



**Polk Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Board
Draft Meeting Minutes**

Thursday, August 28, 2025
Polk County Administration Building, Commission Boardroom
330 West Church Street
Bartow, FL 33830

Voting Members Present:

Commissioner Michael Scott
Commissioner Bill Braswell
Commissioner Rick Wilson
Commissioner Rebecca Troutman
Commissioner Sara Roberts McCarley, **Vice Chair**
Commissioner Stephanie Madden
Mayor Nat Birdsong
Mayor Pro Tem Brian Yates
Mayor Jack Hilligoss
Commissioner Jordan Helms
Commissioner Omar Arroyo
Vice Mayor Vernel Smith
Commissioner Trish Pfeiffer, **Chair**
Vice Mayor Nancy Daley
Vice Mayor Jeremy Clark

South County Bloc Members:

Commissioner Jim Watts
Commissioner Dawn McDonald (Voting Member)
Council Member Adam Greenway

Central County and Ridge Bloc Members:

Commissioner Willie Quarles (Voting Member)
Mayor Phyllis Hall

Advisory Members Present:

James Driggers
Ryan Kordek
Heather Bryan

Other Persons Present:

Bob O'Malley
William Roll
Peyton McLeod

Representing:

Polk County BoCC
Polk County BoCC
Polk County BoCC
Polk County BoCC
City of Lakeland
City of Lakeland
City of Winter Haven
City of Winter Haven
City of Lake Wales
City of Auburndale
City of Haines City
City of Haines City
City of Bartow
City of Lake Alfred
City of Davenport

City of Fort Meade
City of Mulberry
City of Frostproof

Town of Dundee
Town of Lake Hamilton

Representing:

FDOT, District One
Polk County TPO
TPO Legal Advisor

Representing:

Right Track Public Affairs
Kimley-Horn
FDOT

Julia Davis
Angela Kaufman
Cindy Mitchel
KC Rivera
Edith Perez

TPO Staff
TPO Staff
TPO Staff
TPO Staff
FDOT

1. Call to Order

Chairwoman Pfeiffer called the TPO Board meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

2. Confirmation of Quorum

KC Rivera, Polk TPO staff, confirmed a quorum. Commissioner Dawn McDonald represented the South County Bloc and Commissioner Willie Quarles represented the Central County and Ridge Bloc. Advisory Council members present were James Diggers, FDOT, Ryan Kordek, Polk TPO, and Heather Bryan, Polk County Legal.

3. Opportunity for Public Comment

Chairwoman Pfeiffer opened the floor for public comment. No comments were made by the public. Chairwoman Pfeiffer closed public comment.

4. Agenda Review

Ryan Kordek, TPO Executive Director, provided an overview of the Board's agenda and highlighted the items on Envision 2050 and the presentation and discussion on passenger rail.

Mr. Kordek and Chair Pfeiffer introduced James Driggers who has been named as the FDOT District One Interim Secretary. He was previously at FDOT District Two.

Consent Agenda

5. Approve TPO Board Meeting Minutes – June 12, 2025

6. Approve Polk TPO Executive Director Quarterly Timesheets and Expense Reimbursements

7. Approve Title VI and ADA Nondiscrimination Policy Plan Update

8. Approve Consultant Services Authorization (CSA) TPO-20-1009-01-11 with AECOM Technical Services, Inc. to prepare an update of the Roadway Network Database (RND) at a Cost Not-to-Exceed \$74,723.00

9. Approve Consultant Services Authorization (CSA) TPO-20-1009-01-12 with AECOM Technical Services, Inc. to carry out a Sidewalk Inventory and Improvement Study at a Cost Not-to-Exceed \$49,998.00

10. Approve Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Regional Transportation Management and Operations (TSMO) Program RTSMOP between MetroPlan Orlando, Polk TPO, and other Regional M/TPOs

Motion: Motion made by Commissioner Wilson, seconded by Commissioner Watts. Motion carried without dissent.

Council Member Greenway asked to add an email address for Title VI complaint officer for consent agenda item 7. Mr. Kordek confirmed the email address will be added.

Other Action Items

11. Public Hearing on Draft Amendments to FY 2025/26-2029/30 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP)

Angela Kaufman, TPO Staff, presented the Roll Forward projects that were not included in the previously approved TIP between the months of June to October. 123 projects included thin the Roll Forward project including I-4 and SR 33 Interchange, along with miscellaneous projects, resurfacing/paving, road construction, and bicycle/pedestrian projects.

Chairwomen Pfeiffer opened the floor for public hearing, seeing none, public hearing was closed.

Motion: Motion made by Commissioner Wilson, seconded by Commissioner Troutman. Motion carried without dissent.

Roll Call vote was taken and approved without dissent.

12. Interstate 4 Intermodal Passenger Rail Station Feasibility Study

a. Status of Regional Passenger Rail Services in Central Florida

Ryan Kordek, TPO Executive Director, gave a brief history of proposed high speed rail services in Polk County which go back to the 1970s. Mr. Kordek then introduced Bob O'Malley who will provide an overview of passenger rail services in the Orlando area.

Bob O'Malley, Right Track Public Affairs, gave a brief background to his past involvements with passenger rails. Mr. O'Malley explained the history of SunRail, how it was developed as a commuter rail Monday through Friday nine to five workforce. Which no longer meets today's needs so there are discussions to expand the hours and weekends. While Brightline travels from Miami to Orlando, which will be expanding to Tampa with sharing the Sunshine corridor with SunRail from Orlando Airport to Disney. Universal Studios has created a community development district which is being donated along with funds to pay for a multi-modal transit station not only for a train station but also a bus station. Along with support from local and private sectors.

A long discussion occurred between the board and Mr. O'Malley about SunRail and Brightline.

b. Proposed I-4 Intermodal Passenger Rail Station Feasibility Study

Ryan Kordek, TPO Executive Director, presented the high-speed rail envisioned for the I-4 corridor within Polk County when it is proposed to be extended to Tampa.

A PD&E study by the Central Florida Commuter Rail Commission will be conducted in the Sunshine Corridor

Brightline has two planned stops on the Space Coast and Treasure Coast. Mr. Kordek reviewed the planning studies that were completed by the MPOs in those communities to support the stops. He also covered the amount of local funding and investment being put forth to support these stops. Both stops are also seeking a significant amount of federal funding for the construction of these stops. Mr. Kordek also informed the Board there is a similar study currently underway and being led by the Hillsborough TPO to evaluate the proposed Brightline stop in Downtown Tampa.

Mr. Kordek then reviewed what is being proposed for the Polk TPO's study which is being called the I-4 Intermodal Passenger Rail Station Planning and Feasibility Study. This study will identify viable candidate station locations for high-speed rail along I-4. In doing so, the study will look at a number of access and proximity factors such as existing and future land use, infrastructure needs and costs, ridership market and catchment analysis and an economic development analysis. The study will also include some conceptual planning and include an implementation plan for the proposed locations. Public engagement will also be an important component of the study. \$500,000 of funding is available through the TPO's planning funding to conduct the study.

Motion: Motioned by Commissioner Robert-McCarley, seconded by Commissioner Madden. Motion carried without dissent.

13. Review/Approve Draft TPO Resolution 2025-05 approving the Amended Fiscal Year 2024-25 – 2025/26 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) and Authorizing the TPO Chair to Execute the Amended Metropolitan Planning Organization Funding Agreement

Ryan Kordek, TPO Executive Director, presented the UPWP Amendments which are based on a prior fiscal year's carryforward amount of nearly \$900,000. Staff is proposing to allocate these funds in current fiscal year in FY 2025/26. \$500,000 is proposed to be allocated for consultant services for the I-4 Intermodal Passenger Rail Station Planning and Feasibility Study that was covered and approved in the previous agenda item. Additional funding is proposed to be allocated to improving the PolkTPO.com website with data dashboards for safety and transportation data statistics. Identifying roadway context classifications as defined by FDOT for the roadways contained in the TPO's Roadway Network Database is another project being proposed. Staff is also proposing \$100,000 be used for consultant services to assist staff in preparing grant applications in support of the TPO's unfunded priority transportation projects.

Commissioner Scott asked about the TDP update. Mr. Kordek stated there is no additional funding or budget changes being recommended for the transit development plan (TDP) which is nearly complete.

Commissioner Troutman asked if the TPO Roadway Network Database can include the jurisdiction that is responsible for maintaining the road. Mr. Kordek responded that it is possible with nearly all of the county's major roads (1,500 miles) being maintained by either FDOT, Polk County or one of the cities.

Motion: Motioned by Commissioner Scott, seconded by Commissioner Watts. Motion carried without dissent.

Presentations and Status Reports

14. Envision 2050 Update

Ryan Kordek, TPO Executive Director, introduced the Envision 2050 update and provided an overview of the adoption schedule for Envision 2050 with a public hearing scheduled for December 9th where the TPO Board will be asked to review and adopt the Plan.

William Roll, Kimley-Horn, gave an overview of the roadway projects being considered for Envision 2050. This included the state highways and strategic intermodal system (SIS) roads such as I-4, US 27 and State Road 60, as well as important county and city roads which are included in the Plan. Mr. Roll discussed the roadway needs costs versus the amount of revenue which is available to implement these projects by the year 2050. He emphasized there is significantly less state funding when compared to previous long-range transportation plans prepared by the TPO. As a result, there will be fewer state highway projects included in the cost-feasible portion of the Plan.

Cindy Mitchell, TPO Staff, provided an overview of the public comments that have been made on the project website and from the TPO's virtual public work held on June 20th. We continue to see a majority of comments being made in the northeast third of the county. In the comments the main concerns were safety, and the need for roadway and intersection improvements.

Chairwomen Pfeiffer asked about the green line pictured from Lake Wales to SR 60. Commissioner Watts stated the sooner we start the better we will be off.

Commissioner McDonald asked where the website was located. Ms. Mitchel responded PolkEnvision2050.com

Mr. Kordek stated if anyone wanted more information or a presentation on Envision 2050 staff would be happy to do so.

15. Congestion Management Multimodal Planning (C3MP) Initiative

Julia Davis, TPO Staff, introduced Peyton McLeod.

Peyton McLeod, FDOT, gave a brief background on how the initiative came to be. Mr. McLeod presented the initiatives, vision, and mission with various modes of transportation and recently has looked more into freight, aviation and rail needs. The Secretary visited each transit agency and MPO district explaining the six goals and the five step processes associated with C3MP. Mr. McLeod talked about some successes FDOT has had with the transit risk assessment and safety study pilot, SR 33 construction, and Advanced Air Mobility.

Commissioner Roberts-McCarley thanked Mr. McLeod for FDOT's partnership with the circulators in Lakeland Hills Boulevard corridor.

Reports

16. Executive Director's Report

Ryan Kordek, TPO Executive Director, discussed the recent the Best Foot Forward at some of the worst crosswalks for driver yield rates in Lakeland, Winter Haven, and Bartow. He provided information about upcoming transportation meetings including the Southport Connector PD&E Public Hearing, US 27 Public Visioning Workshop, as well as a meeting with the new MPOAC director. He informed the Board that Tom Phillips with the Citrus Connection will address the TPO at their meeting scheduled on October 9th.

17. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Report

Edith Perez, FDOT, shared the American Council of Engineering companies of Florida honored eight (8) Florida transportation projects which included infrastructure and transportation achievements. The nominations were selected from 39 projects submitted from seven districts and three of those projects are from District One. Of these nominations, two projects are in Polk County and one in Lee County. The projects from Polk County were the US 27 at SR 60 interchange and I-4 at SR 557 interchange, and the one in Lee County was US 41. Ms. Perez explained there is a grant opportunity called Safe Routes to School. It will be offering a workshop with the necessary criteria and will offer guidance on creating a strong application. The workshop will be held on September 4th, and the cycle will open September 30th.

James Driggers, FDOT, thanked the board for having him and welcomed the board to inform him if they have any needs.

18. Opportunity for Public Comment

Chairwoman Pfeiffer opened the floor for public comment, none was present. Chairwoman Pfeiffer closed public comment.

19. Board Member Comments

Chairwoman Pfeiffer opened the floor for board comments, there were none. Chairwoman Pfeiffer closed public comment.

20. Adjournment – Next meeting date is October 9, 2025.

The meeting adjourned at 10:44 a.m.

Respectfully transcribed by KC Rivera, TPO Office Manager IV.

Section 286.0105, Florida Statutes, states that if a person decides to appeal any decision made by a record of the proceedings, and that, for such purpose, he may need to ensure that a verbatim record of the proceedings is made, which record includes the testimony and evidence upon which the appeal is to be based.