

Agenda

Metropolitan Transportation Planning Organization Board of Directors

January 5, 2026

3:00 pm

County Administration Building - Grace Knight Conference Room 12 SE 1 Street, 2nd Floor,
Gainesville, FL 32601

1. CALL TO ORDER

- Chair Willits calls to order at 3.01pm.

2. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- **Thomas Tuttle**, a resident of Savannah Station, raised concerns about semi-trucks traveling 55 mph through residential areas along NW 235 and NW 235A near the distribution center. He noted that trucks cannot safely make turns without crossing into oncoming lanes or damaging pavement. He proposed creating a designated truck route directing trucks from the distribution center to US 441 and I-75, reducing cut-through traffic toward Lacrosse and nearby neighborhoods.

Board Member Remarks

- Wheeler: Noted ongoing communication with staff (Stuart and Ramon) and emphasized the need to identify alternative truck routes around small towns.
- Commissioner Book: Appreciated the citizen's practical input and highlighted the value of community-driven solutions.

3. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- No announcements

4. ROLL CALL & CONFIRMATION OF QUORUM

Members Present:

- Commissioner Marihelen Wheeler – Alachua County Commission
- Mayor Harvey Ward – City of Gainesville
- Commissioner Ed Book – City of Gainesville
- Commissioner Desmon Duncan-Walker – City of Gainesville
- Commissioner Bryan Eastman – City of Gainesville
- Commissioner Casey Willits – City of Gainesville
- Commissioner Mary Alford – Alachua County Commission
- Commissioner Ken Cornell – Alachua County Commission
- Commissioner Charles “Chuck” Chestnut IV – Alachua County Commission
- Tina Certain – Alachua County School Board Representative

- Adrian Hayes-Santos – Gainesville Regional Airport Representative
- Ms. Taylor – City of Waldo Representative

Members Absent:

- Commissioner Cynthia Moore Chestnut – Alachua County Commission (Chair)
- Commissioner Ingle – City of Gainesville
- Commissioner Anna Prizzia – Alachua County Commission
- University of Florida Representative – Designee of the UF President (NV)

Quorum: Achieved

5. AGENDA REVIEW

- Commissioner Cornell makes a motion to approve the agenda, Commissioner Wheeler seconds.
- Passes unanimously

6. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

- Commissioner Alford makes a motion to approve the minutes, Commissioner Eastman seconds.
- Passes unanimously

7. ACTION ITEMS

7.1 REVIEW AND APPROVE TRANSMITTAL OF TRANSPORTATION

ALTERNATIVES APPLICATION

The MTPO received single application for the Transportation Alternative (TA) grant program, a submittal from the City of Gainesville for Complete Streets and pedestrian safety enhancements for NW 13th St, between University Ave and 5th Ave. The project was identified in both the City of Gainesville Vision Zero Action Plan and University Avenue/13th St Project Development & Environment (PD&E) study.

Staff Recommendation: Approve transmittal of the City of Gainesville's TA application for NW 13th St.

- Ms. Moss provided an overview of the City of Gainesville's TA application for Complete Streets and pedestrian-safety improvements on NW 13th Street.
- Commissioner Willits asked whether the southern crossing is raised. Ms. Moss confirmed the zig-zag raised design improves visibility, while the NW 4th Ave crossing remains at grade.

- Commissioner Book praised the project as a strong Complete Streets design in a high-pedestrian area and asked how closely it must follow the PD&E concept. Ms. Moss said it will remain largely consistent with only minor adjustments.
- Airport Representative Hayes-Santos raised concerns about accessibility of the zig-zag crossing and asked about lighting, median design, and sidewalk buffer options. Ms. Debbie Leistner (City of Gainesville) explained lighting will match University Avenue, medians will be rebuilt, and design details will be evaluated during final design (project at 30%).
- Commissioner Alford supported reallocating median or roadway space to pedestrians and cyclists.
- Commissioner Willits noted a concrete separator currently acts as an informal refuge; Ms. Moss agreed it is not safe in its current condition.
- Hayes-Santos asked about narrowing lane widths; Ms. Leistner said FDOT requires at least one 12-ft lane but other adjustments may be possible.
- Commissioner Cornell voiced strong support for the project, noting it was the only TA application submitted.

Motion:

- Commissioner Cornell moved, Mayor Ward seconded, to approve transmittal of the application with direction to evaluate median and lane-width options.
- Motion passed unanimously.

7.2 PERFORMANCE MEASURES

Florida MPOs must establish performance measure targets annually related to the following areas: Safety, Bridge and Pavement, and System Performance. MPOs must either support statewide target performance measure targets or establish their own by February 27, 2026. Statewide Targets are summarized in the 'Statewide Targets' document, which in turn provides more detailed Fact Sheets for each of the three areas.

Staff Recommendation: Set MTPO Performance Targets consistent with the Florida Department of Transportation Targets (See 'Performance Measures_Statewide Targets' for more information).

- Ms. Moss provided an overview of the MTPO's current status in meeting required performance targets for Safety, Bridge and Pavement, and System Performance.
- Commissioner Ward noted the material is very data-heavy and said he would like the new Executive Director to establish realistic performance goals, particularly for

Safety (Performance Measure 1). He emphasized that Vision Zero remains the goal, but clearer expectations and actionable steps are needed.

- Commissioner Alford agreed, stressing the importance of defining how the MTPO will reach these targets and calling for an action plan that outlines steps and includes community involvement.
- Airport Representative Hayes-Santos also participated in the discussion.
- **Motion:**
- Commissioner Alford moved to approve the staff recommendation to set MTPO Performance Targets consistent with FDOT statewide targets.
- Commissioner Hayes-Santos seconded.
- Motion passed.

7.3 **AMEND UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (UPWP)**

The Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) must be amended to reflect recent staffing changes, namely the replacement of an Interim Executive Director (Alison Moss) with a permanent Executive Director (Anoch Whitfield). FDOT has also requested that the UPWP retain Alison Moss as 'Deputy Executive Director' for the remainder of the Fiscal Year (Through June 30, 2026) to assist with the transition.

Staff Recommendation: Amend UPWP to reflect staffing changes and allow for continued support by Alachua County during transition (through FY 26/June 30, 2026):

- *Add Anoch Whitfield, Executive Director*
- *Revise title for Alison Moss: Deputy Executive Director*
- *Remove Jeffrey Hays*

Motion:

- Ms Moss provides an overview.
- Commissioner Wheeler moves to approve and Representative Hayes- Santos seconds.
- Motion passes.

7.4 **INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT BETWEEN ALACHUA COUNTY AND MTPO - COUNTYWIDE BICYCLE PEDESTRIAN MASTER PLAN**

An Interlocal Agreement between the MTPO and Alachua County is needed to authorize a contract amendment and raise the contract ceiling for the Countywide Bicycle Pedestrian Master Plan ("the Bike-Ped Plan"). The MTPO Board approved a Unified Planning Work Program amendment on October 6, 2025 to add \$100,000 to Task 5, Special Project

Planning to fund this expanded scope and increase the total maximum project budget to \$354,700, but the existing Interlocal Agreement includes a not to exceed contract value of \$254,700.

Staff Recommendation: Approve the Interlocal Agreement (ILA) 14958 between Alachua County and the MTPO.

Ms. Moss provided an overview of the need to amend the Interlocal Agreement to raise the contract ceiling for the Countywide Bicycle and Pedestrian Master Plan.

- Commissioners Alford and Eastman asked clarifying questions regarding scrivener errors in the agreement.
- Commissioner Willits noted the Board had already approved the funding in the budget, and this action simply finalizes the agreement.
- Ms. Moss explained the amendment is required because the MTPO is the reimbursing entity and the agreement must reflect the updated project cost.
- School Board Representative asked whether Scott Koons's name would be removed; Ms. Moss clarified that Mr. Koons' name only appeared in the previous ILA, not the pending version.
- Ms. Moss further noted that once the MTPO transitions to its own staffing, similar Interlocal Agreements may no longer be needed; the MTPO will contract with vendors directly.
- Commissioner Willits stated that the Board should expect fewer Interlocal approvals of this type in the future.

Motion:

Commissioner Alford moved, Commissioner Eastman seconded approval of Interlocal Agreement (ILA 14958).

Motion passed.

7.5 CITIZEN ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC) APPOINTMENTS

The Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC) shall function as provided in Section 339.175(6)(e)1 and (8)(b), Florida Statutes, and as otherwise directed by the MTPO Board. The CAC currently has 10 vacancies. The CAC membership is subject to appointment by the MTPO Board and serves at the pleasure of the MTPO Board. The membership on the CAC must reflect a broad cross-section of local residents with an interest in the development of an efficient, safe, and cost-effective multimodal transportation system.

Minorities, the elderly, and the handicapped must be adequately represented as well as representatives and users of various transportation modes.

Staff Recommendation: Appoint the following three applicants to the CAC (applications attached):

- *Christopher Potts*
- *David Loveland*
- *Robert Hickernell*
- Ms. Moss provided an overview of the three applicants recommended for appointment to the Citizens Advisory Committee, noting that Mr. Loveland had passed away since the publication of the agenda.
- Commissioner Book stated that all three applicants bring valuable expertise to the committee.

Motion:

- Commissioner Book moved, Commissioner Duncan-Walker seconded the appointment of Christopher Potts and Robert Hickernell to the CAC.
- Motion passed.

8. INFORMATION ITEMS

8.1 TMA CERTIFICATION (FHWA) & JOINT CERTIFICATION (FDOT)

Ms. Moss provided an overview of the upcoming federal (FHWA) and state (FDOT) certification processes for the MTPO.

- Commissioner Cornell noted that the MTPO's expansion to a countywide scope will be an important factor in the certification review.
- Ms. Moss highlighted recent successes and encouraged Board members to help communicate these achievements publicly.
- Commissioner Wheeler commended staff, stating she "can't imagine a more powerful team" to lead the process.
- Ms. Moss explained that the MTPO completes a 20-page questionnaire and thanked FDOT for its assistance.
- She asked about the timing of the joint certification.

- FDOT Representative Achia clarified that the review is annual, beginning in January and concluding by June 30 each year.
- Commissioner Cornell confirmed this aligns with when the Board typically receives the certification letter.

8.2 UNIFIED PLANNING WORK PROGRAM (FISCAL YEARS 27-28)

Ms. Moss provided an overview of the development process for the FY 27–28 Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP).

- Commissioner Cornell discussed the de-obligation and reallocation of prior-year funds.
- Ms. Moss noted the funds are from previous fiscal years and will be rolled forward into the next UPWP cycle.
- FDOT Representative, Achaia Brown, explained that agencies review their two-year budgets and determine how much funding—potentially up to \$1 million—should be carried forward into the new contract period beginning in October, supporting new planning studies.
- Ms. Moss commented that the future burn rate will be much more aggressive, especially in the first year.
- Commissioner Willits asked about the schedule.
 - Ms. Moss stated they are aiming to bring a draft in February, with a full review by the Board in March.

8.3 NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR UPDATE

Ms. Moss provided an update on the transition to the new MTPO Executive Director.

- Commissioner Eastman reported that he spoke with the incoming Executive Director, who is excited about the position and requested time to wrap up her current obligations; her start date has been set for January 20.
- Commissioner Cornell asked where the new Director will be housed.
 - Ms. Moss stated she will be located within Growth Management.
- Airport Representative Hayes-Santos requested a copy of her contract.
 - Ms. Moss clarified that there is no contract, and Commissioner Eastman added he had directed her to contact HR.

- Ms. Moss said she would look further into the matter for the Board.
- Commissioner Willits expressed enthusiasm about her arrival.
- Ms. Moss noted the new Director plans to be in the area on the 12th.
- Waldo Representative asked whether the incoming Director could reach out to Mr. Pedron (the prior candidate) to discuss involvement.
 - Ms. Moss explained that would depend on the established process and that outreach initiated solely through a letter would not be appropriate.
 - Commissioner Willits added that she will be expected to follow established HR policies.

8.4 MTPO FINANCIALS

Ms. Moss provided an update on the MTPO’s financial status, noting that the organization now has its own financials—or is in the final stages of establishing them.

- Commissioner Willits thanked Commissioner Alford (as Chair of the Regional Planning Council) and Ms. Moss for their work on resolving financial matters.
- Airport Representative Hayes-Santos requested confirmation that there is nothing outstanding.
- Ms. Moss stated that all issues have been resolved.
- Commissioner Cornell noted that Ms. Brown had given a “thumbs up” on the financial transition.
- Ms. Moss added that the next meeting will include a larger table and improved equipment.

9. AGENCY REPORTS / PARTNER UPDATES

No updates.

10. UPCOMING MEETINGS OF INTEREST

Ms. Moss provides overview.

- TAC/CAC Meeting - January 27, 2025
- MTPO Board Meeting - February 2, 2026
- Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council (MPOAC)

- January 28, 2026

- Florida Metropolitan Planning Partnership (FMPP) - January 29, 2026

11. MEMBER COMMENTS

- Commissioner Cornell requested an update on paratransit services.
- Commissioner Willits noted he had no additional comments.
- Commissioner Alford remarked on how significantly the nature of MTPO meetings has changed, stating the organization operates very differently now and expressing pride in staff for their hard work.
- Commissioner Wheeler asked about the University of Florida's absence.
- Ms. Moss explained that UF's former representative, Ms. Linda Dixon, has changed positions but may continue as liaison; she will follow up to confirm the appropriate contact.
- Commissioner Wheeler also reported that Levy County Commissioners denied the sand plant proposal, and voters opposed it as well. She noted a batch plant remains in the area and may impact traffic.
- Commissioner Cornell requested adding the paratransit issue to a future agenda.
- School Board Representative stated that MV Transportation is still operating.
 - Commissioner Cornell responded that the operator is required to give formal notice of any changes.
 - Commissioner Eastman noted the matter arose during the first quarter.
 - Commissioner Cornell referenced March 1 as the relevant date.
- Commissioner Willits stated he will send a letter to Mr. Loveland's family thanking them for his willingness to serve on the CAC.

12. PUBLIC COMMENTS (GENERAL)

Thomas Tuttle returned to reiterate concerns about heavy truck traffic moving through residential areas. He emphasized that a bypass is becoming inevitable, noting that Walmart dispatchers identified SR 236 as a preferred route and citing truck volumes serving large facilities (e.g., Walmart with 900+ trucks, Dollar General with 700+). He stressed that fast-moving trucks continue to create safety issues in neighborhoods.

- Commissioner Cornell encouraged Mr. Tuttle to share the same presentation with the City of Alachua Commission, noting it would be important for them to hear directly.

- Mr. Tuttle stated he has already spoken with the Sheriff's Office and scheduled meetings with county commissioners. He added that the city manager advised him to first present to the city council before bringing the issue forward to additional authorities.

13. ADJOURNMENT