

OKALOOSA – WALTON TRANSPORTATION PLANNING ORGANIZATION (TPO)

MEETING MINUTES

City of Destin, 4200 Indian Bayou Trail, Destin, FL

November 20, 2025

MEMBERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Bobby Wagner, Chair	Destin
Todd Bierbaum, Vice Chair	DeFuniak Springs
J.B. Whitten	Crestview
Bryce Jeter	Fort Walton Beach
David Schmidt	Fort Walton Beach
Tracey Dickey	Freeport
April Sutton	Mary Esther
Doug Tolbert	Niceville
Danny Glidewell	Walton County Commission
Tony Anderson	Walton County Commission
<i>Virtual Attendance</i>	
Trey Goodwin	Okaloosa County Commission

MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE:

Doug Capps	Crestview
Shannon Hayes	Crestview
Torey Geile	Destin
James T. Wood	MidBay Bridge Authority
Drew Palmer	Okaloosa County Commission
Carolyn Ketchel	Okaloosa County Commission
Paul Mixon	Okaloosa County Commission
Christine Wasdin	Valparaiso
Donna Johns	Walton County Commission
Cheryl Sawyers	Eglin AFB - Community Planning

OTHERS IN ATTENDANCE:

Bryant Paulk	FDOT
Christy Johnson	FDOT
Jason Alderman	Gude Management Group
Mary Beth Washnock	Gude Management Group
Carla Hodges	FDOT
Wynn Edward	FDOT
Joshua Bruner	FDOT
Cory Wilkinson	HDR
Jared Kirkland	FDOT
Olen Pettis	FDOT
Elliot Kampert	Okaloosa County
Rodney Chamberlain	FDOT

Larry Jones	City of Destin
Jeff Cozad	City of Destin
Roy Petrey	Okaloosa County
Chelsey Sharon	Okaloosa County
<u>Virtual Attendance</u>	
Colby Cleveland	FDOT
Gordon King	
Lexi Harris	
Rob Schiffer	

EMERALD COAST REGIONAL COUNCIL STAFF:

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

CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE

Chair Wagner called the meeting to order.

APPROVAL OF AGENDA

Council Member Sutton moved to approve the agenda as presented. Council Member Capps seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

PUBLIC FORUM

FDOT UPDATES:

Bryant Paulk presented information on two key projects and began by highlighting the progress of the "Around-the-Mound" project. Bryant Paulk explained that the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) phase is nearing completion and that a public hearing will be held at the Convention Center on November 28th, with a virtual attendance option available. At the public hearing, the preferred alternative will be presented. Bryant Paulk confirmed that the at-grade option was identified as the preferred improvement, and all documentation supporting the determination will be available for public review. Bryant Paulk expressed appreciation to the City of Fort Walton Beach and Okaloosa County for providing local funding that enabled the department to advance the project into the design phase next year.

Bryant Paulk then reported on the resurfacing project in Freeport on State Road 20. As part of this project, FDOT will add a second westbound left-turn lane from U.S. 331 onto State Road 20. Bryant Paulk explained that while larger intersection improvements were not feasible without the full four-lane expansion, FDOT was able to incorporate this operational improvement. The project is scheduled to be let in December 2026, making the upgrade relatively imminent. Bryant Paulk concluded the FDOT update and invited questions.

Council Member Schmidt initiated discussion by asking about efforts to secure approximately \$250 million needed by 2028 for right-of-way and construction associated with the Around the Mound project. Bryant Paulk explained that the project is part of the Strategic Intermodal System (SIS), which provides access to a larger funding pool; however, it currently ranks behind other major projects, including U.S. 98 widening and State Road 85 widening. Bryant Paulk stated that FDOT intends to continue highlighting the strong local financial participation to help leverage and advocate for additional funding.

Council Member Sutton asked whether local law enforcement was consulted during the selection of the preferred at-grade alternative. Bryant Paulk confirmed that law enforcement agencies were included as stakeholders and provided input during the evaluation process. Council Member Sutton noted that some law enforcement personnel expressed support for an elevated option and appreciated the opportunity for those views to be presented at the public hearing. Bryant Paulk encouraged all stakeholders to attend the meeting and share feedback formally.

Council Member Schmidt then asked whether any objective traffic-management performance data indicated a meaningful difference between the at-grade and elevated alternatives. Bryant Paulk explained that long-range analyses—looking 20 to 30 years into the future—showed no significant difference in level of service between the two options, and the analysis did not indicate a notable performance advantage for the elevated design. There were no further questions.

CONSENT AGENDA:

- 1. ALL COMMITTEES: Approval of the August 2025 Meeting Minutes**
- 2. ALL COMMITTEES: Consideration of Addition of Quest Corporation of America, Inc. as a Subcontractor to the TPO's Planning Consultant Contract**

Mayor Whitten requested to pull Item 2 from the Consent Agenda for discussion, then asked for clarification on the subcontractor addition for Quest Corporation of America. Mayor Whitten asked what had changed since the original 2023–2024 contract, prompting the request for an additional subcontractor, and whether the amendment carried any financial implications.

Kandase Lee explained that the subcontractor addition primarily serves the Florida–Alabama TPO, which is undertaking extensive regional outreach. Because the

planning consultant contract was procured as a blanket contract covering all three TPOs and the ECRC, any amendment must apply to all. Kandase Lee clarified that the change carries no financial impact and that the Okaloosa-Walton TPO may not utilize the subcontractor's services, while the Florida-Alabama TPO is expected to use the subcontractor for marketing related to an ongoing project.

Mayor Whitten moved to approve the addition of Quest Corporation of America, Inc. as a Subcontractor to the TPO's Planning Consultant Contract. Council Member Bierbaum seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

3. **ALL COMMITTEES: Consideration of Resolution O-W 25-07 Adopting the Long Range Transportation 2050 Public Participation Plan (PPP)**
4. **TPO ONLY: Consideration of Membership Certifications for the Okaloosa County and Walton County Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Boards**
5. **TPO AND CAC ONLY - Consideration of Citizens' Advisory Committee (CAC) Applications**

Council Member Bierbaum moved to approve consent agenda items 1,3,4 and 5. Mayor Whitten seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

ACTION ITEMS:

1. **ENCLOSURE A - ALL COMMITTEES - ROLL CALL VOTE - Consideration of Resolution O-W 25-15 Amending the FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program to Add the Utility Phase for SR 20 from Merchants Way to Peter Kuth Drive Lighting Project, Financial Project Identification (FPID) Number 4568701 in FY 2025/2026 at a Total Cost of \$13,196 - *Bryant Paulk, AICP, FDOT***

Bryant Paulk presented Resolution O-W 25-15, which proposed amending the FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program to add the Utility Phase for the SR 20 lighting project from Merchants Way to Peter Kuth Drive. The amendment identified Financial Project Identification Number 4568701 and reflected a total cost of \$13,196 for FY 2025/2026. Bryant Paulk stated that this phase would support lighting improvements along the corridor and represented a small but necessary addition to the program.

2. **ENCLOSURE B - ALL COMMITTEES - ROLL CALL VOTE - Consideration of Resolution O-W 25-16 Amending the FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program to Add the Design Phase for I-10 from 1.146 Miles West of SR 285 to the Holmes County Line, Walton County I-10 Median Barrier Project, Financial Project Identification (FPID) Number 4556972 in FY 2025/2026 at a Total Cost of \$967,173 - *Bryant Paulk, AICP, FDOT***

Bryant Paulk presented Resolution O-W 25-16, which proposed adding the Design

Phase for the I-10 median barrier project in Walton County, covering the segment from 1.146 miles west of SR 285 to the Holmes County line. The amendment identified Financial Project Identification Number 4556972 with a total cost of \$967,173 for FY 2025/2026. Bryant Paulk noted that this project aims to improve safety on I-10 through the installation of median barriers.

There were no questions or comments regarding either amendment. Following discussion, a single roll call vote was conducted to approve both resolutions.

Council Member Bierbaum moved to authorize the TPO chair to sign Resolution O-W 25-15 and 25-16 amending the FY 2026-2030 Transportation Improvement Program. Council Member Dickey seconded the motion.

Roll Call Vote:

Mayor Bobby Wagner, Vice-Chair	Yes
Council Member Todd Bierbaum	Yes
Mayor J.B. Whitten	Yes
Council Member Bryce Jeter	Yes
Council Member David Schmidt	Yes
Councilmember Tracey Dickey	Yes
Councilmember April Sutton	Yes
Councilmember Doug Tolbert	Yes
Commissioner Danny Glidewell	Yes
Commissioner Tony Anderson	Yes
Commissioner Trey Goodwin	Yes

The motion was unanimously approved.

3. ENCLOSURE C – ALL COMMITTEES – Consideration of Resolution O-W 25-12 Accepting the FDOT FY 2027-2031 Tentative Work Program- *Carla Hodges, FDOT or Bryant Paulk, AICP, FDOT*

Bryant Paulk presented the FDOT Tentative Work Program, summarizing upcoming projects, funding cycles, and district priorities.

Council Member Bierbaum moved to approve Resolution O-W 25-12 accepting the FDOT FY 2027-2031 Tentative Work Program. The motion was seconded by Council Member Sutton, and it was unanimously approved.

4. ENCLOSURE D – ALL COMMITTEES – Consideration of Resolution O-W 25-13 Adopting Targets for Safety Performance Measures – *Gary Kramer, ECRC Staff*

Gary Kramer presented the annual requirement for adopting safety performance

measure targets. Background was provided regarding previous Federal Highway Administration rulemakings for safety, bridge, pavement, and system performance beginning in 2016–2017. It was noted that the TPO historically accepted FDOT statewide targets each year, and staff recommended continuing with the state’s “Target Zero” goals for 2026.

During discussion, concerns were raised by Mayor Whitten regarding the realism of a zero-fatality target. Mayor Whitten emphasized that the number of statewide fatalities and serious injuries remained significantly high and expressed the position that reducing percentages would be a more attainable and meaningful measure. Mayor Whitten stated an inability to support the resolution in good conscience despite recognizing the historical practice. After these comments, no additional discussion was offered.

Council Member Sutton moved to approve Resolution O-W 25-13 adopting Targets for Safety Performance Measures. The motion was seconded by Council Member Bierbaum, and it was approved with Mayor Whitten opposed.

5. ENCLOSURE E – ALL COMMITTEES – Consideration of Resolution O-W 25-14 Adopting the Congestion Management Process Plan (CMPP) Minor Update – *Jill Nobles, ECRC Staff*

Jill Nobles presented the Congestion Management Process Plan minor update. Jill Nobles described the strategies evaluated during the minor update cycle, including travel demand reduction, safety improvements, active transportation support, and system performance monitoring. Metrics under review included carpool percentages, bicycle and pedestrian facility coverage, serious injury rates, fatalities, and facility level-of-service trends.

Jill Nobles noted that these strategies would be reevaluated during the upcoming major update to determine whether current measures remain effective or should be revised. Both advisory committees recommended approval.

Council Member Bierbaum moved to approve Resolution O-W 25-14 adopting the Congestion Management Process Plan (CMPP) Minor Update. The motion was seconded by Mayor Whitten, and it was unanimously approved.

6. ENCLOSURE F – ALL COMMITTEES – Consideration of Resolution of O-W 25-11 Adopting the Intergovernmental Coordination and Review and Public Transportation Coordination Joint Participation Agreement (ICAR) – *Jill Nobles, ECRC Staff*

Jill Nobles introduced the ICAR agreement update, stating that the previous agreement dated back to 2010. Updates were prompted by name changes among regional entities and the desire to ensure consistency across the three TPOs staffed by the ECRC. Jill Nobles explained that the agreement formalizes coordination between FDOT, ECRC, Okaloosa County, Walton County, DeFuniak Springs Municipal Airport, and Okaloosa County airports for transportation planning. Jill Nobles commended Okaloosa County and DeFuniak Springs for completing adoption of the agreement and stated that Walton County adoption was anticipated soon.

Council Member Bierbaum moved to approve Resolution of O-W 25-11 adopting the Intergovernmental Coordination and Review and Public Transportation Coordination Joint Participation Agreement (ICAR). The motion was seconded by Councilmember Sutton and it was unanimously approved.

7. ENCLOSURE G – TPO ONLY – Appointment of Okaloosa - Walton TPO Board Member and Alternate to the MPOAC Governing Board for Calendar Year 2026 – *Kandase Lee, ECRC CEO*

Kandase Lee presented the annual appointment item, stating that Mayor J.B. Whitten currently serves as the primary member and Mayor Bobby Wagner as the alternate. Kandase Lee stated that Mayor Whitten expressed strong interest in continuing to serve, supported by consistent attendance at statewide meetings. Discussion reflected support for both current appointees continuing in their roles.

Council Member Sutton moved to appoint Mayor J.B. Whitten as the primary member to the MPOAC Governing Board for 2026 and Mayor Bobby Wagner as the alternate. Council Member Bierbaum seconded the motion, and it was unanimously approved.

PRESENTATION ITEMS

1. ENCLOSURE I - ALL COMMITTEES- Transportation Alternatives (TA) Program and the Transportation Regional Incentive Program (TRIP) Presentation – *Jill Nobles, ECRC Staff*

Kandase Lee provided an update on the Transportation Alternatives (TA) and Transportation Regional Incentives Program (TRIP). These programs involve coordination between local governments, ECRC, and FDOT. Kandase Lee reviewed the types of eligible projects, application requirements, and jurisdictional limits for submissions. TA applications must be submitted by January 16, after which scoring and ranking will occur before returning recommendations to the TPO.

INFORMATION ITEMS (no presentation necessary):

O-W TPO Meeting Minutes

November 20, 2025 (Page 8 of 8)

1. TCC and CAC August 2025 Meeting Minutes
2. Amendment to the FY 2025-2029 TIP Letters
3. Safe Streets for All (SS4A) Annual Report

OTHER BUSINESS

ADJOURNMENT- There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.