

FLORIDA-ALABAMA TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION (TPO)

MEETING MINUTES

EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL (Designated Staff)

Bayview Community Center 2001 E Lloyd St, Pensacola, FL 32503

May 13, 2026

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Steven Barry, Chair	Escambia County
Kerry Smith	Santa Rosa County
JB Schluter	City of Gulf Breeze
Heather Lindsay	City of Milton
Charles Bare	City of Pensacola
Allison Patton	City of Pensacola
Delarian Wiggins	City of Pensacola
Rhett Rowell	Santa Rosa County
Ray Eddington	Santa Rosa County
Bobby Burkett	Santa Rosa County

MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE:

Charles F. Gruber	Baldwin County
Ashley Hofberger	Escambia County
Steve Stroberger	Escambia County
Mike Kohler	Escambia County
Lumon May	Escambia County
Jerry Johnson	City of Orange Beach
Casey Jones	City of Pensacola
Jared Moore	City of Pensacola
Colten Wright	Santa Rosa County

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE

Bryant Paulk	FDOT
Vincent Beebe	ALDOT
Marilyn Farah	City of Milton – Council Member
Wendy Gavin	City of Pensacola
Mary Beth Washnock	Gund Management Group
Tom Powers	City of Milton
Scott Davidson	Hurlburt Field
Larry McKee	City of Milton – Council Member
Cory Wilkinson	HDR
Jacob Hullett	City of Milton
Ethan Brosnahan	City of Milton
Reni Johnmeyer	Citizen
Cindy Smith	Citizen

Harriett Blount	Citizen
Chris Phillips	Jacobs
Don Christian	Escambia County
Carolyn Grawi	Center for Independent Living
Marilynn Farrow	City of Milton
Marilyn Farah	City of Milton
Yolanda Cooper	Ride!TL Cares
Harold Guttin, Jr.	Ride!TL Cares
Terrence Nelson	Ride!TL Cares

EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL STAFF

Kandase Lee
Tiffany Bates
Rae Emary
Leandra Meredith
Tammy Neal
Gabrielle McVoy
Jill Nobles
Gary Kramer
Dawn Shwartz
Eric Christianson

CALL TO ORDER/INVOCATION/PLEDGE/BOARD MEMBER ROLL CALL

Chair Steven Barry called the meeting to order. Commissioner Kerry Smith delivered the invocation, and members recited the Pledge of Allegiance.

The meeting initially began without a quorum present. Following the arrival of additional board members during Public Forum, a quorum was established and action items proceeded.

PUBLIC FORUM

Cindy Smith – Pace Resident - Cindy Smith addressed the board regarding transportation and infrastructure concerns in Santa Rosa County, stating that residents increasingly feel transportation improvements within the county are being delayed while projects elsewhere continue to advance.

Cindy Smith emphasized that transportation infrastructure, public safety, and mobility directly affect quality of life. She referenced recent fatalities and traffic incidents within Santa Rosa County and expressed concern regarding emergency response times and increasing congestion. She urged elected officials and transportation agencies to advocate more aggressively for infrastructure improvements and to prioritize transportation projects serving the Pace and Milton areas.

Councilwoman Marilyn Farrow – City of Milton - Councilwoman Marilyn Farrow thanked the board for its service and requested consideration of moving the U.S. 90 widening project higher on the TPO's list of priorities. Councilwoman Farrow discussed increasing congestion in Milton and surrounding areas and stated that improvements to U.S. 90 are critical to public safety, mobility, and economic development. She encouraged the TPO to elevate the project's priority ranking so it may advance more quickly through the funding process.

Carolyn Grawi – Center for Independent Living - Carolyn Grawi addressed the board regarding the upcoming transition of Escambia County's Community Transportation Coordinator responsibilities. Ms. Grawi stressed the importance of maintaining uninterrupted transportation services for residents with disabilities and encouraged a smooth transition should RideITL Cares become the designated provider. She expressed the importance of collaboration between Escambia County, RideITL Cares, and community stakeholders to ensure continued service quality and accessibility.

Councilman Larry McKee – City of Milton - Councilman Larry McKee spoke in support of advancing the U.S. 90 widening project. Councilman McKee stated that increasing traffic volumes and congestion continue to create safety concerns for motorists, school transportation operations, and emergency responders. He noted that incidents on Interstate 10 frequently divert traffic onto U.S. 90, creating significant standstills and backups through Milton. Councilman McKee encouraged the board to elevate the project's priority ranking and stated that the widening project is critical to improving mobility, public safety, and future economic growth within the Milton area.

FDOT Update – Bryant Paulk, AICP., FDOT

Bryant Paulk reported that FDOT is advancing a resurfacing project along the Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard and Davis Highway corridor in Escambia County. The project includes ADA improvements and is currently in design with a scheduled letting date in May 2027.

Bryant Paulk also announced a new traffic signal project at U.S. 98 and Bergren Road in Santa Rosa County. Construction is anticipated to begin in August 2026 with an estimated construction cost of approximately \$1.1 million.

Bryant Paulk discussed FDOT's continued efforts to advance capacity improvements along the U.S. 98 corridor. He reported that approximately \$10 million in Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) funding has been programmed for right-of-way acquisition on a segment west of Hurlburt Field. FDOT continues evaluating additional segmented approaches to advance other portions of the corridor as funding becomes available.

Board members briefly discussed funding sources and the use of SIS dollars to advance right-of-way acquisition efforts.

ALDOT Update – Vincent Beebe, P.E., ALDOT

Vincent Beebe reported that construction activities associated with the State Route 161 corridor project continue to progress. The new bridge crossing the Intracoastal Waterway has opened and final construction activities are anticipated to be completed shortly.

Vince Beebe also reported that ALDOT has completed alternatives analysis for improvements at the intersection of State Route 180 and State Route 161 and is moving toward selecting a preferred alternative for design.

FDEP UPDATE

No representative from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection was present.

DRMP ITS Presentation - Summer Beach Monitoring Update – Deston Taylor, DRMP

Participating virtually, Deston Taylor presented an update regarding beach traffic monitoring activities. Deston Taylor reviewed historical traffic data and reported continued increases in high-volume beach traffic days. He explained that the threshold of 20,000 vehicles per day is generally considered the point at which significant congestion and parking constraints begin to occur. Deston Taylor reported that 2025 experienced a notable increase in days exceeding the 20,000-vehicle threshold. As of early May 2026, twenty such days had already occurred.

Additional analysis showed that high-volume traffic days are no longer limited to weekends and now occur throughout the week. Deston Taylor reviewed monthly and daily traffic patterns and discussed ongoing monitoring efforts that assist local governments and transportation agencies in evaluating beach access and congestion management strategies. Board members discussed the value of the monitoring program and its role in supporting future transportation planning effort.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Council Member Bare moved to approve the agenda as provided. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Smith, and it was unanimously approved.

CONSENT:

- 1. ALL COMMITTEES - Approval of February 2026 Meeting Minutes**
- 2. ALL COMMITTEES – Consideration of Resolution FL-AL 26-14 Adopting the Fiscal Year (FY) 2027 – FY 2028 Florida-Alabama Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) – *Kandase Lee, ECRC CEO***

Kandase Lee presented the FY 2027–FY 2028 Unified Planning Work Program. Kandase Lee explained that the UPWP serves as the TPO's statement of work and identifies transportation planning activities, responsible parties, schedules, and funding sources for the upcoming two-year period.

The Board was advised that the document had been reviewed by FDOT, ALDOT, FHWA, and FTA and includes work activities related to program development, long-range transportation planning, data collection and management, short-range transportation planning, studies and corridor planning efforts, public involvement activities, and Alabama planning coordination.

Board members briefly discussed amendments reflected within the document and acknowledged that the revisions had previously been reviewed by the advisory committees.

Council Member Wiggins moved to approve the February 2026 meeting minutes and to authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution FL-AL 26-14 adopting the FY 2027–FY 2028 Unified Planning Work Program and authorizing execution of the associated FDOT agreement. Council Member Bare seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

ACTION:

- 1. ENCLOSURE A – ALL COMMITTEES – ROLL CALL VOTE – Consideration of Resolution FL-AL 26-09 Amending the FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program to Add the Construction Cost for Benny Russell Park from Benny Russell Park to Hamilton Lane Multi-Use Path Project for Financial Project Identification (FPID) Number 4573521 in FY 2026/2027 at a Total Cost of \$410,178- *Bryant Paulk, AICP, FDOT***

Chair Barry noted that Resolutions FL-AL 26-09 through FL-AL 26-13 were all Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) amendments presented by FDOT. By consensus of the Board, the five TIP amendment resolutions would be considered together and voted on as a single action item.

Bryant Paulk presented Resolution FL-AL 26-09, explaining that the amendment would add construction funding for the Benny Russell Park to Hamilton Lane Multi-Use Path project under Financial Project Identification Number 457352-1. He noted that the project would add a multi-use facility intended to improve connectivity and provide enhanced pedestrian and bicycle accommodations within the project area. The amendment adds \$410,178 in construction funding to the Transportation Improvement Program.

- 2. ENCLOSURE B – ALL COMMITTEES – ROLL CALL VOTE – Consideration of Resolution FL-AL 26-10 Amending the FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program to Add the Construction Cost for North Hayne Street from East Blount Street to East Avery Street Hollice T. Williams Storm Water Park Community Connector Under Interstate-110 Project for Financial Project**

Identification (FPID) Number 4582681 in FY 2025/2026 at a Total Cost of \$10,000,000- Bryant Paulk, AICP, FDOT

Bryant Paulk explained that the amendment would add \$10,000,000 in construction funding for the North Hayne Street Community Connector project extending from East Blount Street to East Avery Street and connecting to the Hollice T. Williams Stormwater Park area. He noted that the project will improve multimodal connectivity, provide safer access between neighborhoods, and enhance transportation connections through the corridor.

3. ENCLOSURE C - ALL COMMITTEES - ROLL CALL VOTE -Consideration of Resolution FL-AL 26-11 Amending the FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program to Add the Construction Cost for the Deaton Bridge Drive Railroad Crossing #339779Y Safety Project for Financial Project Identification (FPID) Number 4582641 in FY 2025/2026 at a Total Cost of \$110,802 - Bryant Paulk, AICP, FDOT

Bryant Paulk explained that the project would provide safety improvements at Railroad Crossing #339779Y located on Deaton Bridge Drive. The amendment adds \$110,802 in construction funding during Fiscal Year 2025/2026. He stated that the project is intended to improve railroad crossing safety through upgraded warning devices and associated safety enhancements.

4. ENCLOSURE D - ALL COMMITTEES - ROLL CALL VOTE - Consideration of Resolution FL-AL 26-12 Amending the FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program to Add the Construction Cost for Guidy Lane over Unnamed Branch Bridge No. 484023 Bridge Replacement Project for Financial Project Identification (FPID) Number 4489672 in FY 2026/2027 at a Total Cost of \$4,738,655- Bryant Paulk, AICP, FDOT

Bryant Paulk explained that the amendment adds \$4,738,655 in construction funding for replacement of Bridge No. 484023 on Guidy Lane. The project will replace the existing structure and improve safety and resiliency along the corridor.

5. ENCLOSURE E - ALL COMMITTEES - ROLL CALL VOTE - Consideration of Resolution FL-AL 26-13 Amending the FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program to Add the Construction Cost for Industrial Boulevard Railroad Crossing #353876S Safety Project for Financial Project Identification (FPID) Number 4562651 in FY 2025/2026 at a Total Cost of \$115,019- Bryant Paulk, AICP, FDOT

Bryant Paulk explained that the amendment would add \$115,019 in construction funding for safety improvements at Railroad Crossing #353876S located on Industrial Boulevard. The project includes railroad crossing safety upgrades intended to reduce potential conflicts between vehicles and rail traffic and improve overall transportation safety within the corridor.

Commissioner Burkett moved to authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution FL-AL 26-09, Resolution FL-AL 26-10, Resolution FL-AL 26-11, Resolution FL-AL 26-12, and Resolution FL-AL 26-13. Council Member Bare seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Steven Barry – Yes
Kerry Smith – Yes
JB Schluter – Yes
Heather Lindsay – Yes
Charles Bare – Yes
Allison Patton – Yes
Delarian Wiggins – Yes
Rhett Rowell – Yes
Ray Eddington – Yes
Bobby Burkett – Yes

The motion was unanimously approved.

6. ENCLOSURE F – ALL COMMITTEES – (ROLL CALL VOTE AND PUBLIC HEARING) – Consideration of Resolution FL-AL 26-08 Adopting the Florida-Alabama TPO FY 2027-2031 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) – Gary Kramer, ECRC Staff
Gary Kramer presented the FY 2027-2031 Transportation Improvement Program.

Gary Kramer explained that development of the TIP began with adoption of the TPO's project priorities and continued through FDOT's development of the Tentative Work Program. The draft TIP was completed and made available for public review on April 20, 2026, with comments accepted through May 8, 2026.

Gary Kramer noted that both the TCC and CAC reviewed the document and recommended approval. The TIP incorporates federally and state-funded transportation projects anticipated during the five-year planning period and serves

as the implementation document for transportation investments throughout the region.

Chair Barry opened the public hearing. No public comments were received. Chair Barry closed the public hearing.

Council Member Bare moved to authorize the TPO Chair to sign Resolution FL-AL 26-08 adopting the FY 2027-2031 Transportation Improvement Program. Council Member Wiggins seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Steven Barry – Yes
Kerry Smith – Yes
JB Schluter – Yes
Heather Lindsay – Yes
Charles Bare – Yes
Allison Patton – Yes
Delarian Wiggins – Yes
Rhett Rowell – Yes
Ray Eddington – Yes
Bobby Burkett – Yes

The motion was unanimously approved.

7. ENCLOSURE G – ALL COMMITTEES – ROLL CALL VOTE – Consideration of Resolution FL-AL 26-07 Adopting the FL-AL FY 2028-2032 Project Priorities – *Gary Kramer, ECRC Staff*

Gary Kramer reviewed recommended revisions to the FY 2028–2032 Project Priorities resulting from public comments, stakeholder input, and coordination with FDOT and local governments. Recommended changes included revisions to funding requests for Non-SIS priorities, clarification of transportation planning study priorities, updating the U.S. 98 Multimodal Overpass project phase to construction, correcting Blue Angel Parkway project descriptions from six lanes to four lanes, and adding four Transportation System Management projects requested by the City of Pensacola. Both the Technical Coordinating Committee and Citizens' Advisory Committee recommended approval of the project priorities with the proposed revisions.

During discussion of the FY 2028–2032 Non-Strategic Intermodal System (Non-SIS) Project Priorities, Mayor Heather Lindsay proposed modifications to the

recommended rankings to increase the priority of the U.S. 90 (SR 87 North) project from Stewart Street to CR 89 (Ward Basin Road). Mayor Lindsay stated that significant public interest had been expressed regarding transportation needs in Santa Rosa County and thanked TPO staff for their assistance throughout the prioritization process.

Mayor Lindsay initially proposed moving the Sorrento Road project to the fourth position, the U.S. 90 project to the fifth position, retaining the U.S. 29 Connector project in the sixth position, and moving the Nine Mile Road project from Mobile Highway to Pine Forest Road to the seventh position.

Chair Barry noted that the Nine Mile Road project had advanced further than several other projects because it does not have significant right-of-way needs and questioned moving it lower in the rankings. Chair Barry indicated he would support moving the U.S. 29 Connector project lower in the rankings but expressed concern regarding both the Nine Mile Road and Sorrento Road projects. He further noted that Sorrento Road remains an important safety concern for Escambia County and that several board members with a strong interest in the corridor were not present.

Mayor Lindsay explained that she intentionally did not propose moving U.S. 90 above Sorrento Road due to the public safety concerns associated with that corridor and stated that safety should remain the Board's primary consideration. Chair Barry then suggested retaining the Nine Mile Road project in the sixth position and moving the U.S. 29 Connector project to seventh. Mayor Lindsay accepted the suggestion as a friendly amendment.

Commissioner Smith subsequently expressed support for moving the U.S. 90 project even higher in the rankings. Commissioner Smith discussed increasing traffic congestion within Santa Rosa County, particularly in the Milton area, ongoing economic development activity east of Milton, and the need to advance the U.S. 90 project more aggressively. Commissioner Smith noted that local governments continue pursuing right-of-way funding opportunities and emphasized the importance of improving the corridor before future traffic demands increase further.

Board members discussed recent safety improvements implemented along Sorrento Road, including paved shoulders, intersection improvements, and other safety enhancements. FDOT staff indicated that the additional improvements are expected to significantly improve safety conditions along the corridor.

Following discussion, Mayor Lindsay agreed to amend her motion to move the U.S. 90 (SR 87 North) project to the fourth position and the Sorrento Road project to the fifth position. The revised ranking also retained the Nine Mile Road project in the sixth position and moved the U.S. 29 Connector project to the seventh position.

Mayor Lindsay thanked the Board for its continued support of efforts to move U.S. 90 onto the Strategic Intermodal System and indicated she would continue advocating for the project in the future.

Commissioner Smith moved to authorize the TPO Chair to sign Resolution FL-AL 26-07 adopting the FY 2028-2032 Project Priorities as amended. Mayor Lindsay seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote

Steven Barry – Yes
Kerry Smith – Yes
JB Schluter – Yes
Heather Lindsay – Yes
Charles Bare – Yes
Allison Patton – Yes
Delarian Wiggins – Yes
Rhett Rowell – Yes
Ray Eddington – Yes
Bobby Burkett – Yes

The motion was unanimously approved.

8. ENCLOSURE H – ALL COMMITTEES – Consideration of Resolution FL-AL 26-17 Amending the Fiscal Year (FY) 2025 – FY 2026 Florida-Alabama Transportation Planning Organization (TPO) Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP) to De-obligate PL and SU Funds – *Kandase Lee, ECRC CEO*

Kandase Lee explained that this amendment would de-obligate federal Planning (PL) and Surface Transportation Urban (SU) funds that will not be expended during the current fiscal cycle. The action is necessary to ensure that federal funding balances accurately reflect completed work activities and available funding.

Board members discussed the timing of the de-obligation process and how unused funds may be addressed in future planning efforts. Staff explained that the

amendment is primarily administrative in nature and reflects normal year-end financial management practices.

Council Member Bare moved to authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution FL-AL 26-17 amending the FY 2025-FY 2026 Unified Planning Work Program. Council Member Wiggins seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

9. ENCLOSURE I – ALL COMMITTEES – Consideration of Resolution FL-AL 26-20 Authorizing the Chair to Execute the Revised Joint Participation Agreement Between Florida Department of Transportation and the FL-AL TPO – *Kandase Lee, ECRC CEO*

Kandase Lee explained that FDOT periodically updates Joint Participation Agreements to ensure consistency with current federal and state requirements. The revised agreement outlines responsibilities related to transportation planning activities, funding administration, reporting requirements, and coordination between FDOT and the TPO.

Board members discussed the updated agreement and the continued partnership between the Florida-Alabama TPO and FDOT. Staff advised that the revisions were largely administrative and did not substantially alter the TPO's planning responsibilities.

Council Member Bare moved to authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution FL-AL 26-20 authorizing execution of the revised Joint Participation Agreement. Commissioner Burkett seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

10. ENCLOSURE J – ALL COMMITTEES – Consideration of Resolution FL-AL 26-18 Adopting the Scope of Services for the Florida-Alabama TPO Regional Freight Network Plan — Highways of Commerce Update- *Eric Christianson, ECRC Staff*

Eric Christianson presented the proposed scope of services for the Regional Freight Network Plan, also known as the Highways of Commerce Update, explaining that the study will evaluate freight movement throughout the Florida-Alabama TPO planning area and identify transportation improvements necessary to support economic development, freight efficiency, and regional mobility. The effort will update previous freight planning work and evaluate changes in freight patterns, logistics activity, industrial development, and transportation infrastructure needs.

Eric Christianson noted that stakeholder outreach will be an important component of the study and will include coordination with local governments, freight operators, economic development organizations, and transportation partners.

Council Member Bare moved to authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution FL-AL 26-18 adopting the Regional Freight Network Plan Scope of Services. Commissioner Burkett seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

11. ENCLOSURE K – ALL COMMITTEES – Consideration of Resolution FL-AL 26-16 Adopting the Pace Boulevard (SR 292) Corridor Management Plan (CMP) from Barrancas Avenue to West Fairfield Drive and Endorsing Implementation of Transportation Strategies and Projects Identified in the Plan – *Cory Wilkinson, HDR Staff*

Cory Wilkinson of HDR presented the Pace Boulevard Corridor Management Plan, explaining that the plan evaluates transportation operations, safety conditions, access management opportunities, and multimodal improvements along the Pace Boulevard corridor between Barrancas Avenue and West Fairfield Drive. The study identified several recommendations designed to improve traffic flow, safety, pedestrian accessibility, bicycle accommodations, and corridor operations. He advised that both the TCC and CAC reviewed the plan and recommended approval.

Council Member Bare moved to adopt the Pace Boulevard Corridor Management Plan and to authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution FL-AL 26-16. Council Member Wiggins seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

12. ENCLOSURE L – TPO ONLY – Consideration of Resolution FL-AL 26-15 Recommending RideITL Cares, Inc. as the Designated Single Community Transportation Coordinator for Escambia County – *Howard Vaselow, ECRC Staff*

Howard Vanselow explained that the Escambia County Board of County Commissioners previously served as the designated Community Transportation Coordinator (CTC) for Escambia County but voted on February 5, 2026, to relinquish that responsibility. Escambia County agreed to continue operations through June 30, 2026, to prevent service interruptions while a replacement provider was identified.

Howard Vanselow advised that TPO staff issued a Request for Proposals on March 10, 2026. While several organizations expressed interest, RideITL Cares submitted the only complete proposal.

Staff reviewed the proposal and determined that RideITL Cares met the requirements necessary to serve as the Community Transportation Coordinator. Board members discussed the importance of maintaining uninterrupted transportation services for transit-dependent populations, seniors, individuals with disabilities, and other eligible riders. Several speakers during Public Forum also expressed support for ensuring a smooth transition of services.

Council Member Bare moved to authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution FL-AL 26-15 recommending RideITL Cares, Inc. as the designated Community Transportation Coordinator for Escambia County. Council Member Wiggins seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

13. ENCLOSURE M – ALL COMMITTEES – Nomination and Election of TPO Board, TCC, and CAC Chair and Vice Chair for FY 2027 – *Kandase Lee, ECRC CEO*

Kandase Lee presented the annual officer election process. Mayor Lindsay requested Chair Steven Barry to continue as chair and Commissioner Smith to continue as vice chair.

Mayor Lindsay moved to elect Escambia County Commissioner Steven Barry as FL-AL TPO chair for Fiscal Year 2027, and Santa Rosa County Commissioner Kerry Smith to serve as vice chair. Commissioner Burkett seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

INFORMATION ITEMS - (no presentation necessary)

1. TCC and CAC February 2026 Meeting Minutes
2. Amendment to the FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP) Letter
3. FDOT MPO Joint Certification
4. 2026 FL-AL TPO Meeting Schedule

OTHER BUSINESS - The next Florida – Alabama TPO meeting will be held on **Wednesday, August 12, 2026, at 9:00 a.m.** Advisory committee meetings will be held on Tuesday, August 11, 2026. The TCC will meet at 10:00 a.m. and CAC will meet at 1:30 p.m. All meetings will be held at the **Gulf Breeze Community Center; 800 Shoreline Dr, Gulf Breeze, FL**

ADJOURNMENT