

OKALOOSA – WALTON CITIZENS' ADVISORY COMMITTEE (CAC)
MEETING MINUTES
Chautauqua Building, 95 Circle Drive in DeFuniak Springs.
February 19, 2026

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Robert J. Rennie, Vice Chair	Fort Walton Beach
Yvonne Earle	Fort Walton Beach
Matthew Cox	City of Niceville
Yvonne Shanklin	City of Crestview
Bill Cox	City of Crestview
Anthony Vallee	City of DeFuniak Springs
Celeste Cobena	Walton County
Neill O'Connell	Walton County
Mike Panarisi	City of Niceville
<i><u>Virtual Attendance</u></i>	
Kirby Locklear	City of Fort Walton Beach

MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE:

Amy Jamieson, Chair	Fort Walton Beach
Steven J. Czonstka	City of Niceville
Chance Leavins	City of Crestview
Steven Place	Okaloosa County
Harrison Harsch	Okaloosa County
Megan Harrison	Walton County

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Christy Johnson	FDOT
Cory Wilkinson	HDR
Joshua DeVries	HDR
Cassidy Haney	FDEP
<i><u>Virtual Attendance</u></i>	
Wanjiku Jackson	Citizen

EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL STAFF:

Kandase Lee
Tiffany Bates
Rae Emary
Jill Nobles
Tammy Neal
Leandra Meredith
Gabrielle McVoy
Virtual Attendance
Gary Kramer

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE

Vice Chair Robert J. Rennie called the meeting to order and presided as Chair in Amy Jamieson's absence.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA – TPO Only

PUBLIC FORUM

FDOT UPDATES:

Christy Johnson provided an update regarding the resurfacing project along State Road 85 from U.S. 98 to Richburg Avenue, noting that work had just begun and that FDOT would continue to provide updates as construction progresses.

Anthony Vallee commented that resurfacing work in the area had taken a long time to complete and noted concerns about the elevation of several manhole covers along the roadway. He explained that some covers appeared to be slightly recessed or settled below pavement level, which could create issues for vehicles traveling along the corridor. Anthony Vallee also asked for an update on the Sun Trails project, noting that it may intersect with future LRTP discussions and could affect the prioritization of certain projects such as a proposed pedestrian bridge already listed in the LRTP.

FDEP UPDATE

Cassidy Haynes with the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Office of Greenways and Trails provided an update regarding statewide trail planning efforts. Cassidy Haynes explained that status maps for the state's fourteen regional trail systems had recently been updated to reflect stakeholder engagement and project progress across the state.

Cassidy Haynes noted that the maps are updated approximately every five to ten years and that the most recent update began in August and concluded toward the end of the year. The maps include projects across the north, central, and south regions of Florida and were coordinated with partners such as the Emerald Coast Regional Council.

Cassidy Haynes informed the committee that the updated maps would soon be available online and offered to assist members interested in reviewing the status of specific regional trail segments.

CONSENT AGENDA:

1. ALL COMMITTEES: Approval of the November 2025 Meeting Minutes

Anthony Vallee moved to approve the consent agenda. Matthew Cox seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

ACTION ITEMS:

- 1. ENCLOSURE A – ALL COMMITTEES – ROLL CALL VOTE - Consideration of Resolution O-W 26-04 Amending the FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program to Add the Preliminary Engineering (PE) Phase for Valley Road from SR 10 (US 90) to Stillwell Boulevard, a Sidewalk Project, for Financial Project Identification (FPID) Number 4573561 in FY 2026/2027 at a Total Cost of \$180,237 - *Bryant Paulk, AICP, FDOT***

Christy Johnson presented Resolution O-W 26-04, which proposes amending the FY 2026–2030 Transportation Improvement Program to add the Preliminary Engineering phase for the Valley Road sidewalk project from SR 10 (U.S. 90) to Stillwell Boulevard. Christy Johnson explained that the project will utilize Transportation Alternatives funding and that the amendment allows FDOT to program design funds beginning in Fiscal Year 2027.

Anthony Vallee moved to recommend the TPO authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution O-W 26-04 amending the FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program. The motion was seconded by Matthew Cox, and it was unanimously approved.

- 2. ENCLOSURE B – ALL COMMITTEES – Consideration of Resolution O-W 26-01 Approving the Okaloosa-Walton TPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Goals and Objectives - *Jill Nobles, ECRC Staff***

Jill Nobles explained that the LRTP is updated every five years and outlines transportation priorities through the year 2050. She stated that the goals and objectives serve as guiding principles for the LRTP and are based on federal planning factors, state guidance, and regional planning documents.

During discussion, Mike Panarisi asked whether the classification and use of e-bikes would be addressed within the LRTP goals and objectives. Staff clarified that e-bike policy would be addressed more specifically within the Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Trail Master Plan rather than within the LRTP goals themselves.

Additional discussion occurred regarding the relationship between goals and objectives, and the evaluation criteria used to score projects. Members asked whether each objective would correspond directly to scoring criteria during project prioritization. Staff explained that the evaluation criteria are based on measurable factors derived from the goals and objectives, but not every objective can be quantified for scoring purposes.

Matthew Cox moved to recommend the TPO authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution O-W 26-01 approving the Okaloosa-Walton TPO 2050 LRTP Goals and Objectives. The motion was seconded by Mike Panarisi, and it was unanimously approved.

3. ENCLOSURE C – ALL COMMITTEES – Consideration of Resolution O-W 26-02 Approving the Okaloosa-Walton TPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Evaluation Criteria - *Jill Nobles, ECRC Staff*

Jill Nobles presented Resolution O-W 26-02 approving the LRTP evaluation criteria, which will be used to score and rank projects during development of the plan. Jill Nobles explained that the criteria were developed from the LRTP goals and objectives and are structured to provide a measurable scoring system. She noted that the weighting percentages remain consistent with the previous LRTP cycle.

Anthony Vallee asked about the removal of certain environmental language from the criteria. Staff explained that some language had been adjusted to reflect updated federal guidance.

Further discussion occurred regarding how specific objectives relate to scoring criteria. Joshua DeVries clarified that evaluation criteria may correspond to multiple objectives and that the technical memo contains detailed cross-references between objectives and scoring measures.

Bill Cox moved to recommend the TPO authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution O-W 26-02 approving the Okaloosa-Walton TPO 2050 LRTP Evaluation Criteria. The motion was seconded by Yvonne Shanklin, and it was unanimously approved.

4. ENCLOSURE D – ALL COMMITTEES – Consideration of Resolution O-W 26-05 Approving the Okaloosa-Walton TPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Financial Resources Technical Report - *Jill Nobles, ECRC Staff*

Jill Nobles presented Resolution O-W 26-05 approving the Financial Resources Technical Report, which estimates available funding through the year 2050. Jill Nobles explained that approximately 75% of projected funding comes from state sources and 25% from federal sources, and that the report evaluates available funding for both Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) projects and other federally eligible roadway improvements.

During discussion, members asked about the potential impact of electric vehicles and

declining gas tax revenues on future transportation funding. Staff noted that the federal gas tax has not increased since the early 1990s and that improved vehicle fuel efficiency and electric vehicle adoption may affect long-term funding projections.

Anthony Vallee moved to recommend the TPO authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution O-W 26-05 approving the Okaloosa-Walton TPO 2050 LRTP Financial Resources Technical Report. The motion was seconded by Matthew Cox, and it was unanimously approved.

5. ENCLOSURE E – ALL COMMITTEES – Consideration of Resolution O-W 26-03 Adopting the 2026 Transportation Alternatives (TA) Set-Aside Ranked Projects for FDOT District 3 Fiscal Year 2028 – 2032 Tentative Work Program - *Jill Nobles, ECRC Staff*

Jill Nobles presented the ranking of TA projects submitted for FDOT District 3 consideration. Four applications were received: City of Destin Harbor Boardwalk under the bridge project, City of Niceville Palm Boulevard multi-use trail, Okaloosa County Fourth Avenue sidewalk in Shalimar, and Walton County Walton Road multi-use path.

Jill Nobles explained that only the top three projects could be submitted to FDOT and presented the recommended ranking based on scoring criteria. During discussion, a committee member asked whether the Destin project's high pedestrian traffic and tourism activity were considered in the scoring process. Staff explained that scoring accounted for factors such as crash history, traffic volumes, connectivity, proximity to schools, and surrounding land uses.

Mike Panarisi moved to recommend the TPO authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution O-W 26-03 adopting the 2026 TA Set-Aside ranked projects for FDOT District 3 Fiscal Year 2028 – 2032 Tentative Work Program. The motion was seconded by Anthony Vallee, and it was unanimously approved.

PRESENTATION ITEMS

1. ENCLOSURE F – ALL COMMITTEES – Schedule for Development of the Okaloosa-Walton TPO FY 2028-2032 Project Priorities - *Jill Nobles, ECRC Staff*

Jill Nobles presented the upcoming schedule for development of the TPO project priorities. Jill Nobles explained that the priorities identify projects the TPO recommends for FDOT's five-year work program. A joint CAC/TCC/TPO workshop will be held March 12, followed by additional public and committee workshops in April before final adoption in May. Members asked how the priorities relate to the LRTP Needs List. Staff explained that the Needs List identifies all potential transportation

needs through 2050, while the project priorities are derived from the cost-feasible portion of the LRTP.

2. ENCLOSURE G- ALL COMMITTEES - Review of the Okaloosa-Walton TPO 2050 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Draft Needs List- *Joshua DeVries, AICP, HDR Staff*

Joshua DeVries explained that the list was developed by reviewing the previous 2045 LRTP Needs List and adding projects identified in local plans and regional studies. Members were encouraged to review the list and submit comments. Mike Panarisi suggested including a direct hyperlink in future agendas to make the Needs List easier to access online. A member also noted a potential project in Walton County that may need to be removed or revised. Staff encouraged members to provide comments directly to the project team using the project identification numbers.

3. ENCLOSURE H - ALL COMMITTEES- Review of Okaloosa-Walton TPO Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Trail Master Plan Update – *Joshua DeVries, AICP, HDR Staff*

Joshua DeVries presented an update on the Pedestrian, Bicycle, and Trail Master Plan. Joshua DeVries reported that the region currently has approximately 1,231 miles of existing bicycle, pedestrian, and trail facilities, following recent data verification and cleanup. An additional 516 miles of potential projects have been identified through the Needs List. Joshua DeVries invited members to participate in the workshop following the CAC meeting and encouraged members to complete the online survey, which will help prioritize projects within the plan.

INFORMATION ITEMS (no presentation necessary):

1. TCC and CAC November 2025 Meeting Minutes
2. Amendment to the FY 2026-2030 TIP Letters
3. 2026 O-W TPO Meeting Schedule

OTHER BUSINESS

Yvonne Earle raised a safety concern regarding the intersection of Hurlburt Road and Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard, noting that limited lighting and pavement markings create visibility issues at night. Staff confirmed that the concern had been forwarded to the appropriate agencies for review. Okaloosa County staff also noted that engineering staff are reviewing the location and will evaluate improvements such as updated pavement markings and reflective treatments.

The next Okaloosa Walton Transportation Planning Organization meeting will be held on May 21, 2026, at 3:00 p.m. The CAC will meet at 9:30 a.m. and the TCC will meet at 1:30 p.m. All meetings will be held at the Chautauqua Building, 95 Circle Drive in DeFuniak Springs.

ADJOURNMENT

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.