

MINUTES

INDEPENDENT TRANSPORTATION SURTAX OVERSIGHT BOARD

MAY 10, 2024

MEMBERS PRESENT:

Phil Allen, Retired, Finance

Deborah Madden, Environmental Sciences, Florida Energy

Policy Attorney, Southern Alliance for Clean Energy

Douglas Coolman, Chair, Retired, Land Use and Urban

Planning

Ronald Frazier, Architecture

Alan Hooper, Engineering/Construction Management,

General Contractor and Real Estate Re-developer, Hooper

Construction, Inc., and a founding member of Urban

Street Development.

Erdal Donmez, Former City or County Manager

Shea Smith, Accounting, Director of Audit and Attest

Services, Berkowitz Pollack Brant Advisors and

Accountants

Alejandro Munoz, Public Transportation Consumer

Anthea Pennant-Wallace, Vice Chair, Designee of Broward

College, Supplier Relations and Diversity

MEMBERS ABSENT:

Also Present:

Nathanial Klitsberg, Surtax General Counsel, Broward
County Attorney's Office

Gretchen Cassini, Board Coordinator

Ray Burnette, Administrative Support Specialist

Tashauna Williams-Wilson, Marketing Manager

Laura Rogers, County Auditor's Office

George Tablack, CFO, Broward County

Commissioner Hazelle Rogers, Broward County Commission,
District 9

Tim Garling, Deputy General Manager, Broward County
Transit

Sandy-Michael McDonald, Director, Office of Economic and
Small Business Development

Aaron Nevins, public participant

Scott Bassett, RSM

Sardou Mertilus, RSM

Ashli McIntyre, RSM

Nichole Francis, Small Business Development Specialist

Mark Gale, Director, Broward County Aviation

Mark Plass, Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization

Anant Dinamani, Deloitte Consulting, LLC

Patrick Zubin, Deloitte Consulting, LLC

Todd Brauer, President, Whitehouse Group

Rasem Awwad, Assistant Director, Broward County Traffic
Engineering Division

Miriam Meneely, Laws Reporting, Inc.

A meeting of the Independent Transportation Surtax Oversight Board, Broward County, Florida, was held at One North University Drive, First Floor Boardroom, Plantation, Florida, at 9:30 a.m., Friday, May 10, 2024.

(The following is a near-verbatim transcript of the meeting.)

CALL TO ORDER - CHAIR COOLMAN

CHAIR COOLMAN: Good morning, everyone. I would like to call to order the May 10th, 2024 Oversight Board meeting.

ROLL CALL - ROY BURNETT

CHAIR COOLMAN: Ray, would you please do the roll call?

MR. BURNETT: Sure can.

Good morning, everybody.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good morning.

MR. BURNETT: Douglas Coolman?

CHAIR COOLMAN: Here.

MR. BURNETT: Thank you.

Anthea Pennant?

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: Here.

MR. BURNETT: Phil Allen?

MR. ALLEN: Here.

MR. BURNETT: Erdal Donmez?

MR. DONMEZ: Here.

MR. BURNETT: Ronald Frazier?

MR. FRAZIER: Here.

MR. BURNETT: Alan Hooper?

MR. HOOPER: Here.

MR. BURNETT: Debbie Madden?

MS. MADDEN: Here.

MR. BURNETT: Alejandro Munoz?

MR. MUNOZ: Here.

MR. BURNETT: Shea Smith?

MR. SMITH: Here.

MR. BURNETT: Thank you.

We have a quorum.

CHAIR COOLMAN: I think that might be a first, that we have everyone present in a while.

By the way, are there any elected officials here this morning? Do I see any? No?

If I do, someone let me know.

MS. CASSINI: I will let you know.

GENERAL PUBLIC PARTICIPATON ON NON-ACTION ITEMS

CHAIR COOLMAN: Is there anyone here from the public that would like to comment this morning?

Okay. Please come forward and state your name and give us the topic.

MS. CASSINI: Make sure you turn your mic on.

MR. NEVINS: Hello. Good morning, members. My name's Aaron Nevins.

We're gathered here today out of the promise made to the residents of Broward County through a clearly-worded and poll-tested ballot question.

This one percent sales tax was earmarked specifically for substantial transportation improvements, to reduce traffic congestion, enhance traffic signal synchronization, and produce -- promote safer environments for pedestrians in traffic.

Despite collecting nearly \$2,000,000,000 in revenue from this tax, a staggering 75 percent of these funds have been funneled into the County bus transit.

I see buses going around with one cent penny tax stickers on them. But we had buses before the one cent tax.

And you can't say that spending these funds has actually increased ridership, thereby helping congestion.

Actually, since the penny tax was first collected,

the ridership has gone down 21 percent. That's an appalling failure.

Prior to the penny tax, a hundred percent of the Broward County Transit budget was funded out of General Funds and government grants.

What the County has done is place 75 percent of the budget funded out of the penny tax. That means operations and personnel.

So all they did is move the General Fund so the County can spend those funds in other ways.

This is the infamous Florida lottery shell game, where new funds do not supplement, but substitute, offering no real increase in resources.

And voters are not seeing the relief promised.

First, we expected traffic synchronization as a critical first step in alleviating congestion. Yet we see no significant progress on this front.

Similarly, the creation of safer bicycle paths and walkways have been greatly -- grossly overlooked.

Each morning, hundreds of children navigate Riverland Road on their bikes, facing risks that we have

the means, and the mandate, to mitigate.

Today, I reviewed this agenda for what -- this meeting, and once again it seems like we're focusing on bureaucratic enhancement rather than projects that directly benefit our residents.

As to your oversight, it's falling short. If you want to carry out the oversight, look at the ballot question -- and I brought a copy for each of you -- at every meeting, and ask the voters if they're getting what was promised.

Had the voters been aware that this surtax would predominantly subsidize the existing bus system instead of the traffic synchronization and the enhancements that they were promised, they would have rejected it, as they have in the past similar transit fundings.

Now is the time to correct this oversight and deliver the voters what they were promised and what they expect.

Thank you.

And I have a copy of the ballot question for each of the --

[SEE PAGE 230 for material submitted by speaker]

CHAIR COOLMAN: Thank you very much.

MR. NEVINS: -- board members.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Is there anyone else here from the public?

And thank you for your input. And I think Item 4 on our agenda today in presentation has to do with synchronization. And the previous -- a number of other presentations today will talk about a number of other things we're doing.

I hope you can stay for that.

Thank you.

Let's see here. Before we -- before we go ahead, I just want to say, we only have one item to vote on today, and that's the minutes, which we're going to take up here shortly.

The other two items are motions -- motion statements, which are informational.

And then we have five items -- five presentations, of which Number 4 is synchronization.

And then we're going to talk about the third amendment, in some form.

So does anybody have any questions?

REGULAR AGENDA

**AGENDA ITEM 1 - MOTION TO APPROVE MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 9,
2024 OVERSIGHT BOARD MEETING**

CHAIR COOLMAN: If not, let's -- could I have a motion to approve the minutes of February 9th, 2024?

Or, first of all, are there any corrections or changes or additions to that? Anyone have anything?

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: I just have a comment. I just want to say that, you know, I -- the statement that was just made was pretty powerful, to say the least. And at some point during the course of today's meeting, I think we need to (inaudible) address it.

I know the gentleman that just made those statements has left, but for our record, I think we need to address each of the components of what he spoke about.

CHAIR COOLMAN: That's fine.

Regarding -- back -- back -- back to the minutes, okay?

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: Yes.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Can I get a motion for approval?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: (Inaudible.)

MR. FRAZIER: So move, Mr. Chairman.

MR. HOOPER: It's hard to hear.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: Yeah, there's a reverb- --
it's like reverberation.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Well, you should all turn off your
--

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: And turn it down.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: (Inaudible.)

CHAIR COOLMAN: Alan, are you saying it's hard to
hear?

MR. HOOPER: There's a lot of reverberating.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Uh-huh.

MR. HOOPER: And, actually, you're better if we
weren't talking to the mic, but I know we have to. So
there's some reverberation going on.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: I think everybody needs to
turn their volume down, because it was pretty high.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: That might help.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Is that any better?

MR. HOOPER: That's probably true.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Is that any better?

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: Turn it down some more.

MR. HOOPER: Oh, so that's like a speaker, too,
right?

MS. CASSINI: Yes.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: (Inaudible.)

MR. HOOPER: That's better.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: Mine is down very low, so I
think (inaudible).

MR. HOOPER: Yeah, that worked.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: And I'm not even (Inaudible)
technology.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible) brand new.

MR. HOOPER: He used to sell high -- hi-fi --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Huh?

MR. HOOPER: -- stereos back in the day, right?

CHAIR COOLMAN: Well, I'm going to try for the
third time to get a motion to approve these minutes.

(Laughter.)

MR. HOOPER: Okay. That's good.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Can everybody hear me?

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: Yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: (Inaudible.)

MS. CASSINI: Mic's not on.

MR. HOOPER: Your mic's not on.

CHAIR COOLMAN: You can hear me, right?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

CHAIR COOLMAN: All right. Can I have a motion
please --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- or any corrections, additions,
changes?

Hearing none, could I have a motion, please.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Second it. I think somebody
moved it.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Who moved it?

MR. FRAZIER: I did.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Okay. We have a motion to approve.

(Inaudible) -- excuse me. We have a motion on the

floor.

Can I have all those that approve?

Any opposed?

Thank you.

This mic, I'm having trouble learning how to turn it on and off, I guess.

VOTE PASSES UNANIMOUSLY.

**AGENDA ITEM 2 - MOTION TO NOTE FOR THE RECORD FY 2023
COMPREHENSIVE FINANCIAL AUDIT OF THE SURTAX FUND -
SURTAX FUND AUDIT REPORT PRESENTATION, FY 2023 (SARDOU
MERTILUS AND SCOTT BASSETT, RSM)**

CHAIR COOLMAN: We have a motion -- next on the Action Agenda, we have a motion statement. A motion of note to the board.

As I said earlier, this is really informational. We're not going to vote on it.

It's the FY 2023 Comprehensive Financial Audit of the surtax fund.

The County Commission acted on the audit for its fiscal year 2023 on Tuesday, this past May 7th, as Agenda Item Number 26.

The surtax fund audit was Sub-item N on that agenda item, which is also -- there is also backup in your materials.

Each year since the inception of the surtax program, we invited the County Auditor to present the surtax audit.

If I could ask that RSM make their way up to the podium.

And while they're doing that, let me recognize other members of the County's Auditing Division that helped to prepare the audit.

Thank you to Bill O'Reilly -- Bill -- and his team.

I see that the County's CFO is with us, as well, George Tablack. Thank you. Welcome.

The County's Auditor Office managed -- manages the RSM contract. Representatives from the Auditor's Office here -- representatives of the -- representatives of the Auditor's Office is here. Welcome.

And, of course, let's recognize our own staff and finance manager for the program, Ms. Margaret Dalley-Johns. Do I see her in the back? All right. You have

to stand up, you're -- there you are. Welcome.

Thanks to all of you for the work that you do and for providing financial backup materials in our package today and every meeting.

The County's ordinance that created the Independent Surtax Oversight Board clearly states that audit, Section K, is an important aspect of our role.

So at this point, I'm going to turn it over to RSM, Sardou Mertilus and Scott Bassett.

MR. BASSETT: Good morning.

MS. CASSINI: You're going to have to turn your mic on. Thanks.

MR. BASSETT: (Inaudible.)

MS. CASSINI: Thanks.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Push that little face. It'll turn red if it's on.

And you might turn the volume down, because it was very high.

MR. BASSETT: Okay. Good morning. For the record, my name's Scott Bassett. I'm a partner with RSM. Thank you for having us here this morning.

So our job really was to come in and do an audit of the two funds of the surtax program that are included in the County's financial statement.

So we pull those out and we do an audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards, and present the statements in accordance with the generally accepted accounting principles.

As we went through that, we gave a clean, unmodified opinion on the two funds and how they're presented.

The funds here are presented on the modified accrual accounting, which is a short-term basis of accounting, which is required under GAAP.

So what we're going to have to do -- Sardou is going to go through some required communications that we have to this board, as your external auditor, and Ashli will help as Sardou does that presentation.

Then, of course, we can answer any questions that you may have, as we go through the document.

So, thank you.

So, Sardou, if you want to start, that'd be

terrific.

MR. MERTILUS: All right. Thank you, Scott.

Good morning, everyone.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Good morning.

MR. MERTILUS: So I have control of this document -

-

MS. CASSINI: Yes, you do.

MR. MERTILUS: -- myself? Okay. Thank you.

If you look at page 1 of the document, our responsibilities with regards to the financial statement audit was described in our arrangement letter dated September 27th, 2023.

An overview of the plan scope and timing of the financial statement audit was communicated in our letter dated January 16, 2024.

As it relates to accounting policies and practices, no -- no new standards were adopted, and no changes in accounting policies in regards to the surtax.

We did not identify any significant error or unusual transactions.

Thanks to management and their efforts, there were

no adjustments to the original trial balance at the start of our audit, and we encountered no uncorrected misstatements.

If you go to page 2 of the document, as it relates to observations about the audit process, there are no disagreements with management, no consultations with outside -- other accountants that we are aware of, no significant difficulties in dealing with management.

Towards the bottom of the page, it shows our shared responsibilities as it relates to independence. Basically, our independence and management's responsibility and our responsibility in regards to independence overall.

On page 3 of the document, it talks about the signed representation letter that was provided by management at the end of our audit. It's part of the Exhibit 3 of the document.

And moving on to page 4, this talks about our significant estimates. Ashli will cover this section.

Ashli.

MS. MCINTYRE: Good morning.

For the significant accounting estimates for the surtax program, it relates the investments, which management reports (inaudible) value.

They do evaluation of -- of the investment and review it on a periodic basis and at year end.

As far as our audit procedures, we test a sample of those investment securities, and we concluded that they were reasonable at year end.

And lastly, in Exhibit E, you have our representation letter which was signed by management.

And now we'll open the floor up for questions.

Thank you.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Phil, do you have any comments?

MR. ALLEN: (Inaudible.)

CHAIR COOLMAN: Do you have any comments?

MR. ALLEN: I think I'd just ask for a motion when we do the vote, for the record.

CHAIR COOLMAN: I don't think we need to do that, but that's okay.

MS. CASSINI: There's no motion needed.

CHAIR COOLMAN: We don't -- that's what I'm saying.

And I'm also curious if Alan has any questions.

MR. HOOPER: Who?

CHAIR COOLMAN: You.

MR. HOOPER: On -- on --

CHAIR COOLMAN: Audit.

MR. HOOPER: This is the financial audit -- this is the financial audit, correct?

CHAIR COOLMAN: That's correct, yes.

MR. HOOPER: No questions.

CHAIR COOLMAN: I have a couple of comments. I guess it came out of the Broward Beyond Business Conference, where (inaudible) the surtax.

And one of the things that was brought up to my attention and brought up to the public is that the surtax was originally scheduled to be a \$16,000,000,000 surtax.

Based on being able to match funds, government funds, and other state funds, the projection is the surtax is going to grow to at least probably 25,000,000,000.

And I don't know that this is part of the audit or

not part of the audit, but I think that's very good news.

So I think it was -- I just wanted to mention to everyone, especially in light of how important money is these days, that this is growing substantially, and will probably continue to grow.

And I don't know that the audit people track that, but, Gretchen, I know you have, because we've asked you to.

And that -- that is, I think, one of the -- the roles that we found ourselves into, is encouraging that for the benefit of making the tax dollars -- basically, it's over 60 percent, I think, more. Maybe it's 56 percent.

Anyway, if no one has any --

MS. CASSINI: There's an elected official --

CHAIR COOLMAN: Pardon?

MS. CASSINI: -- elected official.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: Yes.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Oh, okay. Well, with -- does anybody have anything else, we want to thank you.

Alan, do you have something else?

MR. HOOPER: Yeah. I appreciate the fact that the revenue's going up, but cost to construct and develop facilities and, I'm sure, even the cost of buses and things, inflation is affecting that revenue.

So we're probably just maintaining on a value -- today's dollar versus tomorrow's dollar value.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Right. Which is even why it's -- right, which is even why it's more important to continue what staff has been doing.

MR. HOOPER: Yeah.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Anyone else?

MR. ALLEN: Chair, before we move to -- motion to adopt --

CHAIR COOLMAN: I don't --

MR. ALLEN: -- for the note -- for the record --

CHAIR COOLMAN: I don't think we have to.

MR. ALLEN: -- I'd like to note for the record -- I'm sorry.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Gretchen, correct me. We don't have to.

MR. ALLEN: Let me just then -- last year, we had a discussion relative to the management -- or the financial statements. And because of the changing interest rate markets, the County was exposed, because of certain investment changes. And we -- we discussed the unrealized losses that were occurring and explained that -- and Finance Department explained to us that the intent to hold those investments with longer maturities until they matured, that's the normal standard practice, is not to sell short or long on those types of investments.

And our -- the value of the overall County portfolio, investment portfolio, will fluctuate, depending on the maturities of those instruments that are held for investment and the interest rate market.

So from year to year, you get in -- into a situation of having either unrealized or changes in the value just because of the overall interest rate market.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

MR. ALLEN: And we had asked for some additional discussion of that. We had that discussion, et cetera.

My point here is the information that was provided in advance of the meeting did not incorporate either the County's overall management letter or the investment reports.

And I'm just asking that -- that our perusal of those records should be something that is a normal practice, because it does affect the value of our portfolio as it relates to the surtax.

And it's not so much a question, it's just a matter of our due diligence to make sure that, within the context of the overall County, that the surtax investments are, in fact, monitored and impacts of those are considered year to year as the interest rate market changes.

We're going to be facing another market change here pretty soon, primarily because of the election cycle that we're in.

So it's just a matter -- I had asked for staff to provide the information to the board. It's not something that we need to have further dialog relative to problems or concerns, but just so that we are doing

our due diligence in looking at the surtax in relationship to the overall County.

So that's all I had.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Phil, my question is I assume that they are managing the monies the same way, surtax and County; is that correct?

MR. TABLACK: Mr. Chairman, distinguished members of the community, Advisory Board, George Tablack, CFO.

I just want to clarify something.

The exposure -- September 30th is our balance sheet date for audit purposes. So we (inaudible) to market on that day at midnight whatever those Treasuries when we bought in a previous period of time, whatever they're trading at on September 30th, for financial statement purposes, those are presented at the market value.

So there may be a gain, there may be a loss.

As we all know, the Fed -- at least in my lifetime, this is unprecedented, how quickly interest rates increased.

And so securities that you bought before that increase occurred, if you're purchasing -- and, you

know, the furthest we go out is five years.

I want to assure you that almost every security for the eight years I've worked here we hold to maturity.

So I think there was a word introduced, exposure. Let me assure you that we are not trying to be a hedge fund or take risks with the public funds.

As a matter of fact, I had an old finance profession one time that said, you either eat well or sleep well when it comes to investing. And I can assure you that, as it relates to our portfolio, we sleep well, because these are taxpayer dollars.

We're primarily in U.S. Treasuries, the most liquid asset.

As you'll see on your financial statements, this year there were realized gains because the interest rates -- you know, as we're buying back into the market, we're buying at a higher interest rate.

So I agree with Phil. We'll probably, with the Fed beginning to posture itself to start lowering rates, we'll start to balance some of our portfolio longer, to capture these higher rates and hold them.

So, you know, each -- actually, each Monday, my investment staff sits down, looks over our portfolio, looks over our cash flows.

You're in a pooled investment with all the other Treasuries and government securities that we're holding. Those reports are published by the Commission each quarterly period. I think we even post them online. So they are available to you, but we're more than happy to show you what -- what's in that pooled investment.

But I can tell you that you can sleep well with the portfolio and the way we're investing it for you.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Well, over simplified, how are we doing percentage-wise? Basically, you know, it goes up -- up and down, but we're very conservative and we're averaging what we set out to average, right?

MR. TABLACK: Yeah. And keep in mind, Mr. Chairman and Commission members, that each time a security matures, you're susceptible to interest rate fluctuations in the market.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Sure.

MR. TABLACK: But we are, as best we can,

following, you know, what we believe the market's going to do on a go-forward basis, and that drives investment decisions that we're making for those securities that are maturing.

But we are not actively trading this portfolio and trying to speculate on the market.

And, you know, the longest maturity we have -- and our investment policies are probably even more conservative than Florida statutes require for any government entity.

So just to reiterate, we -- we sleep well with our structure of our investments.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Thank you.

MR. TABLACK: You're welcome.

MR. SMITH: Quick, can I have a question for while we have the auditors up real quick, or -- did you have anything else? Yeah, okay.

Kind of a question and kind of just a public statement. And I think we talked about this a little bit, you know, as we've seen numbers previously.

And that's -- you know, typically, when you see a

governmental type of entity, right, with a large fund balance and large reserves, right, that's a good thing.

However, and I think it kind of ties into the public comments that we received, I'm -- I'm not so sure here it's such a great thing, right? The fact that we have all of these investments, you know, 1.5 billion dollars, it looks like, in investments, okay, sitting there, and a large fund balance is just something that this body, I think, needs to keep in mind is the efficiency in which these funds are rolled out, the public perception, but also the reality, right, of are things moving too slow.

And I know we have some items on the agenda to talk about and maybe what our role can be there.

But for the auditors in particular, a couple of things.

One, do you -- did you have any sort of like management letter comments, internal control comments that would impact what we're doing on our side, right?

And I know that this probably relates more broadly to the County, because I know they're intermingled, the

controls.

And then, do you guys look for kind of value added comments and give any of those to management as you go through and perform, you know, your procedures?

So, for example, if this fund balance were to keep growing, would you say at some point, look, your mandate that you set out to accomplish is X, you know. This is something that you should maybe consider because this is a public program.

And do you have any other kind of comments or improvements maybe that were given that would be helpful -- helpful for us to know about?

MR. BASSETT: So we audit under what the statutes say. Obviously, the management of a program is outside of our scope, so we really wouldn't comment whether it's too big or too small.

What we'd comment on is the presentation within those financial statements as of September 30th.

So those type of -- those type of analysis is outside our scope, so we wouldn't provide feedback on that.

We do, during the course of our audit, do look at internal controls as a (inaudible) as a whole.

The two funds that are with the surtax program as major funds, so they actually get an individual opinion on the appropriateness of those funds.

So we go, as I said in my opening comments, through the -- through our professional standards, both GAAP AND GAAS, we go through those standards and, again, clean, unmodified opinions.

If there were -- as we do review internal controls, if there were something that had to be reported to management, we formally would do that. And as it pertains specifically to the surtax fund, we would report it to you in this board.

We did not come up with any of those findings in the current year.

MR. SMITH: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Anyone else?

MR. TABLACK: If I can just add, Mr. Chairman, from a management perspective, keep in mind, you know, when I drive down 595, I ask myself, when did the state first

begin planning that versus when ground was broken versus when it opened up, just like the additional express lanes.

I think if you look, the incubation period for particularly transportation projects, with environmentals, with design, everything else, the lag period is significant.

I'm not one to make forward statements, but I think it's a safe bet that you will begin, over time, to see a draw down of those reserves as you get into these capital intensive type projects.

Thank you.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Thank you.

MR. HOOPER: Doug?

CHAIR COOLMAN: Alan. Then Phil. Wait a minute.

MR. ALLEN: Oh.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Alan next.

MR. HOOPER: Okay.

MR. ALLEN: I'm sorry.

MR. HOOPER: So thank you for the great audit. And -- but this isn't a question for you guys. It's more a

statement for my -- our board.

You know, financially and -- we're spending the money where we say we spend it.

Management is managing it the way it's supposed to be managed.

There were no -- nothing wrong with how things are being done financially.

But I do think that this board -- and based on what somebody from the public brought to us, and it's not to -- it's not -- it's no different than the financial audit. It's not to question what we're doing or where we're going. It's to reaffirm.

But I think at some point in the very near future we do need to do a performance audit on the system and on what we're doing and on the plan.

And it will likely reaffirm it, but it may also give us new ideas.

And I think it should be done by some sort of third party so we're not auditing ourselves. And maybe it's a company or a consultant that looks at transit systems overall, looks at our system, sees how we're

implementing it, and gives us thoughts.

Maybe they say, you guys are right on. Okay?
Maybe they say, you guys are right on, but you could do
a couple of these two things to help.

And what this does is it lets the public know that
we are -- we are testing ourselves based on performance.

And I know that incubation and how long it takes
for these things to actually hit the ground running are
usually quite long, but we're already hearing from the
public they're -- and I've heard it from a variety of
people.

But I think we would be doing ourselves a favor if
we -- maybe we do it at the work- -- next workshop,
where we come up with three or four or five different
companies that do audits for performance and pick one
and have them do that for the surtax, for our board so
that we can audit this.

We talked about performance audits a long time ago.

Thank you.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Good point.

Allen, do you have anything else?

MR. ALLEN: Going back -- going back to previous comments, that's the discussion as it related to this set of funds for the surtax in light of the overall County budgets is why I have asked for just the materials to be provided, the management letter (inaudible) the County, even though there was no comments as it related directly to the operations of the surtax fund, as well as the quarterly report that the board -- that the County administration provides to the Board of County Commissioners.

It's just basically for your information that we're our due diligence and why that's been added to the approach.

As it relates to the comments about a performance audit specifically as it relates to how are we performing, I think that's good, but I think it's a matter that we need to have further dialog in a dedicated meeting to discuss the options.

CHAIR COOLMAN: I think we can --

MR. ALLEN: Gretchen, if I'm correct, the original vote, the information that was provided, at the time the

tax was voted in, to the public always forecast the collection of monies up front, and to meet the plan to spend those monies in years later. And that was part of the overall program, to avoid the issuance of debt.

Traditionally, these types of projects get a lot of debt, and then you pay that off over 30 years rather than the approach that we've taken -- the County has taken with the ballot language, which was to accumulate those funds and spend those as they are meeting their fruition as it relates to the overall planning process and approval and environmental reports, et cetera.

So I think we are on track, but, you know, a performance audit is always good.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Thank you.

Is there anything else? If there is, I'm going to take Chair's prerogative --

MR. SMITH: One -- one --

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- and stop discussion.

MR. SMITH: -- one quick follow up to what Alan said, if you -- if you could.

So I do agree with the performance audit, but I

also think, as a group, we should step back at some point and just have another discussion about our own performance metrics, right? Because I don't mind outsourcing it. I think it's a good idea.

However, I also think there are some simple ways to look at -- we have to put numbers to things, right? So take the busing example that the member of the public brought up, right? It's theoretically possible that busing never works the way we want it to work in south Florida. Like, that is a possible outcome.

So at what point would the metrics tell us, hey, we should spend less on busing, right? Just as one example to kind of cut straight to that one particular criticism. And I think some of that might be coming from it's a -- it's something that was there already, so we can move funds and they're seeing the funds move there.

But it is something I've brought up several times, that I was concerned about the adoption curve here. And maybe it will happen more as we add more facilities and it ties in.

But I think being clear about what makes it a success and what maybe we peel back on some things, I think that that needs to be part of the conversation, these performance metrics, right, whatever they are, and having an open dialog about -- about that.

CHAIR COOLMAN: I think this is something that we're going to take up at the end of today's meeting. And if nobody has anything else for this group, I'd like to thank you.

MR. BASSETT: Thank you.

CHAIR COOLMAN: We have Commissioner Rogers has joined us, and I would like for her to come up if she'd like to say something.

It's not every day we get a Commissioner to come speak to us.

COMMISSIONER ROGERS: Good morning.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Good morning.

MS. CASSINI: Just hit the --

COMMISSIONER ROGERS: (Inaudible.)

CHAIR COOLMAN: It has to be red.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: (Inaudible.)

MS. CASSINI: Hit the face. Just --

COMMISSIONER ROGERS: The face.

MS. CASSINI: The white face.

COMMISSIONER ROGERS: Uh-huh.

MS. CASSINI: Got it?

COMMISSIONER ROGERS: Hello. Good morning. I'm not going to wait for that to come on. Can you hear me?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Yes.

COMMISSIONER ROGERS: Good morning. I just decided to come in this morning to say thank you for what you're doing, all right? We value your service. And I like the conversation, the way the conversation is going this morning.

I really do believe we need to look at where we are going to see, after you start a project, in ten years, 15 years is it still providing what we expected it to provide and solve the problems that we were looking at 15 years ago, all right?

So those are some of the questions and concerns that I would have and share with you.

So -- but I wanted to say this morning -- I'm not staying the duration. I look at that calendar and it's like 3:00 or 4:00 o'clock, I say I love you, but not on a Friday.

So I made sure I'm dressed for not on a Friday so I don't stay looking as beautiful as Gretchen.

(Laughter.)

COMMISSIONER ROGERS: Thank you all. Thank you for your service. Thank you very much.

MS. CASSINI: Thank you --

CHAIR COOLMAN: Thank you very much --

MS. CASSINI: -- Commissioner.

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- for coming this morning.

I am going to change the agenda a little bit, because our first presentation --

MS. CASSINI: We have another motion.

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- pardon?

MS. CASSINI: Another note for the record.

CHAIR COOLMAN: I don't want to -- I'm sorry. I don't have to do that right now, do I?

MS. CASSINI: No, you don't.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Oh, good. Because Sandy-Michael McDonald is here this morning. He's first on the presentations, and he has other commitments.

So what we're going to do is we're going to change the order and ask Sandy to come forward and give us his -- his update as he always does.

And, by the way, Sandy, you going to talk about this at all?

MR. MCDONALD: Excuse me? I'm sorry.

CHAIR COOLMAN: You going to talk about this at all?

MR. MCDONALD: Yes, I am.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Okay.

PRESENTATIONS

**I - OFFICE OF ECONOMIC AND SMALL BUSINESS MAP BROWARD
CBE GOAL ATTAINMENT QUARTERLY UPDATE (SANDY-MICHAEL
MCDONALD, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF ECONOMIC AND SMALL
BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT**

MR. MCDONALD: So, thank you again for having us and allowing us to come -- I don't want to stand up. Don't worry about it -- to come and present to you

today.

So in your packets, you did receive the regular report we do every quarter. So you have all of your data, you have your analysis, you have your minority, you have your women, you have your industries. We didn't want to miss any of that.

But what I want to try to do and prepare myself, and certainly never try to bore you, as we move forward with your next couple of quarterlies, and by the time we're at your end, your ending report this year, I'm going to make sure I can show you the GDP side of what you've been doing, based on small business and business activity.

So what I wanted to start with today, just to demonstrate, you often hear us talk about a 30 percent goal. And that's only on eligible projects.

But within that, I need you to understand, you have small businesses that are also providing services, winning contracts as CBE primes.

So it might be a \$5,000,000 contract and at the end of the day, you got a 30 percent goal, and that's a 1.5

opportunity for small business. But you have projects that I want to go through today where the CBE has decided, hey, based on my capacity, based on my ability, why would I just wait to be a part of 30 percent, let me go after the entire contract.

Whether that's 800,000, whether that's a million, or whether that's two, that's value to the program, that's value to your -- your drive in terms of economics, because the more we can support these businesses with eligible activity that they can actually perform -- no favors -- it grows your scale. They grow, they hire more, they spend more, and those dollars for that GDP I'm going to show at the end of the year stays in your County.

The whole idea when we were brought into this picture was not just the utilization of small businesses. You guys charged us with making sure on the economic impact, by utilizing small businesses and leveraging their participation, can we keep some of the dollars home to grow.

Because keep in mind, if a small business is

awarded a contract, he or she, as a part of that contract, buy some of their supplied, materials, and activities to perform the contract.

Some of that purchase is made by other businesses in our County.

When that contract is being performed, that owner then pays his or her employees.

Those individuals then take that check and they pay rent, they pay mortgage, they go to the gas -- gas stations, grocery store. In our County.

You had, as an expectation for us, by all means, let's make sure small businesses can participate, because in Broward County, there's approximately -- according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, we have approximately 85,000 businesses in Broward.

But just know that 89 percent of that number, no matter the industry, has 20 employees or less.

So we're small. So you and the County did right by making sure we had these projects.

And we just wanted to make sure that we can show some of the examples. So we continuously show you for

awarded projects. You know we review a whole bunch. Then you guys eventually award some. And then, based on award, we even have those who are monitored.

But you get to see, when you look at these slides, what the projected activities are for awarded projects. So similar to what you were speaking about with Mr. Tablack and the auditors, if these awarded projects ever go to Notice to Proceed, and if they're actually completed, even inclusive of the CBE goal or when CBEs are primes, these are the numbers that I'm showing you every single quarter.

And these are the numbers that, by the end of the year, I want to start demonstrating not as just small business, but small business in terms of impacting the entire economy.

Next slide.

So, again, this is another slide of awarded to CBE as prime contractors. And if you don't have this slide, we'll make sure that you have this presentation.

These are awarded to CBEs as prime contractors. And when I had Nichole to start this about a month ago, even

I -- because, remember, I run my daytime program for the County -- even I thought I was going to have about 15 to 20 CBE awards. Absolutely. Not as primes. You know, I'm 35, 40 projects deep where CBEs are the lion's share of the activity.

So that's a major plus in terms of how we're doing outreach and the projects that we're actually working with, that they're actually succeeding.

And, as you see, even with the CBE as the prime, we look at starting at 30. Yes, there are some goals under 30, because we don't fake it. If we don't have it, we don't place it.

But even with the CBE as the prime, you'll see that most are still over 30. They're looking to meet 40, 50, 60 percent of the opportunity with our small prime, and then they still hire other contractors, who don't have to be certified with me, to complete the remainder of the work.

So, again, we also continue to market and promote when our CBEs are excelling. We do this in terms of a weekly basis. We have a weekly newsletter called BAW,

Business Assistance Weekly. We put that in there. One, because we do really want to congratulate our small business, but, two, one of the things that I think Mr. Hooper will remember when he was Chair, we were challenged about growing capacity.

See, we never said when we started this we had every single business we need. But we do know we have all the businesses that's available that we need. They just weren't certified.

So this is a way to continue to definitely, on the record, congratulate the businesses for being successful.

But this has been my best recruitment tool for small businesses, when they see that another business that's in their association or that attends our workshops, who I've been sitting next to, what do you mean you just won a \$400,000 contract? What did you do that I didn't do?

We use this also as a way -- as a fishing tool, to make sure that small businesses know that it's a legitimate opportunity to participate, and try to reel

them in.

So we constantly, through social media -- Nichole and her team do a great job of our social media. You guys might find me on LinkedIn, but they are teaching me about I.G. -- I said that right. We got YouTube videos, Facebook, and -- what'd I miss?

MS. FRANCIS: X.

MR. MCDONALD: Oh, yeah, X. So we've got (inaudible). Behind honest, they do X. I don't do X. I'm -- I'm still getting there.

And -- I'm just going to leave it up for five seconds, or three, because, see, this is a good slide. Some of you know for different reasons.

This is a good slide, because this is a company who does a lot of work. But this is a company that I'll always give the kudos to, because every time the company reminds me, you know, Sandy, it's hard to get that 30 percent, I wake up and he's 47 percent small business. On the record, hey, Sandy, it's hard for me to get that 30 percent. I have to remind him, you just hit 47, and I was happy with 30.

So it is beginning to ring as a message, even with our primes, (inaudible), the opportunities.

So another thing that we're focusing on this year, and we're working closely with Coree and her staff, is taking a look at the things that Transit procures that we can begin to identify -- here's that capacity building, to identify what you're buying, where you're buying it from, and also to determine if we can get more businesses interested in our area, or make our businesses in our area understand, hey, County's buying an item from the norther part of the state. You mean I don't have a business within south Florida, specifically Broward, who provides that service, that good, or that material?

So we're trying to create that competition. We're trying to get businesses to move here. We're trying to expand workforce development.

But, again, that starts with us making sure we're marketing and announcing what you guys are doing, what we're doing across the state.

And I think you remember in your five-year plan,

I'm about a year away from going outside the state. But the next two years is still about focusing on south Florida and beyond within the State of Florida.

And here are just some of the outreach marketing material. And Nichole will just leave those up for ten seconds and move forward.

But I would like to say -- thank MAP administration, thank Chair, thank Vice Chair. They did attend our Broward Beyond workshop. And next quarter, you will have all the pictures and the videos.

But the significance of that, with your leads, as well as with Gretchen's support, and with Coree's support, our small businesses, an audience at the Convention Center this time last year, over 900 businesses participating, over 47 vendors and resources for an entire day at the Convention Center.

They had an opportunity to hear from your Chair, your Vice Chair. They had an opportunity to hear from other leaders of the County. They had an opportunity to hear from the federal government, the state government, all about contracting and programming opportunities.

And we made sure that MAP Broward was primarily featured, because for all the things that our small businesses can do, MAP Broward also affords them an opportunity to start extremely small and potentially grow.

So with that, we want to thank you for your support, thank you for the resources.

But the reality is it's a major way that we can connect who we are and what we're doing, what we're supposed to be doing, with the small business community, and that then afforded us a chance to do that last week.

Oh, and this is just some more of the things that Nichole is working closely with Transit, and we're going to the necessary conferences, we're passing out the necessary information. And we, again, are beginning to do our fishing with what will eventually be, with my partner, the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance, reeling in the businesses that we know competitively outside of our state that should understand surtax A through Z, understand that if I talk to you over the next two years, even if you decided to come here three years from

now, they're still over 22 years of surtax left.

So there's still advantage and leveraging of making sure this message gets out far beyond the state.

And Nichole is starting to attend those meetings and those workshops, and to come back and to share that information.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

MR. MCDONALD: So with that, I do thank you. And, again, I do really appreciate you (inaudible) me this morning, because I am going to have to leave in about ten minutes, 15 max.

But thank you.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: I have a comment.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Anthea?

MR. FRAZIER: I just have one question. With the new state law coming out, and I understand it goes into effect in July, how does it affect this program and do you have a plan of action to sort of continue the success that you have?

MR. MCDONALD: So we did talk with our Intergovernmental Affairs Office, Marty Cassini, and the

rest of the team.

When it was all said and done, we're covered.

MAP is protected because it was voted by the people. So whereas I am going to have challenges on my own, not you guys, with if the state -- if the County agencies take any state money, I really can't set small business goals.

But with MAP, because it was a vote of the people, MAP is not included in that.

So MAP, on the record, will continue, we'll still be able to do what we're doing right now in these activities.

And I'll say what I said to you at the end of the meeting last quarter, and that's why, at the end of the year, I'm going to give you real GDP.

Guys, 87-plus percent of all Nichole's original slides, 87-plus percent of the projects we review that end up being awarded, that we monitor, all are meeting or exceeding the goal.

So, yeah, there's still some I need to work with. Cities, which I had a good meeting with one city this

week. That's real. But we can't run away from the fact that 87 percent of everything that we review, that -- that is awarded, that we monitor, they're meeting and exceeding the goal.

With that being the case, we just want to continue to make sure we're doing our one-on-ones with our communities, we're rolling out projects, we're speaking directly to primes, and we're growing the number of small businesses to participate.

As I told you last quarter, even if you just maintain, from our office perspective, doing exactly what you're doing now -- and I believe we're going to do much better, but even if you did what you're doing right now for the remaining 25, you exceed the goals that was given to us.

You already beat that goal if you just stay the same.

Mess around and improve some of your processes. Mess around and all my cities get extremely hungry and excited. Let me get another 300 small businesses to compete across the board.

And for what you charged us with, we blow it out the water.

So that's real numbers and that's what I'm going to make sure you see in December, but based on GDP, not just some stats for small businesses I'm excited about, but I'm going to be able to show you how that money's turning in your economy in your County today.

CHAIR COOLMAN: I think Anthea has a comment.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: Yes, Mr. Chair. Thank you.

So, of course, I'm just going to repeat what I said at the conference, that I don't think there's another government agency that is doing a better job in celebrating the capacity and enhancing the capacity of our small businesses.

Your office does an amazing job.

But my question today is in reviewing the projects and the goal achievement across cities, that is also something to celebrate.

We see some of the cities doing some dramatic attainment in terms of reaching their goals, but we're still seeing some cities that are not performing at the

level that we would like.

And I -- I want us to figure out, I guess, and maybe you can illuminate why this is happening in some cities.

So, for example, City of Lauderdale Lakes, I see that there are some projects with no goal or the goal attainment is really low.

You know, there -- there are a couple of them that are still -- and the City of Oakland Park.

And these are areas, communities, where we have oftentimes high levels of poverty. These are cities where we have seen historically businesses are faced with a tremendous amount of barriers for their advancement, or even capacity building.

How can we be more intentional in terms of how we help these businesses move forward?

Because I think they probably need a little bit more love and tender care. And not necessarily that the County has to do all of the heavy lift.

I think we need to leverage resources from these cities to do a better job in making sure that their

local businesses are ready to perform on some of these grants.

And then, of course, identifying opportunities where we can assign more goals. Because I see in some sections, there are no goals assigned.

So we want to assign goals so we can create these advancements for these businesses.

MR. MCDONALD: No, great, and good -- good point.

So across the board -- and Nichole had one of the slides up earlier -- so the first thing, you will see multiple no-goes, especially with some of our smaller cities, and especially when they're on the front end, on the design side, before they get to construction.

Because remember, anything 250,000 or less, we can't establish a goal.

So when you're talking about setting up a project, starting a project, doing the design, most of those are A and E type work that's still less than 250, so we never can set a goal.

But once construction, you're absolutely right, we want to at least start at 30.

So the slide that Nichole had earlier was about the trainings. That's the thing that we extend not only to all the cities, but beyond all the cities. We extend the trainings one-on-one.

Because we, too, are looking at all the projects based on what we review, then based on what's awarded, and then eventually what hits the street.

We then circle back as a part of the monthly utilization. For the projects that hit the street, we come back around to the cities and try to identify, since it was your procurement, since you selected the award, they did commit to the small business, where else can we be of assistance.

That is going to take a little time. Not a lot of time, but, as you mentioned, we have projects, we've been rocking and rolling since day one.

You said Oakland Park, you've got projects in Oakland Park that's been extremely successful, then one or two that fell through the gap that wasn't successful.

Each of those, we go back and we do our trainings. And we don't embarrass anyone, but we share the

information across the board without calling the cities out.

But then we do schedule our one-on-ones with the city. I mean, I've mentioned earlier and I didn't mention the name, yeah, a city came in last week and -- no, actually, it was -- it was this week, after the conference. It was Monday. Very tough conversation.

But I shared my email with administration staff. I was excited when they left, because so was they. Because at the end of the day, they are willing to follow our steps.

So, again, we know that I'll be doing more one-on-ones, but the slide that we had about training, that's how we get to address it, because different cities have different challenges. And based on those challenges, we want to respect the fact that we can probably address them per city, and not me just group everybody in one bucket.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: I believe a lot of these cities also need to have skin in the game, right? Because it is --

MR. MCDONALD: Yes.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: -- to their benefit when their local businesses are doing better. So there may be some investment opportunities for them in terms of building an ecosystem of resources to support their businesses.

MR. MCDONALD: No fight from me.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: And not just only be dependent on your resources.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Anyone else have any comments? If not, I have just a couple things.

One, this Broward and Beyond, I don't know exactly what you did or didn't have to do with it, but that was amazing to have that many exhibitors there.

The one thing you did forget to mention, that in the last few years, the CBEs are expected to generate over 400,000,000 business and revenue and 26,000 jobs in the first five years.

MR. MCDONALD: And that is true. Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR COOLMAN: And --

MR. MCDONALD: Seriously.

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- I -- can I assume that Nichole Francis, your assistant's here today? Would you like to say something about here, because you did the best job you could of representing her, because she was supposed to represent you.

MR. MCDONALD: So I say this, you know, Nichole is doing me a favor, because she's now the Market Outreach Coordinator for all the activity for surtax for our office.

But if you guys remember, come day one when we started this, based on how the dollars are allocated, from the beginning, I had one person. So I've never been able to fake like it's me. She's been here from the beginning.

I have Lorraine (phonetic) now, and I have Kenneth now, so staff is starting to grow, but I said her name several times not just because she's running the slides. Because she does have A through Z. She really does understand that for the things that Kenneth and Lorraine and I are working on projects in cities, she understands

that, guys, I can probably connect that if I get with that city's PIO and we do this marketing before it ever hits the street. Guys, I can probably address that. Since the city has already identified the prime, I'm going to set up a meet and greet.

But what she did, not me, hey, guys, that industry day is coming up with Coree, and you've got all these international rail companies and others who are going to come to Broward. You have a morning meeting, go on a bus tour, then go to lunch, and there's no afternoon. Sandy, let's schedule a meet and greet, since all the big companies are here. And if they ever win a contract, they've got to work with small, anyway. Let's marry the two. That's her brainchild.

So the idea that Nichole is making sure that, for the projects and for the process of the program we're responsible for, she now has taken the duties, how do I market that, how do I brand that, how do I grow capacity, how do I make sure that message gets out.

So, again, Kenneth and Lorraina are now pulling the weight for project to project to project.

The success that we end up having as an office to make sure that this message really gets out and that we create those other partners, that is what Nichole's doing for me right now.

CHAIR COOLMAN: All right. This was the fifth year or seventh year?

MR. MCDONALD: Seventh year. Seventh year.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Seventh year. And it's the first year that -- that we showed up.

Erdal, you want to say anything?

By the way, those who didn't attend, but Erdal did, do you have any comments?

MR. DONMEZ: Just kudos --

MS. CASSINI: You need a mic.

MR. DONMEZ: Oh. Just kudos to, you know, you, your staff, County employees, organizers. The number of small businesses, you know, that attended, it was truly, you know, overwhelming.

And -- and what you do to make your resources available and just going over and above and beyond, is truly gratifying.

And we're privileged to have you as our economic development, you know, person, a lead person, you know, for the County and for the MAP program and for the whole community (inaudible) here.

Just keep up the good work.

What I'd like to hear perhaps at some point, maybe today is not the right day for that, what do you hear from businesses when they feel comfortable. You know, what do they offer to make things -- the processes or the programs easier or simplify their issues, you know, what they bring up to you.

Like I said, maybe today's not the, you know, right time for that, but I would be interested to hear -- hear from you.

MR. MCDONALD: No, I'll come intentionally at our next meeting, as a part of our presentation, I'll share that. Because we do not only the --

MR. DONMEZ: Yeah.

MR. MCDONALD: -- regular surveys, but, as you're alluding to, you don't need to do a survey. Businesses will come up and tell you, hey, Sandy, this is just too

cumbersome. At the end of the day, I thought it was three pages. It was nine pages, and I don't have time. I don't want to give you this.

And, again, a lot of that has helped us tweak our processes. And long as I'm in align with the County's administrative policies and procedures, we can tweak what we need to tweak, because we're not trying to be a barrier or an impediment.

But at the end of the day, if I'm really trying to get private industry businesses to understand there's government opportunities, I'm not making you do government business, but if you choose to, I just need to make sure that if you understand what the access is and the opportunities, I can lead you to that.

So you make a very good point. Businesses do come up to us, and I will say on both sides, oh, my goodness, that was great. Thank you. I didn't expect to get a contract. I got one last month.

But I do get the real comments as well about, man, I wish this would have been right here, or had I known this. And that's how it tries to help us to do a better

job.

So I'll share that.

MR. DONMEZ: Thank you.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Thank you.

Anyone else? All right.

**V - BROWARD COUNTY AVIATION DEPARTMENT FY 2024 SURTAX-
FUNDED PROJECT UPDATE**

CHAIR COOLMAN: With that, we are not going to go on to the Motion Statement 3 on our agenda. Mr. Mark Gale has come in, and in deference to his time schedule -- he's Number 5 on the presentation list. We've done Number 1. Now we're going to skip to Number 5 before we jump back to Number 2 on our motion -- or Number 3 on our motion statement.

Welcome, Mark.

You might introduce yourself, just --

MR. GALE: (Inaudible.)

MS. CASSINI: No. The mic is off.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: (Inaudible.)

CHAIR COOLMAN: The face has to be red.

MR. GALE: There we go. Too close.

Good morning, Mr. Chair, Madam Vice Chair, members of the board. Happy to be with you.

I actually am nervous right now. I never like following Sandy-Michael McDonald at anything. I love the man dearly, and he is one of our strongest partners and advocates, and we work really close together on a lot of different things, but he sets the bar up here (indicating) and rightly so. He's just phenomenal.

So thank you for the opportunity to come in front of you today. I know you were looking for an update to some of the projects that we outlined for you last year relative to airport development and moving forward.

I would start off by saying your -- your airport is on the move again. There has been continued recovery from the pandemic. Took that punch in the gut like everybody else did.

Our high water mark for passenger traffic at the airport was 2019 at 36.7 million passengers.

Our official numbers aren't in yet for 2023, but it looks like we're going to come in at about 35.1, and we're forecasting to go up above the 36,000,000 in the

coming year, despite headwinds that we see some of our major airlines at FLL facing. You've seen some of that with the Jet Blue/Spirit merger, on again, off again, now permanently off.

But we think we'll be fine as we move forward in respect to airport growth and further development.

So, the two projects that we presented last time -- and thank you again for your support and your consideration for the use of some of the surtax dollars to support these not only incredibly important projects, but also rather expensive projects. And we continue to refine those numbers, as you see down here at the bottom right-hand corner.

So FLL's Intermodal Center, 4,000,000 square foot eight-level facility with approximately 7,000 parking spaces.

When we talk about an intermodal center, this is not necessarily a new concept to our master plan. This has been in existence -- I think Mr. Allen remembers it from years gone by. We talked about it before, back into the early 2000 days, a -- a nexus, if you will, to

be able to connect the airport to the seaport to the Convention Center to now rail that will probably come right adjacent to that facility truly multi-modal in its operation.

Parking for the airport, the seaport, for Transit passengers, but more importantly, it is expected to be that nexus that is the transition point for many, many forms of transportation that are using the airport and the other ports, as well.

When you traverse the airport today, you're going to find some challenges. We're a really busy place, and we're battling infrastructure that was in the 1980s timeframe. Our roadways, our garages weren't designed to keep up with the traffic that not only we have this year, but what we expect to see in the next five years, ten years, 20 years.

This facility is going to help set us up to be able to deal with those demand increases going forward.

We want it to be the opportunity, again, to permit Broward to shine, to be able to connect those economic engines, the Convention Center expansion and hotel, a

growing seaport, and certainly a growing airport, and to be something that folks around the country just look to continue to admire and want to transit through Broward on their way to cruises or to be able to enjoy our sun, sands, and beaches, and everything else that we have to offer here.

So the request was where are we. When we met with you last year, there was still some indecisiveness on the part of the federal entities as to who are going to be lead agencies on environmental aspects. Was it going to be one huge environmental -- there's different projects that were going on, between Broward commuter rail and airport/seaport/hotel/Convention Center connector. Were they all going to be one huge environmental or were they going to be separate environmentals.

Late 2023, we got that word that they were going to be separate, which we were appreciative of, because it gave us the ability now to launch. We had the ball already teed up and ready to go.

Will, on our team, and Armilla (phonetic) on our

team had already started to put that ready to go if that word came down.

We immediately started to work with the lead agency, which is the Federal Aviation Administration, in the January timeframe.

And then soon thereafter got the Notice to Proceed, and we've been working our way through that environmental assessment process.

From start to finish, these processes generally take about 12 months.

Sometime over the summer period, we anticipate you'll start to see drafts of the environmental assessment work coming out for public comment and the airport having to go through a Public Hearing process.

We have not been sitting still. While this has been going on, we've been working behind the scenes, as we mentioned before, our projects.

In this particular case here, we did a lot of the advanced planning work to kind of set the stage, working with a number of consultants, moving that into what we refer to as the program definition document to actually

create the programmatic requirements of what's going to be necessary when we push this out the door as a solicitation for actual design and construction.

One of the key aspects that we needed to take care of was inclusion in the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan.

Thank you, thank you to the team. Over -- Greg Stuart and his team over at the MPO worked with us to add that to the 2045 plan by amendment.

We got that official word in February, just two -- two and a half months ago, from the MPO.

As is listed here on the -- on the screen, you can see ongoing survey work, geotechnical studies, stormwater drainage, which is, as you imagine, in south Florida, when you create impervious surface, what you do with stormwater runoff is a really, really big issue. And it's one of the things that we're looking at very, very closely in the environmental work.

Continued development of that program definition document. Again, we anticipate that concluding about the same time that the environmental work is wrapped up

at the end of this year.

Interagency discussions, whether it's Federal Highway, our good friends -- I can't say enough kind things about the Florida Department of Transportation. They've been absolutely wonderful to work with as we navigate our way through this process.

Just as a reminder, that large facility that you see in the lower left-hand part of the screen, that is the Intermodal Center. Sits in that circular area when you come into the airport that we affectionately refer to as the donut at our facility.

That is state property. so we are working with -- with the state on a long-term lease for that so we can construct the inner -- intermodal facility at that -- at that location.

And then, you know, it's not like we meet with them once a quarter, once every four months or so. The team is engaged, if not on a daily basis, certainly on a weekly basis, between FDOT and the FAA.

The cost, as you might imagine, we continue to watch. We're seeing escalation and inflation, and have

to -- we're going to have to continue to refine numbers as we go through the process.

But here's where we are with the Intermodal Center as we stand today.

I think we're making really, really good progress.

As a reminder, between the IMC and the automated people mover system, the next project, those two, just under \$400,000,000 worth of surtax funds will go towards those projects, which is ranging right now in the 1.7 billion dollar range.

So there's still a significant amount of funding that needs to be secured, whether we're working with our partners at the state to secure that funding through grants, or, how many projects have gotten done at the airport for decades now is working with our business partners, our airlines.

They generally end up supporting debt structure. That's how all of the recent development at the airport has been done.

And those discussions with our airlines are under -
- under -- underway right now for their support for

these projects moving forward as part of the master plan.

So the automated people mover system, again, I've said this before, unfortunately, I think we're a little behind the times with our wonderful airport. We did the Kevin Costner build it and they will come. We built the South Runway, and all this traffic started to come to our airport.

Many of the terminal facilities and the landside facilities, frankly, weren't ready to accept the tens of millions of passengers that were going to be coming, and more that are expected to come as the population in south Florida continues to grow.

Our forecast, to be able to deal with that growth, when you talk about having 35 or 36 or 37,000,000 passengers right now, is anticipated to be somewhere in the neighborhood of about 52,000,000 passengers in the year 2035. Just about ten or 11 years from now.

But only if the infrastructure is in place to support that growth.

If the infrastructure's not there, if the terminals

aren't there, if the parking's not there, if the roadways aren't improved, that number won't materialize, because the airport will be capped out in terms of its growth potential.

And that's why these projects are so critically important.

I've said there are four large hub airports in the State of Florida, Orlando, Tampa, Miami, and Fort Lauderdale. Three out of the four use automated people mover technology to move their folks around their campus. One does not. We're the one that doesn't.

And Tampa and Orlando have been using automated people mover technology since 1971. They're 50-plus years into being able to move. We're still moving folks around on new buses, you know, mind you, but we're still moving people around our roadway systems on shuttle buses, 50 different shuttle buses moving folks around.

We're looking to move ourselves into the 21st century here with the automated people mover system on a dual guideway.

That project's also not new. That was talked about

way back in the Sun Port models back in 2006-2007
timeframe.

Our version in our master plan is slightly
different than that. It provides for a circular loop
on-airport, which will then connect to the intermodal
center.

We envision that there's going to be those 7,000
parking spaces used on a daily basis, but also
transiting passengers that are on their way over to the
seaport or to the hotel and Convention Center going
forward.

That is also in the environmental assessment phase.
They're being done as a joint E.A. with -- with the
intermodal center.

We anticipate that environmental, again, to be done
by the end of this year.

It also was added to the MPO's Long Range
Transportation Plan.

We're a little bit further in it in -- ahead on the
A.P.M. with respect to we had done the advanced planning
and we also finished the program definition document to

actually set the parameters for what the program would require.

And now we are going through what the solicitation of the construction of that would actually look like.

There are certain state statutes that we have to follow when it comes to putting together design criteria packages.

And the general accepted method of delivery for this type of project is what's often referred to as a DBOM. It's not spelled out there, but it's a design/build/operate and maintain.

It's usually a turnkey operation where we hire a firm that would come in, design it, build it, operate it, and maintain it over a long period of time, probably in the 15 to 20 year timeframe, in return for an availability payment. They get paid only if they meet the performance requirements that are set forth in the contract. And then there'll be penalties if they -- if they don't.

Both of these projects take, obviously, many years to construct. The estimated timeframes for completion

still stand in the 2029, 2030 timeframe.

Once we get going, we'll be going rather quickly, working with, again, the Florida Department of Transportation.

But these two projects, while they can certainly operate independently, they are somewhat anticipated to operate in concert with each other, and then also in concert with the third element of -- of the program, which was the airport/seaport/Convention Center connector.

That's not being led by the airport. That's being led by our colleague Coree Cuff Lonergan over in Broward County Transportation, under her umbrella.

But we're interacting with Coree and her team on a regular basis on that.

So that was the update.

Ladies and gentlemen, I'm happy to answer any questions you may have.

MR. ALLEN: Mr. Chairman?

CHAIR COOLMAN: Oh, go ahead, Phil.

MR. ALLEN: Mark, thank you. Excellent

presentation.

But it points out the concern that -- that I've had and the board expressed to the County Commission after our last meeting relative to coordination of all of these various elements.

The I.M.C. sits right in the middle of a massive, massive investment in transportation. You note that the hotel -- or the seaport/airport connector and the Convention Center. The bypass road, which just broke ground and it's moving forward now. And that's another element of the overall program.

And you've got the I.M.C. and the intermodal -- or the people mover within the airport.

And you've got the south County transportation connection that is also there.

I mean, we're talking probably \$10,000,000,000 -- 10,000,000,000 or \$14,000,000,000 in investments over the next five years.

And while you point out the benefit to the airport of having one federal agency over other projects, that does not include any kind of coordination as it relates

to the other elements that I keep calling a mega project of overall coordination.

And I'd like to know how -- how do you foresee that you -- your element of it, which is significant, and has been a long time in the planning stages, fits?

I mean, it goes back to when the rails went across the United States, you know, many, many years ago, and you had one company doing the rail from the east to the west and the other one starting at the west to the east, and what happened in the middle, that they didn't match up relative to connecting the two.

That's my real fear as it relates to all of these projects that are ongoing.

And there seems to be some need for an overall monitoring to make sure that -- that there is one person in charge or one entity in charge of -- now you've added another element I wasn't even aware of as it relates to the people mover -- or the -- yeah, people mover within the airport of a third party now that's going to take the risk as it relates to building and construction of that facility.

Where do we stand on coordination? How does that work within the County?

MR. GALE: Well, I would first start -- thanks for the question, Mr. Allen, and -- and I think we talked about this a little bit last time. And I used a reference from my previous home in Philadelphia, where -- where the airport was operated by the city and the seaport was operated by the state and the Convention and Visitors Bureau was operated by a not-for-profit quasi organization.

Not only not -- lack of synergy at times, but certainly no overall umbrella organization structure.

I think we benefit here from have -- knowing that, just like my colleague who just left the room, Mr. Michael -- Sandy-Michael McDonald, that the Port Everglades, that Coree Cuff Lonergan, Broward County Transit, we work every single day with members of the County administration.

I report to Monica Cepero. Coree Cuff Lonergan reports to Monica Cepero. Glenn Wiltshire reports to Monica Cepero.

We're coordinating on many different aspects of not only what we're doing individually with our projects, along with the environmental and regulatory agencies and others, but other projects that are being discussed now.

We talked about the southern portion of commuter rail, what does that do with respect to potential for a station at or near the airport, how does that tie in.

Those conversations are taking place almost on a daily basis.

And while there's not a single person that I think has their finger on every single one of them, other than possibly the County Administrator and her team, from that level of coordination, but there's no office that we're reporting to.

The automated people mover system that I described is virtually, with minor exception when it just loops over and touches the Intermodal Center, is entirely on airport property.

The Intermodal Center, once it's under lease, it'll be entirely on property that is leased by the airport.

I think that that is somewhat contained.

And I think we've demonstrated over the course of the last ten to 12 years, we've invested nearly \$3,000,000,000 in the airport in construction activities.

I've overseen quite a bit of it since my arrival here in 2016. I am not afraid of doing big projects, and I'm not afraid of coordinating with others in order to get them done.

I have all the confidence that we'll be able to pull these projects off and do them successfully.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Anyone else?

MR. MUNOZ: Yeah, I have a question. I just want to ask, is the 7,000 number higher than what we currently have at the -- at the airport? The parking lot is what I'm referring to.

MR. GALE: So we have three parking garages at the airport today. Palm Garage, the Hibiscus Garage, and the Cypress Garage.

The Palm Garage is our oldest and smallest garage. Only has approximately 2,400 spaces.

The Hibiscus, larger, newer.

The Cypress Garage is actually a combination. The first five, six levels of that facility are the rental car facility. That's not used for public parking.

The top three decks of the Cypress Garage are used for public parking.

So we have a little over 11,000 total parking spaces right now.

When we get into the construction of the Intermodal Center, the plan is to develop the Intermodal Center, add 7,000 spaces into our inventory.

But we also need to come back, when we're constructing the people mover, the Palm Garage, that oldest and smallest garage, is in the way of actually the completion of the people mover and the rework of our roadway system that, again, is only three lanes of through traffic and needs to be doubled in size in order to pull -- have the ability to pull traffic through so you don't spend 30, 40 minutes.

It is 1980s design right now.

When the Palm Garage comes down, we've reworked the roadway system, we complete the loop of the A.P.M., but

we do not forego the asset that lies above it, the vertical asset that lies above it.

So there's a new Palm Garage that actually gets added back in that'll contain roughly 4,000 parking spaces.

So the 7,000 that gets added for the Intermodal Center and the net difference between the existing Palm and future Palm is about 1500 spaces. We will net approximately 8,500 additional parking spaces at the airport going forward.

MR. MUNOZ: I ask just because it -- it seems a little high for a place that's supposed to be connecting by rail, which will obviously move more people than -- than cars can.

Just -- just a comment on that.

MR. GALE: Can you clarify connected by rail?

MR. MUNOZ: Well, the idea is for the Intermodal Center to be connected to -- to rail, correct? Is that correct?

MR. GALE: The Intermodal Center will be connected to our automated people mover system, and there is

envisioned that there'll be a connection point for commuter rail that will be traveling on the north/south align there.

But, ultimately, our airport is what's known as an origin/destination airport, meaning we don't have a lot of connecting traffic, folks going from one airplane to another airplane.

They're folks that are coming to the airport, they're coming to the airport (inaudible).

And our garages fill right now frequently. As a matter of fact, we expect that our garages will fill this weekend, Mother's Day weekend, and we'll be pushing people to the far western edge of the airport, into an overflow lot.

That's not ideal, but it's what we have to use right now so that they don't miss their flights. They can go down there. They can park their car for \$10. We provide the shuttle bus to bring them back into the terminal core.

We use that during peak periods right now, but when we go to the 52,000,000 passengers a year, if we

continue the terminal build-out, all of our forecasts say that we're going to need that additional parking to survive.

And that parking is our second largest source of non-airline revenue. It is what pays the bills at our airport.

MR. MUNOZ: Got it. Thank you.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Erdal?

MR. DONMEZ: For non-planners, could you share with us the significance or importance of adding these projects to the MPO's Long Range Transportation Plan?

MR. GALE: I'm not the expert (inaudible). The significance, as I understand it, in looking at it from an overall County perspective, in order for some of our projects to continue to vie for additional levels of funding that are out there -- so, for example, our airport is identified as a strategic intermodal system hub.

We (inaudible), in particular, from our team, as we were going through the process of inceptual and moving the Intermodal Center into its now reality as we know it

today, is to fight the Intermodal Center its own designation as a strategic intermodal system hub.

And in doing so, it now can vie or it can compete for funding that comes available.

And that is our intent, working with our friends at the Florida Department of Transportation, is that this facility is such a key nexus for lots of different aspects around Broward County. The airport has been recognized as one of the largest, if not the largest, economic engine in all of Broward County at 37 and a half billion dollars annually.

But if it's failing in terms of its ability to move people around or its ability to grow, this facility has been long sought to try to help some of those.

But they're expensive facilities. They're expensive to construct.

That designation, and as part of the Long-Range Transportation Plan, has given us our pathway, at least an opportunity, to receive additional funding going forward.

And, again, our -- our friends at FDOT have been

very, very good in supporting projects over the last several decades at our airport, and we're hoping that they continue to do so.

MR. DONMEZ: Okay. Thank you.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Anthea?

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: I just want to comment a little bit on your -- your question with respect to, you know, why penny tax funds.

And, you know, considering the comments that were made earlier this morning regarding how we're spending those dollars and that there may be -- there was some -- some suggestion that we might not be reducing traffic congestion or improving -- to reduce traffic congestion, improving road and bridges and enhance traffic signal synchronization and develop safe sidewalks.

I just really want to underscore the fact that what you're saying is our investment in the airport -- and it's a tiny investment. And I'm not -- I don't remember exactly how much percentage that we add in terms of underwriting -- underwriting the cost of the intermodal center, but I -- if my memory serves me correctly, it

was a small percent. And you can --

MR. GALE: Approximately 20 percent.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: Twenty percent. So it was not a big investment, but it's -- it was an important investment for us to partner with you in making sure that we are helping to alleviate traffic congestion.

And so (inaudible) concept of reducing traffic congestion is really very complex.

And someone spoke earlier about the incubation period. Nothing happens right away.

And I wanted to use this opportunity to kind of respond to the resident who came in and spoke about how we're utilizing the funds to reduce congestion.

It is not a simple one item solution. We have to think about the complexity of everything that is related to potentially creating congestion.

We know -- you know, if you travel to the airport at -- at any point, you know that there is some congestion. And what spills out from that also creates congestion.

So it is important for us to continue our

partnership with you and with the Transit Department,
because all of it fits together.

And, you know, some of the sidewalks, they're being
built. I think that we are improving roads. We're --
we're doing all of it at the same time.

But there is an incubation period where we will
actually start to see the results.

And so I just wanted to use this opportunity,
because I never want a resident to come and present and
feel that we weren't listening to them. And I suspect,
if that resident is watching, they're thinking, oh, my
God, and now they're investing in the airport. And I --
I wanted to underscore the fact that our investment is a
really small percentage, and it will yield a lot,
because, as you said, the airport is the greatest
economic engine in the County.

MR. GALE: Madam Vice Chair --

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: (Inaudible.)

MR. GALE: -- and Mr. Chair, if I may just respond
just briefly.

There have been tremendous investments in our

airport, not the least of which was nearly a billion dollars invested in the South Runway at the airport.

That investment was made so that the airport can continue to grow, in fuel, (inaudible), with jobs.

You know, prior to the pandemic, nearly 20,000 folks called the airport their livelihood. Today, we're about 16,000, and we're still climbing. There's a lot of employment that takes place at the airport.

Airlines have moved here. Spirit Airlines opened up their headquarters in Dania Beach. More want to fly here.

But if the infrastructure doesn't allow it, those facilities, those airlines will go elsewhere. Make no mistake about it.

So to your point about incubator, thank you so much. It is a continued investment, and they don't necessarily happen overnight. And these ideas have been talked about for over 15 years. They are now coming to fruition, with your assistance, and thank you very much.

But as we continue to do those investments, it'll set up, we believe, the economic engine to better serve

the needs of this region for 20, 30, 40 years into the future.

Thank you.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Alan?

MR. HOOPER: Yeah, I got to say, one of the things that I love about living in Broward County and Fort Lauderdale is our airport. It's easy in, easy out. It's very centrally located. The 595 and I-95 fit perfectly. You get in real easy.

And from a surtax perspective I -- we cannot not participate in this.

One thing that wasn't mentioned is the connectivity to the port. And the people -- he -- his efforts and his staff's efforts are bringing more people into our economy who are then generating sales tax.

And you talked about the rising revenue of the surtax to 24,000,000,000 or some number like that. Well, I can guarantee you, when we finish building this modal center and the -- and helping his business and his -- his staff's business do better, the airport's business do better, it will pay off in multiples to not

only the quality of life for all of our County citizens, but for just the sales tax and the return on investment.

That new hotel that the County's building is going to be incredible. And what it's going to do for businesses that Sandy was talking about, it -- all these efforts, when you mingle them together, are going to be so valuable.

And it's setting us up to be, I think, the better county of the tri-county area, because we're going to -- we are going to be the one that is more world class.

And I know Miami is. I know Miami's international, but I move around a lot easier in Broward County than I do in Dade County.

So I'm just -- I'm happy that we're participating in this.

And every time that -- I've watched your presentation more than once. Every time I watch it, I'm like, yeah. This is great.

So thank you so much for everything you do. And -- and I'm glad we're participating in it.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Mark, these two projects are, I'm

glad to know, I think you said five years out?

By the way, the surtax is five years old, to give you an idea of how long that'll be, which is like tomorrow.

The 20 percent, I think you're talking about this - - these two projects are 1.75 billion dollars, 20 percent of that.

Keep in mind, that money is going to be part of \$14,000,000,000 worth of improvements out there.

So it's even smaller. And, yes, we need to support it.

And thank you very, very much.

And one of the things I discussed the other day at the -- at the Convention Center was the word of the day really needs to be patience.

We need to be patient with these projects. It just takes time.

And I think I -- first of all, I appreciate the public member -- what was his name again?

MS. CASSINI: Aaron Nevins.

CHAIR COOLMAN: I really appreciate the public

coming. It's the first time someone came. And it's important to hear, whether we like what he said or not, or we -- we can't -- we can't address it if we don't know what the issue is.

And I think there is some truth to some of his comments that we need to address, and we will.

But these types of presentations need to get broadcast further, because the people need to understand, you know, that this surtax is far bigger than the -- what it's -- what it's even costing us.

Well, anyway, thank you very much.

Anybody -- anybody else?

MR. GALE: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

CHAIR COOLMAN: If not, we're -- we're going to move on to Motion Statement 3, and then we'll probably take a break.

Thank you. Thank you.

MR. GALE: Thank you for indulging me. Madam Director, thank you.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.

REGULAR AGENDA

**AGENDA ITEM 3 - MOTION TO NOTE FOR THE RECORD SURTAX
FUNDING IN THE AMOUNT OF \$200,000 ADDED TO THE LOW-
STRESS MULTIMODAL MOBILITY MASTER PLAN (FY 2024 SECOND
SUPPLEMENTAL BROWARD COUNTY BUDGET ACTION - SPECIAL
REVENUE FUND 11610, AGENDA ITEM #40, MAY 7, 2024)**

CHAIR COOLMAN: Gretchen, if that's okay, before we -- we had a break on our agenda, but we've taken everything out of -- out of order.

So what I'd like to do is move to Item 3, the motion statement.

And, Alan, we will not have to vote on this.

MS. CASSINI: So this is just a motion to note for the record that on May 7th, the Broward County Commission adopted the second supplemental budget.

And as part of that budget action, there was \$200,000 of surtax funding that was added into a project that is currently entirely funded with the constitutional gas tax.

It's going to allow us to expand the scope of that project and extend the schedule for eight months.

This project is the Low Stress Multi-Modal Master

Plan. That project, when it was originally scoped out, was intended to act as the structural foundation for investments throughout our community, municipal, County, and even state.

It's also acting as a match, in-kind match to a collaborative grant opportunity that we pursued with the Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization called the Safe Streets and Roads For All Grant.

We were successful in receiving that grant in 2023.

And one of the things that we want to just make sure is that we can meet the overall project's objectives and establish the type of design criteria, manual, and complete the number of feasibility studies that are necessary, and analysis, so that we have the best product that allows us to be competitive for federal funding on the back end of that Safe Streets and Roads For All Grant.

So that's the end of Item 3, and we can take a break.

CHAIR COOLMAN: One -- one other thing.

MS. CASSINI: Okay.

CHAIR COOLMAN: The 200,000 we're talking about initially was 250.

So the way I look at it, we saved \$50,000.

Anyway, we don't have to do anything with that.

That really concludes today's Regular Agenda, and we're going to go into three of the five presentations - - we've already had two -- after we take a short break.

And then we're going to talk a little bit about -- about amendment three, which may take some time. And maybe it'll be another reason for a workshop. Who knows.

So with that, it's five -- it's about eight after. So let's -- 20 after, 25 after.

MS. CASSINI: And, for the members, we're going to need you to (inaudible).

CHAIR COOLMAN: (Inaudible.)

MS. CASSINI: Thank you.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Yeah, we've (inaudible).

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: (Inaudible.)

(THE MEETING RECESSED AT 11:09 A.M. AND RECONVENED AT 11:25 A.M.)

PRESENTATIONS

II - BROWARD MPO DIGITAL TWIN INITIATIVE: DATA
MANAGEMENT, ANALYTICS, AND MODELING
(MARK PLASS, BROWARD METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION
(MPO); ANANT DINAMANI AND PATRICK ZUBIN, DELOITTE
CONSULTING, LLC)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: This next item, Number 2,
Digital Twin Initiative was a little confusing to me.
That's Mr. Mark Plass, right? All right. Broward MPO
and Deloitte.

Someone needs to explain to me a little bit about
the Deloitte -- that's a legal office, right?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

CHAIR COOLMAN: No?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

CHAIR COOLMAN: Ah. Okay. Well, I guess I'd like
to invite the MPO and their consultant, Deloitte, to
come up for a presentation about another initiative that
has received some federal funding. Matching money, huh?

My understanding is the MPO and Deloitte have been
talking to the County and other stakeholders as --

stakeholders are here as part of their general outreach efforts.

With that, I would ask Mr. Mark Plass --

MR. PLASS: Yes.

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- to introduce himself and his role in the project, as well as the consultant team.

MR. PLASS: Thank you very much.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Thank you.

MR. PLASS: So my name is Mark Plass --

MS. CASSINI: You need to turn your mic on.

MR. PLASS: Okay. And how is that done? I should know by now (inaudible).

MS. CASSINI: (Inaudible.)

MR. PLASS: Thanks.

MS. CASSINI: There you go.

MR. PLASS: Okay.

CHAIR COOLMAN: It's new.

MR. PLASS: It is. So my name is Mark Plass. I'm the Chief Transportation Engineer with the Broward MPO.

Prior to joining the MPO, I was with the Florida Department of Transportation's District 4 Traffic

Operations Office for about 30 years. I was a District Traffic Ops engineer.

So I've had a long career dealing with traffic management systems and other sorts of technology as applied to mobility.

So I'm here to provide an overview of an initiative that the Broward MPO has teamed with Deloitte Consulting on.

The initiative essentially is an integrated platform, or will be an integrated platform of a wide variety of data sources, some existing, some emerging, analytical tools, and modeling tools that, when integrated, we believe will really advance the state of planning here in Broward County.

As you'll see in the presentation that'll be given by our Deloitte partners, this is -- this is an initiative that is going to enable a much more informed approach to a wide variety of planning (inaudible), transportation planning, land use planning, project and asset management planning, and operational planning.

So one of the themes that's come up today that I've

heard is mobility through the traffic signal system. And there's applications of a platform like this to help the County with that.

The reason that we think it's important to establish an initiative like this, particularly in Broward County, is because of the environment of emerging challenges relating to climate change, resiliency, equity, land use, work force development. So we need a more holistic approach to how we plan, how we make transportation and other investments.

And this is going to be enabled through this initiative, we believe.

So we've been working -- we meaning the MPO's been working with Deloitte now for about seven or eight months to identify design features, functional requirements for this platform.

We've done extensive outreach, which will be covered in the presentation, to get as much input as we can at this point.

We recently won a \$2,000,000 USDOT Smart Grant to develop a prototype of the platform, and we are hoping

to start that grant effort within the next few months, with an anticipated completion date of a prototype that'll be functional and will be applied to specific use cases that we identify with our partners in the County here hopefully by December of 2025.

We look forward to the presentation today.

We look forward to being able to give the board periodic updates as we develop the prototype and then move forward to implementation.

And so with that, I'm going to turn it over to the Deloitte partners here. They'll introduce themselves, and they'll go through the presentation.

Thank you.

MR. DINAMANI: Hi. Good afternoon -- or, actually, it's still morning. Nice to -- nice to meet you all. And I want to start off by really thanking you all for the opportunity to present here.

My name is Anant Dinamani. I'm a partner with Deloitte, and I lead our artificial intelligence and mobility strategy efforts and how artificial intelligence supports mobility planning here in North

America.

And I've been doing the -- kind of serving the space of governments for about seven years now.

For those of you that are not familiar with Deloitte, we are the world's largest professional services firm. We started about 175 years ago. Our background was really in accounting. That's how we started.

But over time, we've expanded into financial services, consulting, and technology delivery services.

We are basically in every country you can imagine. We serve the majority of the Fortune 500 companies, so we are very large.

And the problem that we're going to talk about today is a large problem. It's complex. We do not underestimate what we're dealing with here. It's a large, complex issue that we're trying to tackle.

So as we present our -- our -- the initiative here, it's more of, today, an opportunity that we see as a global methodology that can be implemented.

But you all are at the forefront of it. We're

trying to test this out locally, because it has to work in solving very tangible local problems before we can discuss anything global.

So we wanted to kind of share with you the approach that we are taking and the problem that we're trying to attack here.

I also have my colleague here, Patrick Zubin. I'll let him introduce himself, and then we'll get into the presentation.

MR. ZUBIN: Thank you all. Yeah, Patrick Zubin, Senior Manager with Deloitte Strategy and Analytics Group.

Appreciate your time.

MR. DINAMANI: By show of hands, how familiar are you all with the technology of digital twins?

MR. HOOPER: Of what? Digital twin?

MR. DINAMANI: Yeah.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Not quite.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: No.

CHAIR COOLMAN: I think, as I said earlier, I was a little confused --

MR. DINAMANI: Yeah.

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- about this -- and a few other things. But I'm here to get educated.

MR. DINAMANI: Yeah. I -- I --

MR. HOOPER: (Inaudible.)

(Laughter.)

MR. DINAMANI: -- could be. We'll test that at the end of this.

So digital twin is basically a digital replica of anything physical. Anything physical, right?

Today, digital twins are being used by factories, by the manufacturers of cars, as an example, so you can assess where you may have a manufacturing issue beforehand, and so you're able to allocate sufficient resources or triage and address it so your throughput of making cars doesn't slow down that day. That's one example.

Digital twins are also being used heavily in healthcare.

So you think of anything physical and you want to create a digital replica of it, that's the broad

terminology of digital twin.

In this context, what we are working towards is creating a digital twin of Broward County.

What does that mean? We basically map out the roads, the bridges, the land use, the communities, and we allow for you all to test certain ideas.

So first start with seeing what a digital twin of Broward County is, and then you are able to say, okay, what if we changed the land use pattern in a certain part of the community, or we added a massive facility like the inter -- like the airport expansion. How does that fundamentally affect performance measures of the County, right?

So the digital twin potentially provides you all with an opportunity to, one, align on the single source of truth for what is happening at the County level, and then scenario plan collaboratively from there.

That's the vision, and that's the approach we're taking for digital twin initiative here in Broward.

So if you go to the next slide, as you think about this, this is a large, complex problem, right? You

think about putting together the digital twin of Broward County, it's not easy. And I want to reiterate, it comes with massive complexities, because a digital twin is only so good as the data that feeds the twin.

So if you don't have good data feeding the twin, you don't really have a digital twin you can trust.

And data is not an easy one to solve for, because you always have to understand where is this data coming from, can I trust this data, is it government owned, is it private sector owned?

So there's a lot of complexity just associated with that, not to mention the math and everything else that goes behind the scenario planning from there. So we'll get into the complexities of that.

But USDOT, from a -- from a national standpoint, who we met with before the grant opportunity was announced to educate them about the -- what we are trying to do with Broward here, from a national standpoint, why did Deloitte pick Broward County?

One, because if you think about the complexities of this county right now, it's unmatched, right? On one

side, you're seeing tremendous growth. You are seeing a lot of people optimistic and moving into this region. It's unprecedented growth.

But you're also being challenged, on the other hand, by some of the stressors that are outside of your control, like climate.

And so you have to think about how potentially these complexities evolve and how does that effect people and equity.

And that's been the central pieces for our work.

Through the work that we're doing here, we're also informing our approach for how we're supporting government agencies across the world around handling climate change, as an example, but, more importantly, how do you allow for collaborative scenario planning in ways that advances jobs, economic growth -- which is kind of the pieces behind what we're trying to do here.

So the USDOT recognizes that this is potentially a massive opportunity to rethink, especially in a time where technology advancement, like Cloud, artificial intelligence, there is so much access to insights and

information.

So they are interested in seeing how technology can improve decision making for people such as yourselves, sitting at a board level, overseeing advancements of policies and programs at the County level.

So that was USDOT's interest. They recognize that we are trying to also see if there's an approach to work this that allows for national scale on the backs of other MPOs and re-kind of thinking how digital twins can provide better planning capability for the County that is provided by the MPO.

Our -- the grant itself, the next year, we're in design, design and prototyping, right? So we are in early stages, because we're just about finishing a seven month engagement with the Broward MPO where we have set initial frameworks for how would a platform like this operate, what should this platform provide.

So we're in early stages, completing that.

But now the next stage is getting into actual platform design. Platform design starts with understanding what are some very concrete challenges or

problems that you would like to address. Or what are some of the very specific questions that you would like answered, and how can a platform like this provide answers to that in a trustworthy way.

So a lot of our next year is going to focus on connecting back into the County, the community, understanding specific challenges, prioritizing them, and (inaudible) picking the first one or two to test this out, and demonstrating a pilot.

And the way the grant works is if -- if we are able to demonstrate a pilot and we collectively see value from the pilot, then the DOT is going to fund the second phase, which is up to \$15,000,000 to implement and scale this.

We've -- as part of all of this, we've also been reaching out to several different stakeholders at the regional level, including members from the County, municipalities, Transit, state DOT, and we've been assessing kind of like, hey, if there was a platform like this that allows for shared collaborative planning, would it be useful.

Generally speaking, the answer is yes.

What majority struggle with to understand, okay, so how would this actually work, how would we actually see the results, how would we interact with it.

So today we'll spend a little bit of time describing how this could work. But, again, as I said, we're in early stage of design. We anticipate coming back in a couple of months and providing more update as this project progresses.

I touched a little bit about kind of the stressors that are facing the region. Transportation stressors, which the majority of the topics before we came on board today were example of what you all are grappling with in terms of putting large facilities in place and how will that change in 20 years.

There's just so much happening. On one side, you have advancements in technology, like autonomous vehicles, electrification, the changes in land use patterns, the changes in population, demographics. There's all of these multiple (inaudible) effects that are happening, so the question is can you study the

impacts of this collaboratively.

So transportation. We talked a little bit about climate. And, more importantly, economic development.

We applied for this grant last year as well, and one of the feedback we got from USDOT was, please enhance it to demonstrate how platforms like this can result in more jobs and economic growth, how can you involve the students, the universities in the region, so which we have now, to kind of really centrally focus on economic development in the region.

What we anticipate, in a very simple way, this platform to do is -- go from left to right. The first one is data exchange. There's a lot of data already that the County has, the MPO has, and municipalities have, the private sector can bring to the table. Can we establish a simple way for data to be gathered and exchanged between governmental agencies, to start with, to overall improve the quality of data?

Like I said before, with digital twins, it's -- it's garbage in, garbage out. If you put bad data in, you will get bad insights coming out of it.

So the first step is to establish kind of the data exchange.

But from your vantage point, what does that mean? It should give you clarity on what is happening, like situational awareness, in terms of like what types of people? What types of demographic? Where is congestion occurring. How is -- should we -- how is tolling affecting congestion? Is the transit being -- is the transit frequency giving you the amount of ridership you want?

So there could be several questions that you may have about what is happening. So let's start there. That's what the data exchange enables you to do, which is understanding the situational awareness.

Next, you get into what we describe as baseline analytics. And what that means is you're starting to describe what next.

And this is where a little bit of artificial intelligence, machine learning, and all of kind of where the technology's already here are. And none of what I'm describing is new.

I mean, Amazon, as an example, knows when I'm going to buy my next toothpaste before I know it myself.

So the point is like you can predict what's happening fairly easily. Those technologies exist.

So once you have a situational awareness, you are able to predict kind of what's happening next. So you can predict is congestion going to show up tomorrow, at what point? If I had a sporting event, is it going to affect congestion in certain parts of the community? Which communities are struggling with access? Are they going to struggle with access tomorrow when there's some sort of an event?

You're able to kind of do some baseline analytics about what next.

The last part that we're trying to do is on demand modeling, which is now you get into what if. When you said, I understand what's happening, I understand what's going to happen, but what if I took certain action? What if we change the signal timing? What if we change transit frequency? What if we change toll price? What if we change ridership, especially for like students?

We've done this of like changing like how much they pay for transportation. What if you deployed autonomous vehicles in certain corridors?

So there's a lot of what if questions that you can ask, and you have to model them. And so the on demand modeling really gets into putting some control back in your hands about what if.

More importantly, because this is a platform that we plan on keeping continuous, you're going to be able to come back and say, hey, by taking the what if actions, you can measure your impact over time. Is it really resulting in the performance measures that you wanted? And you're able to make the (inaudible) continuous process.

So that's kind of the vision for the platform.

This is kind of some baseline kind of you -- and we can get into a demo, you know, at -- at a future date. We're starting to prototype how this could look in terms of like how your constituents would interact with the a platform like this, how -- what kind of metrics they'll see.

We recognize that we are -- we can't do this alone. Deloitte -- this is a large, complex problem, so we've never looked at it as like, we're going to come solve for it.

We have actually assembled a team of fairly advanced and -- experts who know how to work this problem alongside us. So we've assembled a team, for instance, with Google. That is part of our team. And we are bringing the best of what Google can offer, as you all can imagine, with their data sets, with their mobility assets. So Google's part of our team.

We are also partnered with a bunch of universities, including locally. FAU is part of our team. We also have a couple universities like MIT, that has the best thinkers on where artificial intelligence is headed.

We have members from Berkley, who have the best land use thinkers.

So we are assembling the team knowing that we alone can't solve this problem. And we've assembled a team of like globally renowned experts on these topics to think about combining land use models with climate models with

the transportation models, and combining all of that into a single digital twin experience that puts the power in your hands to understand and assess where this might be going next.

I will pause there to see if there's any questions. If not, I'll hand this to my colleague to talk a little bit about what are some of the specific problems we're looking at, and also will appreciate your input along the way.

MR. MUNOZ: I just had one -- well, maybe it's a comment rather than a question. But I would love to see safety be part of the -- some of the metrics that you all analyze. Because I saw there there was a section for like congestion and some other things, but I think it's something that's often overlooked.

We already have so much data on like where crashes happen and where people are getting hurt and, unfortunately, getting -- getting killed.

For example, in Broward County, I think last year, something around 200 and -- and 50 people lost their lives. And this is not something new. This is

something that happens every year. Sometimes it's closer to 300.

So if we can analyze that data and make it part of this modeling to better understand where those things are happening and how we can -- we can prevent them.

MR. DINAMANI: Yeah, I think that is by far the most priority in this case that is showing up, no matter where we're having this conversation.

We just very recently were announced to do a statewide pilot for this entire platform for California. And that's their number one concern. They want us to help understand what might be causing safety incidents and where they are coming from, right? That's like the fundamental use case that is showing up.

Again, as part of this process, we will hear everyone out and collectively prioritize which ones to focus on first. And if you all collectively prioritize safety analysis as the first place, then maybe that's where we start.

But thank you for bringing that up.

MR. ZUBIN: (Inaudible.) Yeah, so this is kind of

a -- as we've been going through this process, right, with the MPO and a lot of other local governments, the County, we've been doing a lot of interviews and starting to try to design the experience of this platform to meet specific user needs, whether or not that's a planner or a data scientist or executive decision maker like yourselves.

So, you know, the way that a user will interact with this information kind of depends on, you know, their own role and responsibility.

But what we've started to also do is kind of illustrate the (inaudible) possible in terms of this -- this platform and the types of data that it'll illustrate and -- and where it can inform decision making throughout kind of the entire planning life cycle.

So you see here -- and that was a great question, Alejandro, in terms of safety data sets. To start, we envision the platform will be used to help identify project needs.

And that can depend on different types of, you

know, performance metrics or data that, you know, anyone might find relative, whether or not that's, you know, areas of high safety risk or, you know, areas of higher commutes to, you know, employment centers or other points of interest, and starting to overlay those data sets on top of each other, so you can see maybe where there are those areas of need and how -- you know, not just kind of socioeconomic or demographic might align as well.

That -- then we can also look into the future, like Anant mentioned. Sort of that forward-looking predictive and trend analysis to see not just where those needs are today, but where they might be in the future.

And this, we believe, helps to inform not just project needs, but understanding cost of inaction.

So, often, you know, we do cost benefit analyses for projects, but the status quo is kind of, you know, status quo.

So this helps, I think, decision makers have a more holistic picture of, you know, where there are areas of

needs and where they might direct investments.

Again, we've been looking at lot at kind of combining data sets so that you can see where, you know, potential projects might impact, you know, folks at different socio-economic levels or disadvantaged communities, or you can layer on top kind of federally designed Justice 40 zones as well, to see where not just the needs are, but potential project impacts might accrue over time.

And then, again, we'll layer in or move forward into kind of the scenario analysis where we can do before or after project impact analysis and then track those performance -- track those project performance over time.

In coordination with, you know, a lot of your fellow members of the community, we started to zero in on a couple high profile projects that might serve as a proof of concept demonstration of this platform in the next phase of work.

One of those has to do with Historic Miramar Innovation Village and Redevelopment Project, this mixed

use kind of commercial real estate development, residential real estate development, and transportation improvement project where we think there's opportunity to sort of apply this holistic and integrated modeling approach that would combine, you know, travel demand and transportation modeling with land use forecasting as well, which can not only help, you know, understand the impacts of potential real estate development projects, but also, you know, for local government decision makers, assess potential supporting policies like zoning or land use changes that could encourage, you know, high density development that would then feed in and support a -- a ridership base for perhaps expanded public transportation, and basically help identify, you know, where there's some of these project needs and project opportunities that lie kind of at the center of -- of land use and transportation.

The other project that's emerged is regarding some of the potential Broward County school closures. And, again, this is more focused on sort of what if analysis around real estate development and sort of, you know,

different -- different opportunities to kind of repurpose public assets.

And this is just one example of that.

And then I know Mark, you know, has raised, again, the opportunity to not just focus on long term planning but also short term operational planning, which could include, you know, things like more active transportation and transportation systems management strategies, such as traffic synchronization.

So there's a range of kind of near-term operational planning use cases that we're also looking at.

Again, I mean, we believe the platform as a whole can benefit, you know, decision makers and users across agencies in different roles, provide kind of that situational awareness and common understanding of needs as they exist today, help provide, you know, data-driven analysis, data science to folks that are not, you know, themselves sophisticated data scientists. So bringing the tools of kind of data driven analysis to more and more people throughout, you know, our agencies and -- and kind of community.

And then also, over time, look at these projects, track their sequencing and their impact over time, and help better communicate to the public the impact of -- of our investments.

Like Mark mentioned, we're not doing this in -- in a silo. The MPO has very deliberately engaged a lot of its peers in the public to try and engage them in the design of the process.

That's intentional, because they want this platform to not just serve their own needs, but, you know, help address other needs and opportunities from, you know, their peer agencies.

So, you know, in that spirit, we've kind of employed a -- some -- some principles for development going forward which includes kind of taking a flexible platform approach so it's not just a point solution, but it's a, you know, collection of capabilities that can be deployed for different use cases.

We're taking an (inaudible) development approach as well, where we're focusing on, you know, early projects that have a clear impact but can scale and extend over

time.

Designing the platform architecture so that it is not, you know, on-premises and sort of limited in its access to other users, but is sort of a federated architecture that complements other solutions that exist today.

And, finally, modular, so that the MPO and your partners are not locked into certain vendors, but you're designing this in such a way that it could be, you know, open source, open access over time.

And, again, I think this builds on a lot of the progress that the MPO, the surtax board, the County have been making over the last, you know, many -- a lot further back than just this timeline shows.

And we're kind of at the start of this next phase of our journey, you know, with the MPO and -- and very excited to partner with you for feedback and guidance as we move forward and -- in conjunction with, like Anant mentioned, a team of both global and local experts to help guide -- guide us along the way.

Mark, anything you'd want to close with?

MR. PLASS: Yeah. So again, I'd like to thank you for providing us a venue to give you an introduction to this.

You know, just a couple of points I'd like to make. One is that it's very important that what comes out of this is going to add incremental value.

This is -- this is something that has to prove itself through initial use cases that lead to other use cases, but it's got to provide value. We have to be able to show that benefit, and that's what we intend to do through the prototype that we're -- we're going to be developing (inaudible) the Smart Grant.

The other thing is -- and the -- the word incubator has been used several times at the meeting today. And that's really what this is. This is something that is a work in progress, that's going to get, I believe, increasingly able to add value in a broad range of scenarios. We've shown you some of them today.

But over time, and as we get experience with the model, with the analytics, other use cases will emerge. And, you know, I -- I would certainly, you know, again,

value any -- any input you have, any forums that we could come in the future to talk to you guys about this platform, where we are with it, and to get your thoughts on not only where we are, but also use cases and -- and -- and how this could help you, how it could help Broward County, how it could help the cities in Broward County.

And I guess with that, if there's any other questions, we can answer them.

Thank you.

CHAIR COOLMAN: I think Anthea has something.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: I'd like to make a comment.

I -- this all sounds very exciting to me, and I have a feeling that you guys are really stoked about being able to be a part of this.

But as you were talking about, you know, if it's physical, you can create this twin concept, I was wondering about some of the intangibles, you know, some of those things that, when you're building that twin, that I would like to see incorporated.

And I'm not sure how you would (inaudible), because

these are probably not the easiest things to measure in a quantifiable way.

But I think about things like cultural intelligence, how do you immerse all of that in that concept.

I think about how we engage our clergy, our faith-based organizations across the spectrum, because they play a significant role in our population.

I think about things like the Silver Tsunami, the fact that we have particularly aging demographics here in south Florida.

I think about the impact of immigration and politics.

Those are just a few.

MR. PLASS: I think that -- so I think that's an excellent observation. And one of the real strengths of developing a platform like this is that we are going to be able to integrate data that reflect the things that you're describing and understand how things like that or factors like that function holistically, and we can make better investment decisions over time thinking about

things beyond just simply how much traffic is on the road from Point A to Point B, but what is the impact on the community, what is the impact on workforce development, what is the impact on housing, what is the impact on a wide variety of things.

And that's what a model like this can do. Exactly what you're saying are the sorts of things that we would look to begin to integrate into the model over time with the data sources that are available that aren't being used as effectively as they could be.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: One last thing, if I can just --

CHAIR COOLMAN: Sure.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: -- Mr. Chair.

I -- I'm going to make a shameless plug for community colleges. I don't know if that was part of the -- a shameless plug because I'm with Broward College.

The thing is, you mentioned universities, but community colleges play a significant role in our workforce development, and so they should also be at the

table.

Thank you.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Yeah, following on that, Nova -- I -- go back a slide. Who are your partners right now? I noticed FAU is on there.

I would think any of the -- any of the educational --

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: I would hope.

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- (inaudible) people you need to talk to.

MR. DINAMANI: Yeah, I -- I think that's a really -- I think that's a really good input about how we engage the community.

So one of the (inaudible) also is the museum is part of our team, the local Broward museum is part of our team. And the data and the insights that are coming out of this, we wanted to make it accessible to the community, to the public. So they want to understand how the communities are and how they might change, and, more importantly, inform and provide community feedback back to you all.

As part of that, I think the community college component, I think, will be very important. So thank you for highlighting that.

We'll take that as an action item to think about how we may want to solicit specific input from them alone.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: Thank you.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Anyone else?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I have -- I --

CHAIR COOLMAN: Phil?

MR. ALLEN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

How -- what's the process for validating the AI determination of, you know, how reliable is this model?

And when you get 15 layers down in the model development and there's a piece of bad data, how do you guard against allowing that bad piece of data to infect the entire twin?

MR. DINAMANI: I think what you're bringing up is probably the most complex question we have to analyze as we work through this.

We have used calibration techniques today to pilot

these. And what we have done is essentially compared the outputs of this model with the models that you currently use, and confirm that, with the same input data, you're providing the same output.

So that we are doing calibration. As mentioned, we have on our team Ph.D.s that have worked this for 30, 40 years. They're informing.

But I don't want to underestimate the complexity, because it's not just about how you calibrate and get started. It's how do you maintain the integrity of it going forward.

And that is where the complexity really comes in, which is how do you continuously monitor for what's coming into this model from a data standpoint, and how do you continue to trust that.

We also are partnered with a not-for-profit called Data and Trust Alliance that is working that exact problem nationally.

What they are doing is defining what they call is a provenance standard. And so they explain what provenance means is they have a methodology that helps

you understand where is this data coming from, who generated it, how often is it being collected, how often are you going back to test the source of it.

And so there's a whole bunch of criteria and categories upon which you derive a trust score. So we are trying to --

MR. ALLEN: And at some point in time, the twin starts to say, oh, I'm going to invalidate that particular critique and --

MR. DINAMANI: (Inaudible.)

MR. ALLEN: -- develop my own approach, because I think it's a better solution.

MR. DINAMANI: We don't know that yet. We don't know that yet. It -- we -- but I think like having human in the loop to confirm if you want the machine to propose such recommendations and do you want to accept it or not.

I think that control needs to remain in the hands of the human that is going to oversee and govern the technology.

Which is why we think that this technology should

potentially be inside the government, right. Because no private sector is going to look at it from a holistic lens of community advancement.

We are not bringing any technology into this for that reason.

Our job is to integrate the best of what's out there and provide the governmental institutions the opportunity to really assess, understand, and shape this.

Which is why we started with very local construct, because this is not a state level problem. This is not a national problem. This is a local problem. And we've got to figure out a place to house this technology locally so it builds trust.

So that's kind of where we landed.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Alan.

MR. HOOPER: Okay. So I hear you on the whole government thing, but I -- the thing that worries me -- and I'm kind of looking further ahead, because I get what you guys are doing, but let's just use Broward County for an example. And you layer transportation,

then you layer water -- sea level rise, and then you layer land use.

And then, eventually, the algorithms and the AI start to learn what the averages are, basically, right? The water rises, this is what's going to happen. So you've got to build the buildings this high off the ground.

And because of transportation, this use on this piece of land works the best, because you can put 223 units here.

And the impact, right, single-family homes over here, because of the impact and the environment.

It -- it's just -- all of a sudden, it'll become, in my opinion, a very averaged -- a thing that AI will learn, to put what it thinks is perfect there.

And what worries me about government is they'll say -- they'll touch that site and say, this is what you can do here because this is the perfect thing to do.

And what worries me about that is you're using an algorithm average or whatever data was fed in over the history of it, it says that's the best thing, and then

you take creativity out of the equation.

You've just removed what -- one individual who has an original idea can no longer participate in -- potentially. Potentially -- land use.

And what worries me between private and public, private always looks for the what if, even when being told what the averages are. And the public always goes with what the averages are, because it's a safe bet. And voters average out.

So that's something to think about, because you're -- you're on the cusp of changing the world with this. You know it. You've thought of all the possibilities.

I'm pretty good at putting dots together and figuring it out as I'm listening, and it's amazing what you're doing.

And you say that -- who will or who owns the platform now? Or who's funding it?

MR. DIMAMANI: The USDOT.

MR. HOOPER: USDOT. So it's going to be the government's platform.

But while -- I don't know who UrbanSim is and all

these others, (inaudible), as that goes on, aren't these other groups going to have access or create their own platforms from that?

Mr. DIMANANI: Yeah. So you -- you've raised a lot of great points.

There are methods, different mathematical methods that can be used here. And so some of the technologies, like UrbanSim uses (inaudible) probably (inaudible) methods where, again, we hope to appropriate governmental input.

MR. HOOPER: Uh-huh.

MR. DINAMANI: You're able to shape the mathematical, the math behind it, to do what you think is right.

And this is why, again, it's going to be important for you all to understand what this is.

MR. HOOPER: Right.

MR. DINAMANI: The second part is the reason why we have always wanted the government to pay for this is because this is going to require integration of multiple technologies, right? So UrbanSim, as an example, brings

one of the best land use models. We are working with Google that is building a great climate model.

But the integration is where the magic happens, right? The integration blueprint, we want the government to own it.

So what happens is you pick UrbanSim (inaudible). You may not. But you may take it to -- to another part, and you may say, you know what? I don't trust Google's climate model. I want to replace that with a local university's climate model because I trust the students here more than I trust a private sector to tell me what the risk is.

You can replace that out.

But the integration is where the magic is, and the integration's going to be owned by the government.

And we want to continue to evolve that integration logic. So if you want to remove piece parts and replace it, the control's still in your hands to do that.

MR. HOOPER: Okay. Thank you.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: All right. So I'm glad you raised some of the questions that you did --

MR. HOOPER: Alan.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: -- Alan, because that's kind of where my mind was going as we continue talking about this.

And I'm glad it's happening in Florida, because sunshine -- we're a sunshine state, so a lot of what we do with government funds has to be made public.

But I really am -- I'm curious to see how, as this evolves, the governance -- what the governance structure will look like.

I'm also interested in emphasizing, at this point, the importance of an ethical oversight. I think that's really important, because I would worry about someone using this kind of platform and the information that you can obtain from it, with all of its future projections and so on, to profit, significantly, to the demise of the greater good of our community.

And so those are my -- my concerns.

MR. DINAMANI: The ethical oversight component needs to be defined together. We are ready to converse with global (inaudible) leaders on the topic. We are

having this exact discussion in B.C. in Vancouver. We are starting our discussions with government of India. We are in discussions with Australia.

This is the same concern that is showing up everywhere.

The digital infrastructure is also enabled differently in these countries. If you think about how India has approached digital infrastructure, it is very different than how some of the Western world has approached it.

It is going to be important to put together a group of global (inaudible) leaders to start to wrangle these topics together, because we can facilitate it. We can inform the choice cascade, but you all have to pick what makes it right.

So that actual government structure, we will put together the choices that exist. We will bring global perspective into it and allow for global (inaudible) leaders to share ideas on it, but it's going to have to be led by you all to decide how you want to oversee and govern this.

MR. HOOPER: Yeah, one -- one other thing that comes to mind is it just seems like -- and I know this is brought up by a million people on the internet, but if my job were easier, which this is going to make a lot of jobs easier, I would hire fewer people.

I think the work -- the work is going to be lessened. Maybe that gives people more time for the live part of their life. Maybe. But it will certainly -- it could certainly affect future populations and the need to have -- and I know this sounds crazy, but the need to have children.

It could eventually -- and maybe we're having a boom anyway worldwide, and maybe that's a good thing. Who knows what's going to be good. But this is the cusp of something now that, to me -- and I never thought of AI the way you just put it, looking at how a whole community or a whole globe develops and grows and, I mean, you've hit the heartbeat of -- of our -- our humanity. I mean, really.

Nobody cares about an (inaudible) going -- driving around the street, but when you put all -- everything

together, it -- it's -- it's the whole -- it's the appetizer, the dinner, and the -- and the dessert.

So it's amazing. It's amazing. It just -- there's a lot of --

CHAIR COOLMAN: Go ahead.

MR. DINAMANI: I -- I just had one thing to react, because we were -- I was mentioning this to someone else. we were in (inaudible) negotiating with California state on this topic, and we wanted them to start small, because of the reasons we're discussing here.

They pushed back and they said, we want to go statewide.

And eventually, when we got to understanding why they pushed to statewide is for that reason. They said, there's a lot of emphasis on integrative corridors, you know, transit frequency, but you've got to look at the macro to solve this problem.

And so that's why they were like, we've got to look at statewide.

But then I explained to them that local input is

going to be critical to build this up into state. And we started describing what we're doing here.

And they connected the dots. They were like, that's exactly the way to architect this.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Well, thank you. Now I understand why I was a little confused and didn't understand what you were going to talk about.

I really want to thank you for coming here early, because I think this is going to be a bigger issue or a bigger opportunity in the long term.

And I'm glad we got at least me straightened out on what direction we're going.

Thank you.

Anyone else?

MR. MUNOZ: I just had one -- I'm sorry to -- to keep this going a little bit, but maybe -- maybe this is a specific question that -- that doesn't have an answer right now.

But do you know if, when it comes to land use, the value per acre metric is used?

MR. DINAMANI: I may not have the answer to that,

but I'm going to connect you with our experts who can help answer that.

So I take that as an action, and we'll be back in touch on it.

MR. MUNOZ: Thank you.

CHAIR COOLMAN: That it? Thank you very much.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: Thank you.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: Thanks.

(Applause.)

MR. HOOPER: I've got to find my (inaudible).

**III - CYCLE 5 MUNICIPAL CAPITAL PROJECTS APPLICATION
UPDATE (TODD BRAUER, PRESIDENT, WHITEHOUSE GROUP; BRYAN
CALETKA, MPO SURTAX SERVICES MANAGER)**

CHAIR COOLMAN: Next is going to be Cycle 5 Municipal Capital Projects Update.

Todd Brauer and Bryan Caletka are going to give us a presentation.

This is -- this is always dear -- dear to our hearts. We're going to see what the cities have requested and where we're going (inaudible) Broward MPO.

But this is related to the Surtax Services

Agreement the County has with the MPO to select certain municipal projects for funding each year.

By the way, I believe -- maybe we've said it before, but cities are last year and this year limited to submitting three projects as opposed to unlimited now, correct? And part of that reason is one city might submit 20 and one submit one, and you're not going to do 20 projects anyway.

So, by the -- how's that working? Are the cities happy with that?

MR. BRAUER: Yeah, where it's really working is we're able to concentrate then on developing strong applications. So instead of looking at 20 different projects, we can narrow in on three.

It has definitely helped when I give this presentation about the educational process and the development process. That's really where we've seen the greatest value.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Okay. We're going to -- we're going to be seeing this, by the way, again in August.

So, with that, go ahead and tell us about Cycle 5.

MR. BRAUER: All right. So the update that I'm going to start with is beginning with the resources that are always available.

And now I see why everybody stood back.

The resources that are always available to the applicant. So 24/7/365, they have a website specifically designed for them. It's my dash mcps.org. In that, we actually have a space for the elected officials as well as municipal staff, so those that are developing the application.

And then we ask for a resolution of support so the electeds can then see what's happening with their process itself.

We do everything from the latest events, we have news items that come out.

Anyone can register to receive those. So if you go on the website, a (inaudible) popup will indicate please sign up for basically events and news.

But in that news, we'll always guide you to other places and other information that you want to look at.

We've got all the educational documents on there,

as well as access to our liaison team.

And then there's also a link to the portal.

So we have automated the entire process.

Everything is done online. They have specific passwords that they use to log in to their account.

We do that not only for transparency, but also keeping a record. So we have a record of every cycle that's gone on and everything that's been submitted by the municipalities as we go on.

So those resource -- resources are always available to our applicants.

Now, before we started this cycle, actually (inaudible) started (inaudible), because with this board, we discussed this multiple times about what are the municipalities doing, how are they evolving as the program evolves.

One of the things I know the messages that I'd sent when I first met with you all was these things take time. Every program develops and evolves, and it matures into a process, it becomes a little more streamlined.

So as we start moving towards this -- as you had mentioned, we're into Cycle 5, we're in the fifth year, I wanted to first start our efforts by looking at where are we at as it relates to the municipalities themselves.

So I was able to divide them into three separate groups of participation.

So if you go down and you see the variable that I tested, I looked at the number of times the municipality had participated in Cycles 2, 3, and 4, the number of applications they actually had in their portal.

So they can have as many applications in the portal as they want. They're limited to three, but they can develop them over time.

So, again, even though our cycle typically starts really the first of the year, we're also developing applications throughout the year.

But then I also wanted to look at the total number of applications that were submitted in Cycle 4.

So those were the participations that I looked at, and I was able to divide them into three separate

categories.

Those high-end users, so those are the ones that are very active, they have participated in every cycle, they have more than three -- at least three or more applications that are already in their -- in their portal, and they had submitted all three of their applications prior to that.

So these are really the high end users. Those represent 52 percent overall.

So the pie graph gives you a sense of how they fleshed out.

But then on the other end of the spectrum, we have the low participation. So these are folks that have only actually participated once in the three cycles. They don't have any applications in their portal, and they didn't submit anything in 4.

So that's where I really wanted to focus my attention on.

CHAIR COOLMAN: You know, can I -- maybe you're going to answer it, but are we doing anything to educate them and make sure -- okay. Go ahead.

MR. BRAUER: Yeah. In fact, thank you, Chair, you have teed me up nicely.

But I wanted you to see how I was viewing this, because I want to be able to make sure that I'm focusing on those that are at the lower end of the spectrum.

Not to say that I'm not paying attention to the high side, but I want to give special attention to that.

And that's exactly what we did.

So our educational process includes three different items. We do one-on-one meetings. We have a training session about how to develop your applications, how to improve your applications, but then we also this year wanted to include one (inaudible). How do we (inaudible). (Inaudible.)

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

MR. BRAUER: So, essentially, we had two different training sessions and then the one-on-ones.

We do the one-on-ones starting in December all the way through the application process.

So you'll see on one side we also have a YouTube channel, so if they're unable to attend one of the

trainings, we record it, so that way, they can see it.

I can verify that almost all the municipalities went to the YouTube channel and had viewed it. We even had several elected officials that had seen it as well.

So there are people definitely taking interest in understanding how do we get these applications together and how are they evaluated and ranked.

So I'm going to very quickly -- again, you've got one-on-one meetings, Training Session 1 and 2.

I want to give you some statistics about that. So (inaudible) participating and how they're participating.

So we didn't quite have 50 percent of the overall municipalities that had involved themselves in a one-on-one meeting.

These one-on-one meetings are critical, because what we do with them is I will actually look at what they submitted, if they submitted anything the prior year. I look at the application; I evaluate it. I look for opportunities where they can improve the application to get a higher score or where we had questions on it.

We had about not quite 50 percent there.

But on the other side, I wanted you to see right out of the gate, you start to see 50 percent of those that I had deemed low participation, that they hadn't been active, four of the eight participated in a one-on-one meeting.

So that was the first time that they're actually getting engaged in this process.

When it came to the training sessions, we're going to see a little bit of a drop from the (inaudible), but you get a sense of like who's really participating on this. And we have a higher level.

So we have about 55 percent that had at least one representative. Many of them had two or three or four, because we had 13 together, that then participated in understanding how is a application developed.

On Training Session 2, we're now looking at 62 --

MS. CASSINI: Hold on.

MR. BRAUER: -- two percent. Okay.

MS. CASSINI: No, you're good.

MR. BRAUER: Okay. We're looking at 62 percent.

And at this point, we're engaging for the low

participants.

So you're seeing that increase of all user sides, whether they're high, medium, or low.

So we're getting a lot of activity and a lot of education that's occurring related to it.

That's what I'm excited about the end statistics that I want to show you.

So we had 62 percent of the municipalities that attended a training session. That's a seven percent increase.

We literally have increases on every side of the board here.

We have a seven percent increase of participation in the training sessions, a 14 percent increase in the number of one-on-ones that we had with the municipalities, and then we had more, a 15 percent increase, in the number of municipalities that participated in the program.

So 23 total municipalities had a -- at least one application. So we're seeing that increase all across the board.

That was one of the reasons why we wanted to do some segmentation in understanding what their needs were.

On the bottom half of this, you can see how the process went along.

We had the training sessions.

The application portal opened February 9th. It ended through March 8th, so there's an overlap with the education and training.

Right now, we've completed the verification process that we also do with the Surtax General Counsel with a preliminary eligibility review.

And then this month, we're engaged in the assigning of the scores.

And then we will provide Gretchen the list of ranked projects as well as the recommendation on June 1st.

So in summary, we had 60 applications. That was a 15 percent increase from last year.

You've got a total request of \$198,000,000.

Ninety percent of that was for construction, so

these are projects that have been designed. They're ready to go.

But the statistic I really wanted to show is -- that -- that we're really proud of, is 38 percent of those municipalities that we had seen as low participation level had submitted an application.

And I remind you, they had no applications in their portal, they had not submitted anything. And only one of them had submitted once through Cycle 2, 3, and 4.

So a big improvement on that end, and very pleased to see that.

So with that, I'll take any questions.

CHAIR COOLMAN: I just want to make (inaudible) no one else does.

First of all, for the younger members on the board, we started off by asking staff to get involved in educating these cities.

Some of these cities didn't have the ability to fill out the form.

You can see how far we've moved in five years.

This is absolutely great information, and thank you

for that. You need to be congratulated for that.

Before I get into a question on Cycle 1 -- does anybody know what Cycle 1 is?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

CHAIR COOLMAN: Well, the question is -- maybe it isn't for you, but I would like to know, we -- we've talked about 2, 3, 4, and now we're talking about 5 and making progress. We have, I believe, still some cycle 1 projects that are out there.

And correct me if I'm wrong. I don't know if this is a question for Nathaniel or Gretchen.

But I think we need to hear about Cycle 1 today, too.

MR. KLITSBERG: Mr. Chair, I could speak generally in terms of Cycle 1, but very briefly. And I -- and I did comment at the first meeting that I -- I (inaudible) be held accountable in terms of what we're doing in terms of moving Cycle 1 projects forward.

I believe that, as of January 1, there were between three and four dozen Cycle 1 projects that were not under project funding agreement.

That number has been halved, I believe.

We, in the last -- even in the last couple of weeks since the start of the second quarter have had a number of cities submitting their checklists for Cycle 1 projects.

When we start talking about the third amendment, I'll bring up a discussion that was had with members of the BCCMA Surtax Subcommittee with regards to these Cycle 1 projects.

There's going to be a memo that's going out relating to the status of Cycle 1.

Oh, can you hear me? Okay. Sorry about that.

There's going to be a memo that does go out with regards to the status of Cycle 1 projects. And I believe we are now down to maybe a little bit over a dozen that there's no activity on from a number that -- I think it was three-plus times that at the beginning of the year.

And the BCCMA was very interested in knowing which cities are freezing money up that could be otherwise utilized for the program.

So I'm hopeful that when that memo goes out and it makes its way into the hands of the city managers, that they will be having discussions with those cities that are not doing anything.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Thank you. Anyone else?

Todd, thank you very much.

Congratulations. Keep it up.

**IV - BROWARD'S ADVANCED TRAFFIC SIGNAL CONTROL SYSTEM
(RASEM AWWAD, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR, BROWARD COUNTY TRAFFIC
ENGINEERING DIVISION)**

CHAIR COOLMAN: Well, we are getting close to the end, but not there yet.

Gretchen, we have time, right? Number -- what was Number 4 is now Number 5, traffic signalization synchronation -- synchronation -- synchronization. It's getting -- I'm getting hungry again.

(Laughter.)

CHAIR COOLMAN: Mr. Awwad, welcome. You're going to talk about something that I hear a lot about from a lot of people.

And we used to think it was number one on our

priority, because we thought it could be fixed fairly simple, and maybe we need some more AI. I don't know.

But --

(Laughter.)

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- what's the status of it today?

MR. AWWAD: (Inaudible.) Good afternoon, Chair, Vice Chair, members of the Surtax Oversight Board.

My name is Rasem Awwad, and I'm the Assistant Director of the Traffic Engineering Division here at the County.

And today I'm going to highlight the traffic signal system.

Oh, can -- can you hear me better now?

CHAIR COOLMAN: Yeah, you've got to get a certain -- you get too far away and --

MR. AWWAD: Yeah. Yeah, I guess I'll -- I'll find my sweet spot. Is this -- is this okay?

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

MR. AWWAD: All right. Good deal. Good deal.

All right. Quick overview of the agenda. I'm going to just highlight the components of our traffic

signal system, then get into the adaptive traffic control system, where it stands. Performance measuring, and then highlight the Florida Department of transportation active arterial management, which has been a very successful program in managing congestion.

And then I'll wrap up by highlighting one of the key items that -- that the MAP was able to help with, and that's the proactive approach to maintaining our vehicle detection systems.

All right. As far as the County's traffic signal system, it is a very large system. If you start at the bottom, we have approximately 1,470 traffic signals.

We're next to Miami-Dade as far -- as far as the state goes with the size of the system.

Then you get to the detection systems. The County primarily uses optical detection systems, which are these video cameras that you see on the approach to every intersection.

To the right, that little note that says thousand-plus streaming, that is also made possible by the MAP, which I'll highlight a little later. It helps in

maintenance and monitoring.

And then we get to the communication system.

Again, detection and communication, I would say, two primary elements that help (inaudible) be proactive as far as signal management systems go.

We're at 70 percent cellular communication, 30 percent fiber optic communication systems. Of course, the MAP is going to add to that percentage under the fiber optics.

School flashers. We oversee the maintenance -- maintenance, set up, configuration of about a thousand eighty-five school flashers. That's associated with about two thirty school zones throughout the County.

Again, the MAP has been instrumental in -- in upgrading these to the latest standard. We operate about six to eight of these school zones annually through MAP funding.

And, finally, we oversee the maintenance and -- and operation of 1500 streetlights.

All right. Adaptive traffic control systems. As far as the program goes, if you look on the map to the

last, that's just a general overview of the locations or the corridors.

It's a total of 26 roadway segments or projects that are programmed through the year 2030 as we stand.

To the right is our -- is a summary of the projects that are currently under construction. These happen to be administered by the state through local funding agreements, the top two being US-1 through the downtown Fort Lauderdale area from approximately 595 through Broward Boulevard, as well as University Drive, very close to where we are, from 595 a little north of Broward Boulevard here.

These are -- these are the furthest along, approximately 75 to 80 percent complete.

And in checking with the state, we're looking at late summer as a target for completion.

As far as the rest of the projects, there are two that are under design. Four are going to also be administered by the state.

There are seven in total that are in the construction procurement process.

So there's good movement overall on the ones that you do not see here.

There are about six of them that are left for future determination, simply because we want to get -- select the appropriate system for these.

Every other project, the system has been selected, but there are unique characteristics to the ones remaining, the five or six remaining, including downtown Fort Lauderdale. It's more of a grid system around the Sawgrass Mall area. A bit of a circular area with -- with roads branching from it. So we want to make sure we select the appropriate system after we have the systems deployed and experimented with and tested.

These are just quick snapshots from US-1. The pictures that you see are from actually US-1 and Broward Boulevard.

Picture on the left is a -- a new traffic signal controller cabinet. That's the silver box you see on the side of the road. It has the controller, an advanced controller. That's the brain that takes all this data from the field, processes it, goes back to our

central services and push -- would be pushing the optimal signal timing.

On the right, you'll see some images of what now we're seeing streaming as far as those advanced detection systems that are needed for, A, running these adaptive systems and, B, measuring their performance.

These hybrid detection systems have the radar component, and, as you see on the right side of the screen, that's what we would see. That's for the advanced detection, about 400 feet upstream from the intersection on every approach, or on the main line approach.

And then the bottom one is more of the optical standard detection that does the counts, the delay at the stop bar, and as well as how -- how much green time are the vehicles utilizing.

All right. When it comes down to performance measuring, we -- as of the past few months, we've been working with the state. The state has a lot of resources, a lot of software platforms they have access to that can help in that manner.

Additionally, most of our investment goes on the state highway system. So they have a vested interest in the performance of the system as well.

So we are looking to partner with -- we've partnered with the state and are looking to develop a continuous measurement through a dashboard that takes two sets of measurements into consideration.

One, I refer to as more of a global measurement, Point A to Point B, what is the average travel time, as well as the speed, as well as the reliability of that travel time. How much more do you have to plan to make it on time from Point A to Point B.

And then more of the granular intersection-level measures. And that's side street delay, quality of the progression through that intersection. And these are going to come from our advanced detection systems and the automated signal performance measures.

So the idea is to marry both of these and get to a dashboard that will continuously measure the performance of the system.

This is just a -- just a snapshot from one of the

systems that handles the travel time and speed. This is not necessarily what we're going to be using, but the state gives us access to the system.

The top part gives you the average speed and travel time per direction relative -- that's in real time, relative to historical data for that day of the week, time of the day.

The bottom part gives you the reliability.

In this case, we're showing a snapshot of what's called the Planning Time Index. The Planning Time Index is what is the travel time 95 percent of the time over the peak hour, for example, relative to ideal conditions, non-congested conditions.

So I -- in a perfect world, it'll be one. If it's generally going to be over one, the idea is to maintain the reliability of the system.

All right. On to the Active Arterial Management Program through the state. It's been a very successful program over the past few years in partnership with the state, initiated by the state with agencies like ours where we do have the tools in place for this program to

be a success.

We have -- as I mentioned earlier, we have -- we are connected to our traffic signal system. We have visibility through cameras. And we have communication.

So what this program ultimately does is provide staff that constantly monitors congestion and monitors unforeseen events and incidents, crashes, lane closures through construction zones, weather-related events like, unfortunately, flooding from -- from last year, and reacts in real time by sending optimized timing to the field to address these issues.

It is a performance-based system. That's another good aspect.

So in a way, the adaptive systems are going to automate some of this, but we still obviously see a lot of need for human intervention.

I want to direct your attention to the chart on the bottom left here. It's -- it's actually an old chart, but a proven one, from the Federal Highway Administration. It breaks down the sources of congestion.

The largest portion, on the right, it's called bottlenecks, meaning it's capacity issues, that are really hard to overcome with just signal timing.

Then you get to the incidents, work zones, and bad weather. Basically, this program tries to address this portion here, by intervening with the standard set up of the signal timing.

Again, it's leveraging the systems that you have in place, but by having staff detect and react to incidents in real time.

It is performance-based, and the performance measures are -- are really interesting, because they always show a really good benefit.

The map on the left is where we have coverage under this program. What's on the right is a monthly report that shows the performance.

Primarily, it monitors how many incidents were managed through this program, and measures the benefit in delay savings compared to the do nothing, basically.

All right. And lastly, this is -- this has been another very successful story and -- and an added

benefit made -- made possible by -- by -- by the MAP funding.

Over the past three years, where we have detection systems that are a bit older, incapable of streaming the video and incapable of providing us the ability to maintain them remotely and detect the issues remotely, we added a device called an encoder, that brings all these streams back, giving us two things: proactive maintenance and monitoring capabilities.

And that's at over 900 intersections, which -- which, in measuring it -- I'm going to show you real quick here -- since fiscal year '20, the beginning of '20, through the first quarter of this current fiscal year, the light green is our new proactive way of looking at things. The dark green is the old way of -- of -- of reacting to detection issues, with the Y axis there is -- are the number of tickets issued to maintain detection.

You can see over time the light green has shot up since we started that program, and it continues to be the higher of the two because of the ability of staff

now to view the quality of detection issue tickets before it goes bad, as well as tuning it remotely and reacting to any issues that they see with the quality of detection.

Oftentimes, optical detection, the video cameras, they get -- they get -- the lenses get dirty. That results in -- in -- in non-optimal operation. You end up either skipping movements, unfortunately, or giving movements much more green time than they need. And in -- and in a peak period, sometimes you can't recover from that.

So detection is such an essential element, and this has been a very successful story, made possible by the MAP.

So thank you all.

And I'll be happy to take any questions.

CHAIR COOLMAN: I see Alan?

MR. HOOPER: Yeah. So -- I have two minutes. So if -- if you could go back and show us which projects you've got underway or have you -- have we completed any of them?

MR. AWWAD: (Inaudible.) So the top two are the closest to completion, and that's US-1 through downtown Fort Lauderdale --

MR. HOOPER: And --

MR. AWWAD: -- and University, yeah.

MR. HOOPER: -- and then are the ones -- wow, that's loud -- are the ones below it, are they -- my sweet spot is much further away than yours.

Are the ones below it like on deck, basically?

MR. AWWAD: They are -- five percent is an estimate that --

MR. HOOPER: Yes, those --

MR. AWWAD: -- was given to us.

MR. HOOPER: -- are the ones that are behind it that are underway.

MR. AWWAD: Yes. We expect these to be completed in the spring of '25, the three at the bottom.

MR. HOOPER: Spring of '25.

MR. AWWAD: Yeah. Yeah. The challenge with these is that they are bundled with other improvements. Rehabilitation, pedestrian improvements, and so forth.

That's why it's been taking some time.

Like the top two started in 2022, if I'm not mistaken.

MR. HOOPER: So is that going to be the way it is always? I mean, are we going to be waiting for additional improvements --

MR. AWWAD: A good portion of the projects have additional improvements. There are some that will be exclusively just go replace those controller cabinets, upgrade detection, and integrate the system.

Those will go rather, I would say, quicker than these. But --

MR. HOOPER: But -- so is that a critical path of getting detection is -- is doing sidewalks and other things in and around there, or can we just get the things on -- on adaptive traffic control immediately, like -- because that -- that's the big problem, is -- you know, and I don't agree with the gentleman earlier that said that nobody rides buses and all this other crap.

That -- I don't agree with that. But I do agree

that there are -- most people are in their cars.

So how do we get this done quicker? Do we -- how can we allocate (inaudible).

CHAIR COOLMAN: (Inaudible.)

MR. HOOPER: Can -- can I have a few more seconds?

CHAIR COOLMAN: You can.

MR. HOOPER: Do we -- is there a way to allocate more in the budget towards adaptive traffic control or -- I mean, maybe give you guys more resources, give -- give those projects more resources from not only vendors, but money and -- and maybe in your office. Because I know you guys are probably spread all over the place.

So is there a possibility -- and I'm -- I'm probably asking everyone in the room -- can we get this thing going a little quicker?

CHAIR COOLMAN: Well, let's hear from --

MR. HOOPER: Others.

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- Phil a minute, and then I'd like to say a few things, and we might get an answer to your question.

Go ahead.

MR. ALLEN: Are those projects that are shown as -- as completed, are they of a quality that you're satisfied with is our goal for other similar projects?

MR. AWWAD: Since -- I would say so. I -- the US-1 in particular, that included the tunnel rehabilitation in that area. So -- and then the -- the city's projects was bundled with it on top of the tunnel.

That was unique. A lot slower than --

MR. ALLEN: I'm thinking about staging something for the media to see that, hey, this is what we can do, this is the kind of improvement that we can put in elsewhere and use that as justification for additional funding if, in fact, that'll make a difference in speeding up the project.

MR. AWWAD: I do believe, if I'm not mistaken, it's close to one eighteen million that's allocated for all these 26 projects under adaptive. It's a sizeable investment, relatively speaking --

MR. ALLEN: What is the constraint? Is it -- I mean, is it getting the equipment, is it the

engineering, is it --

MR. AWWAD: I think it's mostly --

MR. ALLEN: -- contractors to put it in?

MR. AWWAD: -- the sequence of the construction of -- of the projects. Typically, the signal elements under one project are the latest to be done. You --

MR. ALLEN: I know our overall objective of the committee is to reduce congestion. And, you know, we talk about things like, well, bus transportation, et cetera.

The fact is, today, most people drive. And they want to see some improvement in their drive times.

And to the extent that we can, you know, put a priority on this project or projects, I think it would behoove us to move forward.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Yeah, as kind of a follow up on that -- well, if you want to respond, go ahead.

MR. AWWAD: Sure. The one thing I wanted to emphasize, especially the ones that you see under construction and nearing construction, are administered by the state.

Obviously, our control is limited. We're likely going to have more control on the ones that are going to be administered by the County.

But to your earlier point about the improvement, five percent of the nationwide traffic signals are under adaptive.

It's a -- really, there is no good blueprint to say here's what the improvement would be.

I do think it's going to be a lot of trial and error, one thing.

The other thing is that we're looking at some of the more severely congested corridors, so our hope and what we -- I can tell you we can see ultimately is the peak, instead of being from, say, 7:00 to 10:00 a.m. per the current limitation of the system, we can see the -- the same operation, potentially, for that 60 to 90 minutes, but then, outside of that is what I believe we will feel some improvements, especially --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Well, you're --

MR. AWWAD: -- especially if we maintain the reliability (inaudible) to be but we're able to reduce a

little bit of that green time, for example, on the main line and allow the side street to (inaudible) --

MR. ALLEN: You're going to have -- within 12 months on the 17th Street -- on the bypass, you're going to have significant impact on 17th Street in -- within 12 months.

MR. AWWAD: Correct.

MR. ALLEN: And that -- that project needs to come out of the ground quickly to match up with the construction of the bypass road.

MR. AWWAD: That is correct. And it's underway. It's also FDOT administered.

We also -- again, back to the Active Arterial Management Program, these corridors are under that program as well. So there's still that element of us intervening and changing the -- the timing set up to -- to address the different stages of a large project like that one.

MR. ALLEN: (Inaudible) part of that problem of all those projects that are coming (inaudible) ground, that whole area, from the airport, seaport, without better

traffic signalization

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKERS: (Inaudible.)

MR. ALLEN: -- (inaudible) take away from the overall project (inaudible).

MR. HOOPER: (Inaudible) 17th Street.

CHAIR COOLMAN: I'm trying to get some baseline --

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: (Inaudible.)

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- information here.

You mentioned we have about 1500 signalized intersections or whatever.

Is the program to have all of those tied together or not?

MR. AWWAD: They are currently tied together, and they're broken by logical points of when like a synchronization makes sense based on the spacing of the signals.

What the program is doing is taking it the more, you know, artificial intelligence and adaptive that breaks away the predetermined schedules that we follow now.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Right.

MR. AWWAD: I would say, as far as the baseline, I can tell you the County retimes every one of these corridors every two to three years.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Well, maybe a better question over --

MR. AWWAD: Yeah.

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- if we have 1500 of these signalized intersections -- I'm assuming you've prioritized -- prioritized the most congested. What percentage today are we complete on having these talk to each other so they can change what's been programmed?

Any of them done yet?

MR. AWWAD: Not yet through this --

CHAIR COOLMAN: So --

MR. AWWAD: -- program.

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- right now, five years into this, we don't have one intersection that changes its prescribed -- pre-prescribed signalization, right? Okay. Next --

MR. AWWAD: Correct. Yeah.

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- when will we have that?

MR. AWWAD: So, looks like the top two, end of this summer is the estimate of when we will have these integrated there. Because most of the construction is done. The systems, like I said, on US-1, we already have the systems up in the air (inaudible) --

CHAIR COOLMAN: All of them, or just the worst ones?

MR. AWWAD: The two corridors that you see on the top of the chart here.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Just those. And that represents 900 of the 1500?

MR. AWWAD: 900 --

CHAIR COOLMAN: Well, you -- I'm trying get a handle on how -- how long it's going to take. And right now, I got a surprising answer that none of them are tied in.

Did anybody know that? I didn't.

None of them are tied in right now to actually change what they're programmed to do.

So I've got another quick question for you.

MR. AWWAD: Can -- can I quickly --

CHAIR COOLMAN: Wait a minute. Let me --

MR. AWWAD: Okay.

CHAIR COOLMAN: If it's going to take us so much longer to get these programmed properly automatically, when why don't we go out there and fix some of them and reprogram them in the meantime?

MR. AWWAD: That -- great question. And I'll address both of your questions in -- in one thing.

So, again, the County has a really good, solid base, which is going out, reoptimizing timing, the standard timing of these corridors, and the way they talk to each other and the synchronization once every two to three years.

That's best practices by the Federal Highway Administration. We follow that.

So we have a really, really good base, I would say, to begin with.

Specifically to your question, it's those -- those adaptive system. This is that second layer that the surtax is -- is addressing. Yes, so far under the program, we are -- we have not activated one corridor

yet, but it's -- it's very close to get the first two active.

CHAIR COOLMAN: What's close?

MR. AWWAD: Close -- again --

CHAIR COOLMAN: Will it be two years?

MR. AWWAD: No. We -- we anticipate end of the summer on the top two, which --

CHAIR COOLMAN: Okay.

MR. AWWAD: -- again, they're FDOT administered. Things change, but --

CHAIR COOLMAN: All right. When you think the last one will be done?

MR. AWWAD: Good question. But I think through 2030 is the '26 approximate completion year. That's kind of the first one of such systems.

I would imagine we should be able to handle (inaudible).

CHAIR COOLMAN: And I presume that there's sufficient surtax dollars allocated to get it done, and we are expending them as diligently or as fast as we can, or not.

Well, it's a shame that we're in year five and we don't have one of them done.

And it sounds like we're going to have them all done in a couple years, is that right?

MR. AWWAD: Yes, I would say, based on what I see in the backlog, like I said, there are seven of them right now in construction procurement through -- that's going to probably go through the end of this year.

But I do think the next three to four years are going to -- are going to --

CHAIR COOLMAN: See, I don't --

MR. AWWAD: -- (inaudible) --

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- I'm not taking -- meaning this to be personal, but it's a little frustrating.

MR. AWWAD: I understand.

CHAIR COOLMAN: And it's good to hear. We've got answers. That's the main thing.

Thank you very much.

MR. AWWAD: Sure thing.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Anyone else?

Alan has one more.

MR. HOOPER: So I -- I just think, you know if we do it the way Shea mentioned, which I think's a good thing, I think we should talk about performance. And -- and it should be at like a workshop or something, and take the time to think through and then make recommendations.

I mean, I don't know what the -- I don't know what the problem -- how to solve this problem, but it's -- of the things we do, between rail, light rail, airports, this one is not the most expensive. But it's -- it's pretty technical, and it takes a lot of time.

But -- and, again, the state has a lot of the streets, but is there something we can do to just tee them all up at the same time, you know? And -- and go through the process.

And, again, I might be talking through my ears on this one. I have no idea.

CHAIR COOLMAN: I think we'll be --

MR. HOOPER: But I want to start looking at performance and making recommendations and seeing where the things are where we're weak.

And I -- we're very strong in a lot of places, obviously.

But I think that we should be talking about this as a group, then finding the right people to help us help ourselves.

That's just my opinion.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Anyone else have anything?

MR. MUNOZ: I just wanted to ask, what is -- once one of these signals gets complete, what is the difference going to be? Like what -- what's the -- I don't know, the -- the -- what's the word to use here. Like --

MR. SMITH: Less congestion, right? That's what (inaudible) --

MR. MUNOZ: Yeah, but is it going to be --

MR. SMITH: -- (inaudible) the metric?

MR. MUNOZ: Yeah, what's the metric, or is it going to be worth all this time, you know, to save, let's say, ten seconds or something like that? I don't know.

MR. AWWAD: I would say it's a sizeable and a good investment.

I go back to the peak period, especially these corridors. We're talking about probably US-1 and University being some of the first two that we will see come on line here through the end of the summer.

The peak periods with our strong base of optimization, you're likely not going to feel much. I would say it's outside of that and on the shoulders of the peak.

Say you're a pedestrian on the side of the street at 7:15. It's not quite the 8:00 to 9:00 peak. We're hoping -- there should be a -- hopefully, a reduction in the delay during which the signal services you as a -- as a pedestrian, I would say.

So throughout the day, we want to maintain the reliability of the travel time through these measures that we're going to have -- I'm sorry -- but outside of the peaks, I think it would be key to see what the other demands are, side street, pedestrians on the side, how are we handling these now that the system is active.

And I think that's likely where we're going to see some of the sizeable improvements.

MR. MUNOZ: I's like to say one more thing, and I think you guys are going to hate me for this, but congestion -- so we talk a lot about congestion, right, and -- and trying to mitigate it and reduce it and all that.

But, ironically, it's what keeps us pretty safe, because the thing that causes most crashes and injuries and fatalities is speed.

So it's -- it's kind of an irony. Like, we want to get moving, but, unfortunately, that -- that means an increase in crashes, and that's -- it's kind of a positive spin that we have congestion right now.

CHAIR COOLMAN: That'll be a workshop discussion.

Awwad, thank you very much. Thank you all.

UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Thank you.

DISCUSSION ITEM

THIRD AMENDMENT TO THE TRANSPORTATION SYSTEM SURTAX

INTERLOCAL AGREEMENT UPDATE

(NATHANIEL KLITZBERG, TRANSPORTATION SURTAX GENERAL COUNSEL; GRETCHEN CASSINI, MAP ADMINISTRATOR)

CHAIR COOLMAN: Well, we're to our last item,

discussion item. An update to the third amendment to the transportation surtax ILA.

And, Nathaniel, we're turning it over to you.

MR. KLITSBERG: I would say good morning, but it is good afternoon.

CHAIR COOLMAN: You've only got three minutes, but that's okay.

MR. KLITSBERG: I will -- I will give a -- a very brief --

CHAIR COOLMAN: I'm just kidding.

MR. KLITSBERG: -- of where we are with regards to the third amendment.

As you all know, and as is part of the backup material, the BCCMA had written to County administration last year with regards to certain items that they wanted to see either changed, improved, or included in a future amendment to the ILA.

There has been a significant amount of brainstorming activity involving MAP administration, our office at the County Attorney's Office, County administration, and others, looking at the requests that

have been made from the BCCMA and also brainstorming on other creative ideas to make the process easier for the cities, make the process more efficient, streamlining things to the extent that they can be streamlined while still maintaining the guardrails that we all have to have as -- as good stewards of the -- of the surtax funds that are coming in.

So back in the middle of April, there was a meeting that was led by the County Administrator and others from County administration, MAP administration. I was -- I participated as well, with representatives from the BCCMA Surtax Subcommittee, going through many of the items that they had made requests regarding, as well as some ideas that the County had as well.

I viewed it as an extremely positive meeting. I don't think anybody that participated viewed it as anything other than that.

And significant progress is being made.

There was some homework that was given to the BCCMA in terms of example, there was discussion relating to reprioritizing R and M projects and, well, how do you

establish a system for prioritizing those R and M projects. How would the BCCMA consider establishing evaluation criteria for capital projects, if they were going to be more involved in that?

So a lot of discussion on those particular items.

We're expecting some comments back from the BCCMA in hopefully the near future, which is going to lead the -- the way that the discussion and the drafting of the document goes.

One of the key components to all of this is a simplification of both the interlocal agreement, which, really, I view as your constitutional document between yourself and the cities. It doesn't go through every single provision of the relationship. That's what the individual project funding agreements are for.

We also talked about simplifying the application process for R and M projects, proving the cities more flexibility in terms of potentially being able to swap out one R and M project for another without having to go through a brand new application process, so long as the County reviewed it and made determinations that it

wasn't going to interfere with other corridor projects, County projects, or other municipal projects.

All these things, again, were taken very well by the cities.

We're expecting some feedback from them.

We will continue to be working with them in a collaborative manner to try to come up with a document that we can have that will be long-standing and also will provide for flexibility, which, again, is key to having a long-standing document, is one that can change without having to go back to the cities to have a number of them ratify a new ILA.

So that's why a lot of things that we're talking about moving from the interlocal agreement into the project funding agreements, because those can be changed much -- in a much more simple fashion, rather than having to go back to the cities.

I'm hopeful that we will have more information for you -- assuming that we get the information back from the cities that -- that we've requested, have some more information for you at your August workshop and retreat

so that we can talk about where things sit.

That, again, relates to the relationship generally between the cities and the County in connection with -- that's what the third -- third amendment to the ILA is intending to do.

And I'm happy to answer almost any question.

CHAIR COOLMAN: So there will be, then, some discussion or something about Cycle 1 in that agreement that changes what's happening?

MR. KLITSBERG: Absolutely. The -- the representatives from the BCCMA Surtax Subcommittee I think expressed a little bit of surprise with the number of projects from Cycle 1 that the County may view as these things look dead but they're sort of becoming zombies and freezing up money that could otherwise be used in the program.

So they are going to be getting, as I mentioned earlier, that memorandum that identifies what those cities are, what those projects are, and hopefully the cities will have the ability to police themselves with regards to that particular issue.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Do you have any idea what timeline that this document -- will it be coming back before August or after August?

MR. KLITSBERG: In terms of a final document --

CHAIR COOLMAN: Just --

MR. KLITSBERG: -- I --

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- something we could look at.

MR. KLITSBERG: Well, in terms of an actual document, I would definitely say it's going to wind up being after August as it -- as it sits right now.

We are again -- we're here in the middle of May. We are waiting for that information coming back from the cities.

I'm sure there will be some additional meetings that take place between the County and the cities on these particular issues.

And then it comes down to drafting a good document. And when it comes to drafting a good contract, my general philosophy is it takes, you know, as short a time it can and as long as it needs to to be good.

And I don't want to make a commitment in terms of

how fast we can prepare that good document.

And, again, after it goes through County review, it's going to get reviewed by 30 city attorneys. So --

CHAIR COOLMAN: Okay. Next year.

Anyone else have any comments about the third amendment?

Erdal?

MR. DONMEZ: First turn it on.

I want to really show, you know, my appreciation, you know, for the -- the County staff, Administrator's office, and the MAP, you know, staff, working collaboratively with the representatives, you know, from BCCMA, and they're representing quite a few, you know, municipalities, and they're not necessarily all on the same board.

But I think it looks like the process is working. It's coming through. And after five years of experience and they have expressed, you know, what they would like to make, you know, some changes, updates, and maybe some sunseting.

And -- and also, what's more promising, I think,

you know, after looking at the letter from the County Administrator, how responsive to these ideas, openness, genuinely. And throwing some new ideas and new formulas to make this process, you know, smoother and more equitable.

And I think that's really going well, and hopefully this will be done this summer.

And, of course, we want it to be done properly. Not in a hurry. But -- but -- so looks promising, and I'm looking forward to receiving more updates this summer.

Thank you.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Anyone else?

NON-AGENDA

CHAIR COOLMAN: We're going to move into the Non-Agenda items.

CHAIR'S REPORT

CHAIR COOLMAN: And since the Chair is first, I'm going to take prerogative to introduce Tim Garling, if that's okay.

I'd like him to come up and respond to our -- our

public input.

By the way, I think that public input -- I'd love to see at least one or two people here every meeting, and hear what their -- their issues are, because we can't address it if we don't -- we don't know other than what we bring.

So with that, Mr. Garling.

MR. HOOPER: You know, Doug, you're -- let me say something about what you just said.

I agree with you. You know, I get people complaining or saying that things aren't going fast enough, or things aren't happening. And I always ask them, you know there's a Public Hearing that we have, and we need -- we cannot be your voice. You have to show up, and if people will tell us what's wrong, we -- we maybe can help.

So that doesn't happen often enough.

MR. GARLING: Okay. Thank you very much for the opportunity.

(Laughter.)

MS. CASSINI: The sweet spot, yes.

MR. GARLING: So -- yeah, we're back. Okay. So my name is Tim Garling, Deputy General Manager of Broward County Transit.

And I do appreciate the opportunity to come and clarify the record on some of the comments that were made today, and just sort of the intention of the program.

So I know from the very, very beginning, because I actually had the opportunity to work on the financial plan, the 30-year financial plan, it was always intended that the operation of the bus service was going to be one of the things that was going to be funded by the surtax program.

Other cities, other municipalities have done programs where they've only funded capital.

And the issue is, particularly with Transit, Transit's very labor-intensive, once you build it, you have to run it. And then once you have to build it, you run it forever.

So we put in that 30-year plan not only money for capital, but money for operations in the long-term. Not

just the current operations, but all future operations that were going to result from the development of the system.

So -- so that was always in the plan.

And just to further emphasize that point, I also had the opportunity to work with the state auditing office, OPPAGA. They did a review of our program before the surtax actually went to the voters.

And I remember going over every bit of this financial plan with them. And they actually, you know, came with a finding that the -- that the plan was workable and that the County had the ability to actually implement that plan.

And that was done prior to the election -- not election -- prior to the -- to the referendum.

So just -- just to be -- you know, get us all on the same footing, that that was always what it was going to take to do it, and that was always part of it.

Second thing real quick I wanted to talk about was ridership. So Coree Cuff Lonergan, our CEO and General Manager, always tells us to stop talking about COVID.

It's over. And it's time to focus on the future and, you know, how we're going to attract new riders.

But I do want to break her rule for a minute and kind of go back.

When COVID hit in 2020, right after the surtax, we got put into a position where we lost about, you know, 40, 50 percent of our ridership.

We immediately, you know, kind of shut the front door of the bus to protect the driver. We boarded from the rear door. We didn't charge fares. We blocked off every other seat, right? We cut the capacity of the bus in half. And literally told people to only ride if it was absolutely necessary.

So from the standpoint of where we were just a few years ago, that's -- for any kind of business, you know, that's -- you know, that's quite a -- quite a shock, and we're recovering.

So on the positive, right now we have recovered about 90 percent of our pre-pandemic ridership. So we're kind of on the way.

And I don't know if you recall some of the

conversations that I've had with you in the past, we were really struggling to get bus drivers.

And I will say, reporting a good positive now, with the new collective bargaining agreement that we signed with our union, the ATU 1267, that went into effect October of last year, we significantly improved the starting wages of our bus drivers. And that has really helped us get bus drivers through the door, and we think, in the long run, it's going to help us retain them.

Almost right after this was put into place, the end of last year we had our largest bus operator class in history. We had over 50 bus operators that graduated our class.

And we think by the end of this fiscal year we're actually going to have recovered all of the backlog of bus operators that we did not have.

So as we sit today, we're only providing about 90 percent of the service that we used to provide, because we didn't have enough bus operators to fill that service.

By the end of this year, we should be back to where we were, which then positions us to add to our service and improve.

And for those who've been on the board the -- the whole time, if you recall, one of the first things we were going to do was build up our bus service.

So we got one ten percent service increase put in place. The second one was coming in 2020. We still haven't been back to that.

So we're just climbing our way back to regular service. So we're kind of getting there.

And the last thing I wanted to talk about was PREMO, right? You know, like -- like how are we going to add and how are we going to do something better than the bus system and how do we go forward.

Our PREMO program was approved in June of last year by the -- by the Commission. We came and reported out. We talked to you.

Where we're at so far today is the commuter rail system, commuter rail south, is in project development and environmental review. That's going to be ending

probably towards the end of the summer.

We'll be able to from there into the design of that project. So that project is moving forward.

We're in project development and environmental review for bus rapid transit for the Oakland Park corridor. That's already underway and we're working on that.

And within a few weeks, we're going to advertise a project development/environmental contract solicitation for the light rail system that would connect the port to the airport and Convention Center.

So as -- you know, as we're moving forward with those high-capacity systems, commuter rail, underway; bus rapid transit, underway; and just with, you know, really, the work is weeks away from really kind of kicking off light rail.

So there's a lot of those -- you talked about the incubation period, but there's a lot of those activities across the board that are -- are really kind of kicking in.

And I know we're kind of at the end of the day.

Just some brief comments.

We certainly, as we do the workshops and the annual budget development, we can come back and kind of chronicle these things in a lot more detail.

And one last thing I wanted to mention to talk about performance measures and things.

We currently are about halfway through a comprehensive operational analysis. We have a consultant that's looking at us.

We've had some preliminary briefings. We're trying to understand where people are and where they want to go, which routes are productive.

And they're going to give us recommendations on maybe how we restructure our entire system.

And maybe the future isn't just in fixed route buses. It may be in micro transit. It may be in other combinations of modes that will serve whatever those demands are and the changing demands of COVID.

So I just did want to have this opportunity. There's a lot of things going on right now, made possible by the surtax, and we're working very hard to

deliver on it.

And if anybody has any questions, I'd be happy to answer.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: Yeah.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Anthea?

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: So it's the made possible by -- by the surtax that is concerning to me, based on what that -- the citizen who spoke earlier when he made reference to the fact that the County had essentially been using the surtax dollars as opposed to County dollars.

Can you speak to that? Because that, to me, is disturbing, a -- a disturbing accusation.

MR. GARLING: Well, just to kind of clarify the funding, because that's it's a bit complicated. And I -- I know every year when we come back, we talk to you about the operating budget. We kind of detail all the stuff.

But when -- when the surtax was put into place, one of the things was that the -- one of the main funding sources of the transit system was property tax.

We had gas tax, farebox revenue, some -- some monies from the state.

So we needed to supplement that with -- with the surtax.

So right now, we basically have had a standard level of commitment from the property tax, the ad valorem tax, that is still there every year, right? So that has not disappeared. That has stayed.

But the costs of our system grow over time, the expansion of the system will grow over time.

So the surtax actually provides a supplement for it.

So the County did not back away. This is just an add-on to what the County was already doing and the other funding sources.

So just kind of clarifying the -- the more complicated finances of it and the layering of all those finances.

And this really helps give us a sustainable long-term future that we can really focus on improvements of the system, not just the, you know, retaining of the

system. We can really focus on a good future to make it a better system.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: (Inaudible.) And if -- if I could just add, I think in the future, I think we need to clearly state those dollars moving forward so the public stays confident in the fact that we are not using surtax dollars to totally run our -- or add to the bus system.

CHAIR COOLMAN: One last thing. The voter -- voter language I believe is --

MS. CASSINI: Can you --

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- the voter language is extremely important, but I've learned that the voter language was about 75 words or something. You can only do so much.

It says, expand and operate bus and special needs transportation. Operate. Operate means maintain it.

You've already said it was already part of the program. What's missing is it's not here in a -- not only is it not here, the airport isn't here, okay?

You can't put everything in the voter language. But if he went back and read the agreement, I think

he'll find exactly what you said.

We were taking -- we knew we were going to take surtax dollars to do maintenance, correct?

MR. GARLING: (Inaudible.) The answer is yes. And (inaudible) to say is, you know, the ballot language is so constrained, it's so -- so few words, but we went to great pains to go out and do -- I believe it was (inaudible) effort, but we went out to do as much education as we could on the program. So we went out to meet with everybody we could meet with, to explain it. We had collateral materials to explain kind of the nuances of these things and -- and how the funding worked.

And -- and I do think that it's -- you know, it -- it's hard to get all the information out, but I think there was an awful lot out that was explaining all those things.

And I do think the voters reacted quite positively to not just those words, but to the outreach and the things that were done trying to describe what we were trying to get to.

CHAIR COOLMAN: (Inaudible.)

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: If I can just piggyback on that. I mean, some of the language is really overarching, right? Because you can't include every single detail.

It's about how we create improvements in transportation to reduce traffic congestion; to improve roads, bridges; enhance the traffic signal synchronization; develop safe sidewalks; bicycles -- bicycle pathways; expand and operate bus and special needs transportation; implement rail along approved corridors; and implement emerging transportation technologies by funding, you know, through this 30-year one percent sales tax.

But, you know, earlier, a speaker made reference to incubation period. So we are in the trenches, doing some of the foundational work that is required to build some of those projects that will take some time for implementation.

But to just underscore what was said, you know, at the top of the morning, I think we always have to make

sure that we're clear about the percentage.

And I -- and I think we've done that. But I think to continue to underscore the percentage of investment from surtax dollars when we're looking at penny -- you know, investments that the County would typically do.

Make sure we're clear about showing County investment side-by-side to -- with the surtax investment.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Shea?

MR. SMITH: Just wanted to mention, I mean, I think the -- the key word on the -- the key -- the key word in the ordinance, I think, is the congestion piece. And to the extent that funds are coming out of surtax, regardless of what they're going into -- and I know we're going to have a whole discussion of this -- at some point, regardless of the history, we have to be accountable to metrics of, yes, we are making the congestion better.

This is what the average person is kind of looking for. I think this is what the speaker this morning was speaking to.

And it's just going to come down to that at some point. So we need to start thinking about what that looks like and be willing to pivot as we need if we don't get the result that we think we're going to get.

Because that -- it will turn into a rightful criticism at some point, because I can tell you, looking back on COVID, what did come back fully is the congestion, right? For a while, I mean, I was out there, I could ride my bike at any point in the day. I mean, it was kind of awesome for a while, right? Like you noticed big differences in patterns.

Well, all that came back and then some.

So I understand the make up period, I understand that we had to build back. But now we do have to be forward-looking and challenge these ideas as to what people -- you know, if they'll use this type of transportation. If not, it needs to be something else, and it just comes down to that, at some point.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: Uh-huh. So --

CHAIR COOLMAN: Alan.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: Sorry.

MR. HOOPER: Doug never looks my way anymore.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Pardon?

MR. HOOPER: You -- Shea's right. And if you look at -- this is what's most important to me, is -- is that we have been -- they made it so that it was broad enough, and we're attacking this in order to improve congestion.

And we've even addressed -- because it was in here -- bicycles, okay?

And what's really interesting to me is implement emerging transportation technologies, which we heard from today.

All this stuff is starting to happen.

What I think is important, and it speaks to what Shea just said, it's the sequencing of those things. And because COVID happened, the sequencing of certain things had to change. You had to quit letting so many people on the bus. And maybe there will be a moment in time where we have to stop. There may be some sort of a measure and say, hey, let's pump this up a little more, let's pull back on this.

That's going to happen. I mean, no plan is -- is inflexible.

So I think that you answered the gentleman's question really well, and I -- I think that we're -- I think the MAP program is doing what everyone asked it to do.

I think now that we're getting into a more -- a more mature period in our -- in our life as the MAP, that we are going to have to start looking at our sequencing and how we fulfill everyone's expectations as quickly as possible.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Anthea promises me we have one more thing.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: And it's the last thing.

CHAIR COOLMAN: The last thing.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: I -- I think we need to celebrate the whole concept of mobility advancement. Because as we are building this transportation infrastructure, there's mobility advancement happening from a socio-economic perspective. Because we are creating jobs. We are advancing our small businesses.

So I think that -- those two words are what we need to really celebrate. The mobility advancement of Broward County. Period.

That's it.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Well said. Thank you.

Back to Non-Agenda. I had an item, discussion of meeting frequency.

And I'm not saying necessarily that we need to have more than four formal meetings, because that's a lot of work. But I think we need maybe some more workshops to discuss -- eventually, we're going to need one on the third amendment. I think we're going to need one on synchronization.

So I would like to know whether people agree or disagree about a few more meetings where we can talk about some of these things that come out of these meetings.

And I'm not so sure that August isn't too far away if we're going to have a workshop.

Gretchen, would you like to say anything?

MS. CASSINI: So I just wanted to mention that we

do have a workshop on August 2nd, and the agenda looks very large at this point, because we've talked about a performance audit, we've talked about having a more robust discussion of a series of items that have been on the agenda today.

But we don't have another meeting after our August budget meeting. We have a retreat that's scheduled on the 25th of October.

So I know that one of the things that we had discussed is perhaps trying to add a meeting in early December. We would have the U.F. near miss on that agenda, and we could potentially have a discussion of a performance audit.

If that's something that we're going to pursue, I think we're going to have to have a series of conversations about what the metrics are going to be, what the scope is going to be, and we need to have members of our auditor's office involved in that discussion.

So I would propose that we consider adding a meeting in early December.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Is -- is that soon enough for everybody?

MR. HOOPER: Well, aren't we having one on August 2nd, too?

MS. CASSINI: So we have a budget workshop on August 2nd.

MR. HOOPER: Oh.

MS. CASSINI: That's going to be a very long day. And then we have a retreat on October 25th, which is not an action -- there are no action items. It's just a retreat.

Again, we'll be emphasizing, it sounds like, the performance audit as -- in that retreat.

CHAIR COOLMAN: (Inaudible) about maybe should it go into the retreat? Should it be a topic?

MS. CASSINI: Which one?

CHAIR COOLMAN: The issues that we would like to discuss. I mean, maybe --

MS. CASSINI: For sure. For sure. We could have --

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- (inaudible) happen a lot

quicker than December.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: Right.

MS. CASSINI: Yes. But I think we will possibly need a meeting in December, because one of the items that -- the U.F. near miss scope of work anticipated was making a presentation to you all in December.

Would you be open to trying to find a date in early December --

CHAIR COOLMAN: Well, we may need a --

MS. CASSINI: -- so that they can do that?

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- workshop in December, and it may not just be the topics that we're talking about today.

MS. CASSINI: Correct. Of course. We don't know.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Does anybody -- I'm -- that's where I wanted to come from.

Maybe, Gretchen, you and I ought to put our heads together and --

MS. CASSINI: Okay.

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- we may send out an email or something about a meeting schedule.

MS. CASSINI: We -- I don't think we can --

CHAIR COOLMAN: Alan?

MS. CASSINI: -- can poll. Can we -- Nathaniel, can we poll for a date in December?

MR. KLITSBERG: If you'd like to just have a discussion about what people's availability is for discussion of a meeting in December, we can do that now.

It's also administrative, so if you wanted to have that --

MS. CASSINI: Okay.

MR. KLITSBERG: -- email go out to everybody to find out availability, as long as there's not any side communications between each other, that'd be fine.

MS. CASSINI: Okay. Great.

MR. HOOPER: Yeah, I just think that a workshop should be driven by our board. It should be about things that are -- that we all want to talk about.

And so that should be the most productive way to do -- if you want to talk about performance measures, if you want to talk about -- you said synchronization again we can talk about.

Anything that -- that -- that we think we want to improve at, that's the moment in time to have a workshop.

So I think it's appropriate that we put everything and anything in that bucket.

MEMBER REPORTS

CHAIR COOLMAN: Any other members have -- oops. Members, any comments?

MR. DONMEZ: I would suggest increasing the number of meetings, you know, we have for -- not for this year, but for -- maybe not for next, you know, fiscal year we already have the calendar, you know, set.

I think having perhaps another meeting is going to, you know, offer us an opportunity to spend, you know, more time together and have more time to discuss, you know, what we're trying to, you know, accomplish.

And I know staff is busy. This will be added to the burden for them.

But at the same time, having meetings once every two months is just so far apart.

CHAIR COOLMAN: We're three months.

MR. DONMEZ: Oh, well, it's -- maybe it's averaging two months, you know, right now. But three months even is a greater, you know, distance.

And it's something to consider, having another meeting, maybe two, you know, more, you know, for next year (inaudible) -- next year on.

Just a -- you know, food for thought.

MR. MUNOZ: I like that idea. I agree. I think more meetings that are maybe a little bit shorter would be helpful.

But also the time that they start, that's what makes it so hard for members of the public to come and speak.

So, I mean, can you imagine being here on a workday at 9:00 a.m.? So that's what makes it so tough, I think.

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: Oh, that's an interesting point.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Never -- never quite thought of it that way, but I thought you were going to say coming at 9:00 or 9:30 was good for us, because we miss some of

the traffic, but maybe not.

(Laughter.)

MR. HOOPER: And you can sleep later.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Any other members have anything else?

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: Well, he makes a good point. I think maybe as we're scheduling these meetings, maybe have something that's starting a little later on in the afternoon or the evening.

CHAIR COOLMAN: You mean going later?

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: Yes. Starting later and going more -- just a thought.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Any other members?

GENERAL COUNSEL REPORT

CHAIR COOLMAN: Surtax General Counsel.

MR. KLITSBERG: I hope everybody has a very good summer and July 4th, since we will not be meeting before then.

And I look forward to coming back from my overseas trip two days before our August meeting and budget workshop. I'm sure I will be in rare form.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Where are you going?

MR. KLITSBERG: I'll be overseas for about three weeks with --

CHAIR COOLMAN: Just overseas? I mean --

MR. HOOPER: You don't want us to know, right? Okay. That's fine.

(Laughter.)

MR. KLITSBERG: My -- my email will not be functioning during that time.

BOARD COORDINATOR REPORT

CHAIR COOLMAN: Any -- any Board Coordinator -- oh --

MS. CASSINI: Yes.

CHAIR COOLMAN: -- that's Gretchen. She's the MAP Administrator. M.A.P.

MS. CASSINI: And your board coordinator.

Happy Mother's Day to all the mothers out there this weekend.

And to follow on what Mr. Garling was speaking about, I did want to, for those that might be interested, let you know that there's going to be an in-

person public information meeting about the Broward
commuter rail south project.

It's going to be happening at the City of Hollywood
City Hall.

It's going to be 6:00 p.m. on Wednesday, May 22nd.

And then for those who can't attend, there's a
virtual that's going to be 6:00 p.m. the very next day,
Thursday, May 23rd.

And there is information on the website if -- for
those of you that might want to register and
participate.

I'd also like to introduce the newest member of
your MAP administration team, who comes to us with
decades of experience. (Inaudible), please stand up.
She's been back there all day. She spent the whole week
working with our team, trying to make sure that you
didn't have the type of glitches that happened last
time.

She speaks many languages. She's also a licensed
drone pilot, which is going to allow us to start getting
out there and start taking some great drone video of all

of these surtax projects.

And we're really excited to have her with.

And that's it. I don't have anything else.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Well, that's not quite it. Roy? I think -- I think we have to complete some surveys. Whether we're going to -- whether -- how we're going to do that --

MS. CASSINI: We can adjourn, though, and then we can do that. We have --

CHAIR COOLMAN: (Inaudible.)

MS. CASSINI: -- a sunset review survey, and then for anyone that was looking for some one-on-one individual assistance with the Form 1, we also have that set up.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Okay. So we don't need to do anything more today with that.

MS. CASSINI: We can (inaudible).

CHAIR COOLMAN: We can move on.

ADJOURN

CHAIR COOLMAN: If no other comments, could I see a motion to adjourn?

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: Yes.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Alan?

MR. DONMEZ: Second.

CHAIR COOLMAN: Anthea?

MS. PENNANT-WALLACE: Yes.

CHAIR COOLMAN: We're done. Thank you.

(The meeting concluded at 1:32 p.m.)

Look at this ballot question and ask at each meeting whether the voters are getting what was promised.

Shall countywide transportation improvements to reduce traffic congestion, improve roads and bridges, enhance traffic signal synchronization, develop safe sidewalks and bicycle pathways, expand and operate bus and special needs transportation, implement rail along approved corridors, and implement emerging transportation technologies, be funded by levying a thirty year, one percent sales surtax, paid by residents and visitors, with the proceeds held in a newly created trust fund and all expenditures overseen by an independent oversight board?