

DRAFT
MEETING MINUTES
BROWARD METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
INFRASTRUCTURE HARDENING AND
HOUSING COORDINATION COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 2, 2025, 2 P.M.
100 WEST CYPRESS ROAD, 6TH FLOOR, SUITE 650
FORT LAUDERDALE, FLORIDA 33309-2181

Members Present

Vice Chair Barbara Blake Boy
Richard Blattner
Dr. Greg Mount

Members Absent

Chair Sheila Rose
Mayor Michelle Gomez

Broward MPO Staff

Karen Friedman
Peter Gies
Vilma Hurtado
Andrew Riddle
Levi Stewart-Figueroa

REGULAR ITEMS
(All Items Open for Public Comment)

1. Call to Order and Recognition of Quorum

The meeting was called to order at 2:02 p.m.

2. Roll Call

Roll was called and it was noted a quorum was present.

3. Approval of Minutes

Vice Chair Blake Boy noted that Dr. Mount's title should be recognized in the October 30, 2024 minutes.

Motion made by Mr. Blattner, seconded by Dr. Mount, to approve. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously (3-0).

4. Approval of Agenda

The Agenda was approved by consensus.

5. Public Comments

None.

ACTION ITEMS

1. Infrastructure Hardening Improvement Plan

Karen Friedman of Broward MPO Staff advised that the Committee, formerly known as the Resiliency and Affordable Housing Committee, has been renamed the Infrastructure Hardening and Housing Coordination Committee (IHHCC) in recognition of its intended outcomes, as well as the changing priorities coming from the U.S. Department of Transportation (USDOT). Similarly, the name of the Resiliency Improvement Plan has been changed to the Infrastructure Hardening Plan.

Levi Stewart-Figueroa of Broward MPO Staff introduced Nicholas Torres of consultant partner The Whitehouse Group. Mr. Torres explained that while some of the verbiage in the Infrastructure Hardening Plan (IHP) has been changed, it remains consistent with the intent of informing the methodology that will be used in the 2055 Metropolitan Transportation Plan (MTP) update, as well as introducing the best practice concept of criticality when analyzing assets.

Infrastructure hardening will be a community-focused goal that looks at the integrity of the transportation system as well as proactive mitigation. The IHP is meant to be completed by the end of the next fiscal year on June 30, 2026.

The project is currently analyzing collected data. The examination of criticality, as well as the assessment of risk, will carry through the end of the current fiscal year and into the next. Next steps will focus on identification of hardening needs, developing corridor adaptation strategies, and determination of prioritization process and policies for the IHP. Much of the public outreach originally planned for the IHP will be included for the 2055 MTP in order to accommodate direction from the federal level.

Hasa Reddy, also representing the Whitehouse Group, reviewed the IHP's goals and objectives:

- Ensure a robust and reliable transportation network
 - Assess weakness and identify at-risk assets
 - Strengthen adaptation strategies
- Retrofit and upgrade the existing transportation infrastructure

- Promote infrastructure hardening on the corridors identified by the criticality assessment
 - Provide safe and lasting transportation networks
- Promote economic efficiency
 - Create jobs
 - Raise public awareness of the IHP and reduce disruption to the community that would use its assets
 - Incorporate economic performance metrics for the IHP
- Build strong communities
 - Reach regional collaboration
 - Prioritize infrastructure hardening on transportation corridors
 - Incorporate livable metrics
 - Monitor and adapt infrastructure hardening plans over time

The 2026 Safe Streets Summit will be a keystone event to showcase the IHP, including the introduction of criticality as a best practice, as well as differences between the 2050 and 2055 MTPs.

The Whitehouse Group's partner team from Cambridge Systematics reviewed the multimodal approach that will be used to cover as many types of transportation assets as possible within the existing budget. There are three categories of these assets:

- Roads, bridges, and railways, for which a thorough risk-based assessment will be conducted
- Sidewalks, trails, bicycle/pedestrian facilities, and bus routes, for which the risk-based assessment of roads and bridges will be leveraged so a data-intensive analysis will not be necessary
- Seaports and airports, which will be leveraged by referencing available data; smaller airports will include a simpler analysis focusing on the roadways providing access to these facilities

Maps of various assets were reviewed, including several types of roadways such as the national highway system, evacuation routes, and roads designated as regionally significant assets under Florida Statutes. In the case of bridges, data from the National Bridge Inventory will be used, which covers over 600 bridges within Broward County alone. Both major railways operating in Broward County will be analyzed, as will bicycle and pedestrian facilities. For transit, there will be a focus on both Broward County Transit (BCT) routes and community shuttle service, with recognition of ongoing efforts related to BCT's PREMO Plan.

It was noted that there are many potential hazards that could negatively affect Broward County. Hazards with the highest risk include storm surge, flooding, coastal inundation, future groundwater elevation, and extreme heat. Data from Broward County will be used to determine representative scenarios that tie into water- and heat-related hazards in particular.

Ms. Reddy further addressed criticality, which is defined as the importance of an asset to the County's function. A criticality assessment is a process similar to the prioritization of assets based on their functionality or economic significance. Assets with functional importance include:

- Airports
- Seaports
- Bus stops
- Evacuation routes
- Public schools
- Hospitals
- Fire stations
- Emergency operations centers
- Pump stations
- Roads according to functional classification

Indicators for the criticality assessment include economic significance, such as activity centers and tourism-related jobs. Another indicator addresses communities, with particular consideration given to vulnerable populations. Additional factors include household and transportation costs. Ms. Friedman acknowledged that part-time residency is not captured in census data, and there may not be a data set which accurately captures this population.

Mr. Stewart-Figueroa advised that this presentation would be given to the technical working group in the next week, and encouraged the Committee members to provide feedback.

Dr. Mount suggested that the presentation include neighborhood institutions, such as churches, parks, libraries, and community centers, which could serve as gathering places where emergency items could be distributed. This would be particularly important in a prolonged impact period. Vice Chair Blake Boy pointed out that County parks are often used for emergency shelter and distribution as well.

NON-ACTION ITEMS

1. Housing Coordination Plan

Ms. Friedman recalled that when the Committee's schedule was planned, it was with the intent that the Housing Coordination Plan (HCP) would come before them at each meeting as an Action Item. Since then, however, Staff has reassessed the HCP, which means the schedule requires reassessment as well. Today's presentation will focus on the recalibration of this Plan as well as potential next steps.

The schedule is currently being updated in response to USDOT's indication that transportation planning agencies should focus specifically on transportation planning. The MPO is required to ensure that its work furthers its core products and is consistent with the goal of transportation planning, although the understanding remains that there is a relationship between housing and transportation. The MPO is asked to better coordinate housing plans and decisions with the planning process while reassessing the initial scope of the HCP.

Ms. Friedman continued that the MPO has already conducted several stakeholder meetings in relation to the HCP. These include local and state institutions as well as transportation partners and local municipalities. All of these entities represent different perspectives on housing affordability and the need to plan for better transportation improvements and housing coordination. The MPO will continue to meet with these stakeholders, as the feedback they provided has been critical.

One question posed to the stakeholders addressed parking costs, which was a consideration in Broward County's Affordable Housing Master Plan. Stakeholder feedback indicated that housing targeting the senior population in particular could accommodate lesser parking requirements, as could housing for the lowest income levels of the community. It also indicated, however, that parking reductions are not appropriate for all levels of affordability, or for communities with the least access to transit.

The MPO's assets include:

- Funding, including transit-oriented development (TOD) funded by opportunities from the Federal Transit Administration (FTA)
- Technical expertise, such as identification of projects adjacent to existing affordable housing which could lower costs
- Partnerships between various agencies and authorities
- Data that could be packaged to encourage the redevelopment of certain sites for affordable housing

While coordinating transportation investments with affordable housing investments may no longer be consistent with the goals of USDOT, there is now a focus at the federal level on the concept of cost burdens. The MPO will continue to focus on affordability by addressing transportation costs in a manner that can affect the overall cost-of-living burden. The intent is to improve the integration of housing coordination with the planning, prioritization, and funding of transportation options.

Next steps include continuing internal discussions of the HCP's vision. Staff will meet with executive leaders to ensure they are on the right track with regard to addressing the relationship between transportation and housing cost burdens. The intent is to complete the HCP using internal resources only. Based on the confirmation of the vision and schedule for the HCP, stakeholder meetings will re-start, and Staff will bring

information back to the Board for discussion and feedback. GIS Staff will also determine how to best map the cost burden issue, which is likely to use information from several different data sets.

The next IHHCC meeting is currently scheduled for May 21, 2025. Ms. Friedman acknowledged that Dr. Mount would not be able to attend this meeting, and Mr. Stewart-Figueroa added that the focus of that meeting would not include any actionable items.

Motion made by Vice Chair Blake Boy, seconded by Dr. Mount, to cancel the next meeting. In a voice vote, the **motion** passed unanimously.

Ms. Friedman advised that while the next IHHCC meeting was tentatively planned for July 2025, Staff will come to the Committee when there are more decisions to be made, which will most likely follow the receipt of more internal guidance regarding the HCP.

ADMINISTRATIVE ITEMS

1. Member Comments

There being no further business to come before the Committee at this time, the meeting was adjourned at 3:11 p.m.