Polk Transportation Planning Organization

Polk Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Board
Draft Meeting Minutes

Thursday, April 10, 2025
Polk County Administration Building, Commission Boardroom
330 West Church Street
Bartow, FL 33830

Voting Members Present:		**Representing:**
Commissioner Martha Santiago		Polk County BoCC
Commissioner Michael Scott		Polk County BoCC
Commissioner Rick Wilson		Polk County BoCC
Commissioner Rebecca Troutman		Polk County BoCC
Mayor Bill Mutz		City of Lakeland
Commissioner Guy LaLonde Jr		City of Lakeland
Commissioner Sara Roberts McCarley	**Vice Chair**	City of Lakeland
Commissioner Stephanie Madden		City of Lakeland
Commissioner Michael Musik		City of Lakeland
Commissioner Tracy Mercer		City of Winter Haven
Commissioner Jordan Helms		City of Auburndale
Mayor Omar Arroyo		City of Haines City
Mayor Trish Pfeiffer	**Chair**	City of Bartow
Vice Mayor Nancy Daley		City of Lake Alfred

South County Bloc Members:

Council Member Adam Greenway	City of Frostproof

Central County and Ridge Block Members:
None

Advisory Members Present:	**Representing:**
L.K. Nandam	FDOT, District One
Ryan Kordek	Polk County TPO
Heather Bryan	TPO Legal Advisor

Other Persons Present:	**Representing:**
Julia Davis	Polk TPO
Will Hawthorn	CFX
Kaith Slater	FDOT
William Roll	Kimley-Horn
Edith Perez	FDOT
Sharon Garrett	Polk County Citizen
Tom Palmer	Polk County Citizen

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. Councilmember Greenway represented the South County Bloc. There was no one present to represent the Central County and Ridge bloc. Advisory Council members present were Secretary L.K. Nandam, FDOT, Ryan Kordek, Polk TPO, and Heather Bryan, Polk County Legal.

3. Opportunity for Public Comment

Chairwoman Pfeiffer opened the floor for public comment.

Sharon Garrett was present to speak. Ms. Garrett expressed concerned about her home and family's property that are within the proposed corridors for the Central Polk Parkway East.

4. Agenda Review

Ryan Kordek, TPO Executive Director, highlighted the major items on the Board's agenda. Mr. Kordek pointed out the 2024 Certification Review conducted by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) which is on the Consent Agenda. Mr. Kordek stated that in response to the Board's discussion at the February meeting on regional transportation projects in the Northeast portion of the county, staff has prepared a more comprehensive presentation that will be covered at this morning's meeting. This includes presentations on the Southport Connector, I-4 Moving Florida Forward and the TPO's 2050 Long-Range Transportation Plan Update and Northeast Polk County Sub-Area Study.

Consent Agenda

5. Approve TPO Board Meeting Minutes – February 13, 2025

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

7. Approve a Modification to Provide a Time Extension for Consultant Services Authorization (CSA) TPO-20-1009-02-03 with Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. to Prepare the Preliminary 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan Update (Part One)

8. Approve Polk TPO's 2024 Certification Review

9. Approve Draft TPO Resolution 2025-02 Authorizing Chairman to File a Transportation Disadvantaged Trust Fund Planning-Related Activities Grant Application

10. Approve Amendment #2 to the Master Services Agreement TPO-20-1009 to Provide a One-Year Extension to Existing Contracts, and to Allow for an Increase in Reimbursement Rates

11. Approve Renewal Agreement for TPO Staff Services

Commissioner Scott asked about the modification of the time extension for Kimley-Horn.
Ryan Kordek, Polk TPO staff confirmed the modification is changing the duration of the CSA from 6 months to 14 months and there are no changes being recommended to the project scope or cost.

Motion: Motioned by Vice Chair Roberts McCarley, seconded by Commissioner Wilson. Motion carried without dissent.

Presentations and Status Reports

12. Southport Connector Expressway Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) Study from Poinciana Parkway to Florida's Turnpike

Will Hawthorn, Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX), made a presentation on the Southport Connector Expressway project, explaining the process including the development plans, current and past PD&E studies, noise study, and public involvement. The project is a proposed 15-mile expressway traveling between Osceola and Polk Counties which will connect to the Florida Turnpike. There are three proposed alignment options and the hybrid option for Cypress Parkway, which appears to be the most popular alternative, will be presented at the public involvement meetings.

Commissioner Santiago asked when will the Noise Study take place.
Mr. Hawthorn stated the Noise Study will begin once they have the preferred alternatives set and the process will begin in April.

Commissioner Santiago asked about the projected construction time.
Mr. Hawthorn stated this project has no funding at this time, it would take about seven to ten years.

Vice Chair Roberts McCarley and Commissioner Scott asked about other connections to the Turnpike.
Mr. Hawthorn provided an explanation of the interchanges.

Commissioner Scott asked about the interchange to the Turnpike and how it will affect the proposed developments in the area.
Mr. Hawthorn stated the interchange is not being built to support the proposed developments. It is being built for regional connectivity.

Commissioner Santiago asked if funding was needed all at once because it is not being built in phases.
Mr. Hawthorn confirmed there are no phases, and all funding would be needed at one time.

Commissioner Troutman asked about sources of funding generated by CFX.
Mr. Hawthorn provided explanation of sources of funding.

Commissioner Scott made a recommendation for details of funding forecasting information at the next update for this project.
Mr. Hawthorn stated that this will need to be approved by the CFX board in December and if it is approved, then this would be a probably next step.

13. Moving I-4 Forward Update

Keith Slater, FDOT, presented a video of the Moving I-4 Forward projects. Mr. Slater covered the projects currently underway along with the planned projects along I-4 that will be starting within the next few years. He indicated the additional lane in each direction which is currently under construction on I-4 from US 27 into Osceola County should be open to traffic very soon.

Vice Chair Roberts McCarley asked about planning the length of the merging lanes to allow traffic to merge seamlessly.
Mr. Slater stated there is a study of where the traffic's origin and destination along with the speed of the traffic.

Commissioner Madden asked about Brightline high speed rail service.
Mr. Slater stated that there is an envelope left open in their plans within the median of Interstate 4 for future rail service.

Mayor Mutz asked about the envelop size for the rail
Mr. Slater stated it will range anywhere from 44 to 49 feet in width.

Chair Pfeiffer noted that driver's decisions ultimately create traffic jams, (for example: an auto tire change along the side the road creating a 30-minute delay). She recommended signage to warn drivers so they will not be as prone to stare at someone working on their vehicle along the side of the road.
Mr. Slater stated Road Rangers are always available to expedite the repairs along the side of the road.

Council Member Greenway asked about the reality of this project being completed and if this will be enough to manage the current and future capacity needs of travelers through Central Florida on I-4.
Mr. Slater stated this is being considered with the addition of the express lanes which adds two extra lanes.

Commissioner Scott asked about traffic staging for traffic coming onto I-4 to allow the flow of traffic on I-4.
Mr. Slater stated that ramp metering would require a much longer ramp and could potentially back up traffic on US 27. It could be a compliance issue. The open ramp concept is a better option right now.

Secretary Nandam stated that ramp metering was studied previously, and it was not found to be a good option.

14. Northeast Polk County Subarea Study

Ryan Kordek, Polk TPO staff, introduced this item by stating this item was intended to complement the previous presentations made on I-4 and the Southport Connecter, as well as the recent presentation and discussion the Board had in February on the Central Polk Parkway. Mr. Kordek stated it was staff's intent to provide a comprehensive overview so the members of the Board and public could get a complete picture of everything that is underway or planned to be underway in the next several years in Northeast Polk County and portions of Osceola and Orange counties. This overview focused on the major or regional highways, and he referred to

a map that illustrates all of the projects and which identifies who is responsible for them, e.g., FDOT, Turnpike, Polk County.

William Roll, Kimley-Horn, presented project updates for the Northeast Polk Subarea Study and Envision 2050 LRTP which included additional road improvements being considered that will support the regional network.

Commissioner Scott asked who is responsible for County Line Road, Polk County or Plant City. Mr. Kordek confirmed Polk County is and has been responsible for County Line Road.

Council Member Greenway asked about the widening of US 27 corridor to SR 60 to the Highland County Line. Mr. Kordek stated the project has been in the Long Range Transportation Plan for many years. It will need to be confirmed with FDOT.

Council Member Greenway made comments about the population growth that is expected in the area and noted that planning is essential due to the projected growth. Mr. Roll stated the Southport Connector will be an asset to assist with the projected growth of this area.

Secretary Nandam stated that US 27 is not the only facility that needs to be considered, and other areas need to be focused upon due to potential growth.

Vice Chair Roberts McCarley stated that connectivity needs to be considered at concurrency reviews, as well.

Commissioner Scott stated that it needs to be planned and to focus on the revenue needed and other revenue streams needs to be considered in order to update and maintain the growth and development.

Secretary Nandam noted, a network that includes the smaller communities.

Council Member Greenway related the connectivity of the communities, but stated there are always going to be major routes/roads to get to and from the county.

Commissioner Santiago asked about the plans for the CPP East's potential location and routes. Mr. Roll explained about the connections to the CPP East is important and these corridors will need significant improvements in order to facilitate the traffic flow.

Mr. Kordek made a statement that there are transit and safety, bike and pedestrian components within the LRTP and the Board will receive a more comprehensive presentation on the needed transportation at their next meeting in June.

Other Action Items

15. Review/Approve Draft TPO Resolution 2025-03 Adopting Performance Targets for Pavement, Bridge and System Performance for the Polk TPO

Ryan Kordek, presented the performance targets of bridge, pavement conditions, and system performance and compared to past performance targets with surrounding counties.

Commissioner Troutman asked if we have any roads that are classified as being in a “poor” condition. Mr. Kordek described the different types of roadway classifications of state highways versus interstate pavement conditions.

Commissioner Scott asked to confirm if adopting this resolution will have added requirements for Polk County roads. Mr. Kordek explained this is applicable to state highways only.

Commissioner Scott then asked about accountability of the state if these guidelines are not met. Secretary Nandam stated that there is more truck traffic due to the growth of warehousing and residences in the county, they have had to designate more funding to maintenance of the roadways.

Motion: Motioned by Mayor Mutz, seconded by Council Member Greenway. Motion carried without dissent.

16. Review/Approve Consultant Services Authorization (CSA) TPO-20-1009-02-05 with Kimley-Horn and Associates, Inc. to Prepare the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan Update (Part Two) at a Cost Not-to-Exceed $230,000.00

Ryan Kordek, presented a scope of services for consultant services that will assist staff to complete the 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan Update called Envision 2050.

Motion: Motioned by Vice Chair Commissioner Roberts McCarley, seconded by Commissioner Troutman. Motion carried without dissent.

Reports

17. Executive Director’s Report

a. Best Foot Forward Program

Ryan Kordek, discussed a new FDOT-funded program called Best Foot Forward which is focused on improving pedestrian safety. Recently there was a meeting held that including local governments and the School Board and the group picked eight (8) crosswalks throughout Polk County to improve driver yield rates at crosswalks. Mr. Kordek stated there will be a more detailed presentation at an upcoming TPO Board meeting.

Ryan also informed the board of a training opportunity for new board members by MPOAC. If members are interested they should contact Ryan for more information.

b. Florida Legislative Update

Julia Davis, Polk TPO Staff, presents an update of the Florida Senate Bill 462 and House Bill 5501.

Secretary Nandam commented on the update to the doc stamp bill explaining that it could have a big impact on funding. He stated there will be planning programming workshops in April through July which will include resurfacing, traffic management, and more. He spoke about Governor DeSantis reclaiming the carbon reduction CARB funding via the DOGE initiative.

18. Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Report

Edith Perez, FDOT, updated the TPO on the Safe Streets for All (SS4A) funding applications deadline closing and a new SS4A funding opportunity open until June 26th.

Edith advised that there will be a Public Meeting April 24th regarding the County Line Road at the Hilton Garden Inn in Lakeland and a virtual meeting April 29th from 5pm-6pm, registration is required to attend.

19. Opportunity for Public Comments

Chairwoman Pfeiffer opened the floor for public comment. Sharon Garrett requested to speak. Ms. Garrett stated concerns about her home with the proposed corridors of the Central Polk parkway (East).

20. Board Members Comments

No member comments.

21. Adjournment – Next meeting date is June 12, 2025.

The meeting adjourned at 11:33 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.