was consensus with the board for the plan to remain as it was presented.

- TPO Board Membership remaining at 12 Voting, 1 Non-Voting. 13 members.
- City of Ocala (5); Marion County (5), City of Belleview (1); City of Dunnellon (1) – Voting
- FDOT Secretary (1) – Non-Voting

TPO staff was seeking CAC and TAC approvals for the Apportionment Plan. Next steps would include TPO board adoption on October 23 and submission to FDOT by November 14 for Governor approval.

The Apportionment Plan presentation is attached to pages of this set of minutes for reference.

Mr. Titterington made a motion to approve the 2023 Apportionment Plan. Mr. Thomason seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 4b. 2023 List of Priority Projects (LOPP) Amendment

Mr. Balmes presented and said there was a proposed update the 2023 List of Priority Projects (LOPP) Trail Priorities list to include a Cross Florida Greenway-Pruitt Gap connection, across State Road (SR) 200.

Based on the recent enactment of Senate Bill 106, which revitalized and increased funding for the SUN Trail network, the TPO with state and local partners were identifying future

project opportunities in Marion County. A connection across SR 200 would provide a vital link to the Cross Florida Greenway and Heart of Florida Loop, while ensuring safety for all users.

Mr. Thomason provided some background on the project, explaining that the paved trail from Santos to the East Side of SR 200 was constructed approximately six years ago. He highlighted the need to find a safer alternative for bicyclists to avoid SR 200 due to its high speed, narrow road, and heavy traffic. To address this, he collaborated with the County and received a suggestion from the County Engineer's Office to relocate the trail 600 feet into the woods, connecting it to the Pruitt trailhead.

Additionally, Mr. Thomason mentioned his discussions with the FDOT District 5 Office, during which they recommended submitting an application for a feasibility study to explore the possibility of an at-grade crossing to establish a connection in that area.

Mr. Thomason also discussed a request for an addition: Cross Florida Greenway Land Bridge Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study. A PD&E Study for the future expansion of the Land Bridge would be a complimentary component to FDOT's ongoing master planning of I-75 improvements in Marion County, beyond the current Moving Florida Forward initiative. This request was raised from the ongoing discussions regarding future work on I-75, specifically the paving of the trail from Santos to SR 200. The Land Bridge has become bottlenecked because half of the 16ft open trail, which serves as a wildlife corridor, has been paved. Given the substantial increase in trail traffic, it would be necessary to expand the land bridge.

During the meeting, Mr. Balmes inquired about the committee's preferred ranking for the project within the current LOPP.

Mr. Thomason mentioned that there is funding available to construct the phase west of SR 200 in fiscal year 2026.

Vice-Chairman Smith inquired about the timing of funding for the Downtown Ocala Silver Springs trail.

Mr. Balmes indicated that this project is scheduled for fiscal year 2025.

Mr. Thomason expressed his preference not to prioritize this project ahead of others currently included in the LOPP.

Ms. Shaffer asked about the status of an independent feasibility study.

Mr. Thomason clarified that no independent feasibility study is being conducted, as the feasibility study conducted by FDOT would be the sole one considered.

Ms. Shaffer made a motion to approve the 2023 LOPP Amendment to include the Cross Florida Greenway-Pruitt Gap connection, across State Road (SR) 200 and Cross Florida Greenway Land Bridge Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study. Mr. Titterington seconded, and the motion passed unanimously.

Item 5a. Congestion Management Plan Online Resources

Mr. Balmes introduced Sara Brown, the new Transportation Planner, as the presenter of the Congestion Management Plan Online Resources to the committee.

Ms. Brown presented and said that at the August 8 CAC meeting, Kimley-Horn presented the Congestion Management Plan (CMP), 2023 State of the System Update. The presentation included the most recent information on congested roadways.

As a result, the TPO updated the Congestion Management Plan interactive map on the Congested Roadway Locations in Marion County.

From the TPO website, www.ocalamariontpo.org, Ms. Brown provided the committee with a walkthrough on how to view and operate the story map. She also gave a brief introduction to the Congestion Management Plan and discussed the CMP network, Level of Service, and the interactive map on the Congested Roadway Locations.

Item 6. Comments by FDOT

Mr. Johnathan Scarfe introduced new Liaison, Kia Powell.

Mr. Scarfe also provided the construction report was provided in the committee agenda packets.

The "Moving Florida Forward" project, which focuses on Interstate 75 (I-75) from State Road (S.R.) 44 to S.R. 326, has been scheduled. Within the MPO liaison units, efforts have been underway to draft letters for the Long-Range Transportation Planning Amendment that will be necessary for the project.

Mr. Scarfe also informed the committee that the Tentative Five-Year Work Program for Fiscal Year 2024/25 to Fiscal Year 2028/29 virtual public hearing was scheduled from October 16 to October 20, with an open house planned for October 17 from 3 pm to 5:30 pm at the FDOT District 5 Office in Deland, FL. All public comments were due by November 3, 2023. The FDOT Work Program group would give a presentation to the committees on November 14 and the governing board on November 28.

Ms. Shaffer raised a question regarding the auxiliary lanes being added to I-75 and inquired whether there were long-term plans to convert them into toll lanes.

Mr. Scarfe indicated that he was not aware of any long-term plans regarding the lanes and stated that he would look into it for more information.

Mr. Balmes mentioned that the District had been actively working on the I-75 Masterplan, suggesting that this plan might provide additional insights into the project's direction.

Item 7. Comments by TPO Staff

Ms. Irby shared with the committee that Mobility Week was approaching October 27 to November 4 and shared the following local events with the committee:

- November 1 from 4:30pm to 6:00pm – Helmet Giveaway at the Mary Sue Rich at Reed Place Community Center
- November 2 – Try Transit Thursday, offering fare-free rides for the day, and take a look at the new electric cutaway vehicle
- November 3 from 9:00am to 10:30am – Walk and Talk Tour beginning at the Downtown Ocala Gazebo

Mr. Balmes announced a 2023 Transportation Safety Summit in collaboration with the Marion County Community Traffic Safety Team (CTST). The Summit, scheduled for November 9, 2023, from 9:00 am to 10:30 am at the Mary Sue Rich Community Center, aims to promote transportation safety within Marion County as part of our Commitment to Zero vision. It will include speakers and opportunities for public input. More details to come as the agenda is finalized.

Mr. Balmes announced information about the SUN Trail Request for Funding. On September 27, District 5 initiated an open solicitation period for project applications, which played a role in the amendment of the LOPP for the SR 200 crossing. This adjustment was made to explore funding opportunities for the project. The solicitation period is open from September 27 to December 20, allowing local partners to seek support for their projects during this time frame.

Mr. Balmes said that the Adjusted Urban Area process is approaching to create a revised version of the urbanized area, starting with 2010 and then assessing if any areas need to be added or included. This information will be presented to the committee next month.

Item 8. Comments by TAC Members

Ms. Shaffer thanked FDOT for all of their work and support in the area.

Mr. Thomason said that he received an email stating that \$1 million has been awarded for completing the design and future construction for the Baseline to Santos project in the current fiscal year, and an additional \$5.6 million has been allocated for construction in fiscal year 2026.

Item 9. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

Item 10. Adjournment

Vice-Chairman Eric Smith adjourned the meeting at 4:05pm.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Shakayla Irby, TPO Administrative Assistant

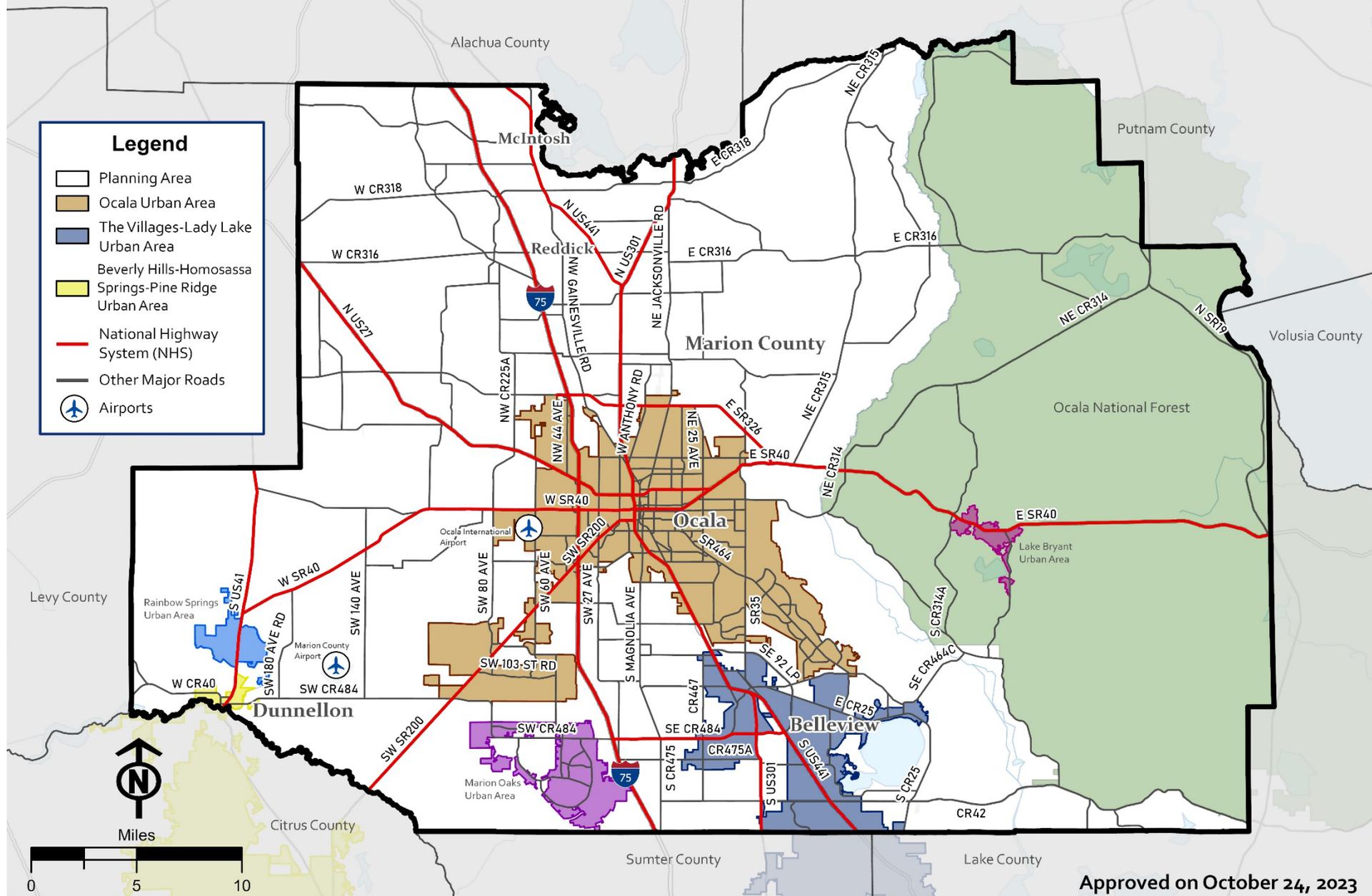
Apportionment 2023 Schedule

- ✓ **CAC/TAC Presentations – September 12**
- ✓ **TPO Board Presentation – September 26**
- **CAC and TAC Approvals – October 10**
- **TPO Board Adoption – October 24**
- **Submission to FDOT by November 14 for Governor Approval**

MPA Boundary

- **2020 MPA Boundary remain the entirety of Marion County**

Metropolitan Planning Area Map



MPA - Planning Area Population

MPA Area	2010 Population	2020 Population
Total	331,298	375,908

Increase of 44,610 residents or 13.5 percent

Membership

- **TPO Board Membership remains 12 Voting, 1 Non-Voting. 13 members.**
- **City of Ocala (5); Marion County (5), City of Belleview (1); City of Dunnellon (1) – Voting**
- **FDOT Secretary (1) – Non-Voting**

Membership

Jurisdiction/Agency	Current Membership			Proposed Membership		
	Number of Voting Members	Number of Non-Voting Members	Percent of Total Votes	Number of Voting Members	Number of Non-Voting Members	Percent of Total Votes
City of Belleview	1	0	8.3%	1	0	8.3%
City of Dunnellon	1	0	8.3%	1	0	8.3%
City of Ocala	5	0	41.7%	5	0	41.7%
Marion County	5	0	41.7%	5	0	41.7%
Florida Department of Transportation, District 5	0	1	0%	0	1	0%
Total	12	1	100%	12	1	100%