

# Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Board of Directors Budget Workshop Meeting Minutes

**Date:** September 5, 2024  
**To:** Board of Directors  
**From:** Artie White, PLACE Director  
**Subject:** Summary Minutes to Budget Workshop of May 16, 2024

## MEMBERS PRESENT

### COUNTY

### CITY

Commissioner Carolyn Cummings, Chair	Commissioner Dianne Williams-Cox, Vice Chair
Commissioner Nick Maddox	Mayor John Dailey
Commissioner David O’Keefe	Commissioner Jeremy Matlow
Commissioner Brian Welch	Commissioner Jacqueline Porter
Commissioner Rick Minor	
Commissioner Bill Proctor	
Commissioner Christian Caban	

\*Commissioner Richardson- absent.

## **I. AGENDA MODIFICATIONS**

There were no agenda modifications.

## **II. WORKSHOP ITEMS**

*Workshop on the Proposed Fiscal Year 2025 Operating Budget and Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan for the Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency*

Commissioner Cummings, IA Board Chair, opened the workshop and PLACE Director Artie White provided a brief introduction for the workshop item. Director White explained that the proposed 2025 budget was balanced and provides for the continued implementation of previous IA Board direction. Director White explained that the budget was developed in collaboration with City and County budget staff to ensure consistency with budgetary formatting, processes, and revenue estimates. He explained that the budget incorporates nine years of IA Board direction. Director White explained that the budget approval process requires two public hearings, and the hearings are scheduled to be held at the August 22, 2024 CAC Meeting and the September 5, 2024 IA Board Meeting.

Blueprint Director Autumn Calder then provided an overview of the Infrastructure proposed FY 2025 budget and 5 year Capital Improvement Plan. Director Calder announced that the Capital Circle Southwest Greenways Project was awarded the national Public Works Project of the Year by the American Public Works Association. She also summarized the seven awards the Agency has received in the 2024 FY so far and commended the IA Board for their direction with implementation of the projects. Director Calder continued that the proposed budget would allow for 15 additional Blueprint projects to go into construction in the upcoming fiscal year. She explained that the proposed budget incorporates nine years of IA Board direction, implements project prioritization, and makes no significant changes from the 2024 FY approved budget. She explained that the capital budget allocates more than \$21 million to the projects, including \$10 million to bike and pedestrian trails. The budget reconciles funding for five grants, provides funding for the Airport Gateway, the Monroe-Adams Placemaking, and the Midtown

Placemaking projects. She explained that the 5-Year CIP provides over \$144 million to projects with an estimated \$20 million going towards minority and women owned firms. Based on the IA Board's direction, 25 of the 27 Blueprint 2020 projects will be in progress or completed by 2025. Director Calder then summarized some of the upcoming projects, including Capital Cascades Trails Segment 4, Bannerman Road, Airport Gateway, Market District Placemaking, and the Orange-Meridian Placemaking project. She explained that the proposed operating budget also included cost of living increases consistent with the City and County.

OEV Director Keith Bowers then provided an overview and explanation of the proposed 2025 budget and 5-Year operating plan for the Office of Economic Vitality. Director Bowers began his presentation by explaining that OEV received the Regional Deal of the Year award from the Florida Economic Development Council for the Amazon Project and discussed that the Tallahassee MSA was named the Strongest Economy in the U.S. by the Area Development Magazine. He explained that Tallahassee received high marks and recognitions based on key economic indicators, such as job growth. Director Bowers explained that OEV intends to capitalize on these recognition and awards by marketing through the Florida Trend and 850 magazines, partnering with the Tallahassee International Airport, and hosting the 2025 Worldwide Motors and Magnetics conference. Director Bowers explained that the proposed CIP allocates funding to allow OEV to partner with TMH and FSU to expand the Tallahassee community's healthcare ecosystem. He explained that the proposed OEV operating budget continues the prior IA Board direction, does not create any new positions, includes a cost of living adjustment consistent with the City and County, and implements new MWSBE Division programmatic enhancements. The MWSBE Division program enhancements include software to ensure MWSBE utilization compliance and the facilitation of trainings for staff for software and federal regulation compliance. Director Bowers concluded by stating that the proposed budget would also fund the 32<sup>nd</sup> Annual MED Week.

Director White summarized the presentation explaining that the proposed budget was balanced, incorporates nine years of IA Board direction, and requires two public hearings for approval. He also explained that the proposed budget includes recommendation C which allocates surplus funds to the Community Enhancement, Connectivity, and Quality of Life (CCQ) project and the Future Opportunity Leveraging Fund (FOLF). He explained that Staff's recommended action would be to accept Option 1 with the enumerated budget recommendations.

Chair Cummings and Mayor Dailey congratulated staff on their awards and commended them on the work done to complete the proposed budget.

**Mayor Dailey moved to accept staff recommendation for option #1 with budget recommendations A, B, and C. The motion was seconded by Commissioner Maddox.**

**Option 1: Accept the Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Proposed Fiscal Year 2025 Operating Budget and Fiscal Year 2025-2029 Capital Improvement Program and direct staff to include the enumerated budget recommendations in the proposed FY 2025 budget.**

**Budget Recommendations:**

**Budget Recommendation A: Approve the Proposed Infrastructure and Office of Economic Vitality (OEV) FY 2025 Operating Budgets and FY 2025-2029 Capital Improvement Programs into the final draft FY 2025 budget plan.**

**Budget Recommendation B: Authorize Blueprint to advertise and award, pursuant to Blueprint's Procurement Policy, contracts for construction of the following FY 2025 projects: Capital Cascades Trail Segment 4; Northeast Connector Corridor: Bannerman Road; Airport Gateway: Phase 1; North Monroe Gateway; Market District Placemaking; and Orange-Meridian Placemaking: East Drainage Ditch Improvements.**

**Budget Recommendation C: Allocate the \$749,159 FY 2023 Blueprint Infrastructure fund balance surplus and \$800,608 FY 2023 OEV fund balance surplus, as detailed in Agenda Item #2 on the regular IA Board meeting agenda, respectively to the Community Enhancement, Connectivity, and Quality of Life (CCQ) project and the Future Opportunity Leveraging Fund (FOLF).**

Commissioner O'Keefe inquired about the formatting on the budget and noted that the budget did not include specified project costs. Director Calder explained that the budget is formatted strategically not to include the specific project costs to ensure that construction bids aren't influenced by cost estimates released by the Agency prior to a project's construction being released for solicitation. Commissioner O'Keefe asked whether the IA Board would be provided with updated project costs after the projects were bid and awarded and Director Calder explained that updated costs could be provided after the contracts for the projects were awarded. Commissioner O'Keefe then asked why an updated long-term plan was not included in the proposed budget materials. Director Calder explained that a long-term plan was historically used to assist in project prioritizations but since 25 of the 27 Blueprint 2020 Projects are progressing in the next fiscal year, a long-term plan would not provide meaningful information moving forward.

Commissioner O'Keefe then inquired about changes to project budgets and cost estimates. Director Calder explained that the cost estimates and project budgets were different. She stated that cost estimates are the projected total cost to complete a project and that project budgets are the current funding allocation for a project, which are subject to change each fiscal year. She explained that the cost estimates for the projects have remained stable from the 2024 fiscal year and that the project budgets for the projects fluctuate each year based on the allocation for that specific fiscal year. Commissioner O'Keefe asked if any project budgets changed for the 2025 fiscal year. Director Calder explained that several project budgets changed for the 2025 fiscal year including Capital Cascades Segment 3, North Monroe, Airport Gateway, Midtown Placemaking, and Monroe-Adams Placemaking. Commissioner O'Keefe asked what was the 2024 approved budget for the Airport Gateway and Director Calder stated it was \$82 million. Commissioner O'Keefe noted that under the 2025 proposed budget the Airport Gateway budget would be increased to \$117 million. Director White explained that the proposed budget for the Airport Gateway would reconcile the funding needed to complete the approved scope for the project. Commissioner O'Keefe stated that he would not be supporting the proposed budget.

Commissioner Minor commended staff for their work in preparing the budget, the awards they have received, progressing 25 of the 27 Blueprint 2020 projects, and the Strongest Economy recognition. He then discussed the North Monroe Gateway Project and a grant application that was submitted to the US Department of Transportation that requires match funding of \$4.2 million which is allocated to the project in the proposed 2025 budget. Commissioner Minor stated that he would be supporting the motion for the proposed budget.

Commissioner Caban stated that he would be willing to support the proposed budget with the Airport Gateway Project bifurcated for discussion. He stated that he would prefer to vote on the Airport Gateway Project's budget after reviewing the full design materials and the cost of

construction following a solicitation and contract award. Commissioner Caban asked about having documentation of FDOT's opinion about projects included in the agenda materials. Director Calder explained that the Agency does not work with FDOT in the design and planning of projects but that the Agency coordinates with FDOT to mitigate impacts to state roads. Commissioner Caban concluded that he would not be supporting the proposed budget because of the current unknown costs of the Airport Gateway Project but stated that he has no other concerns about the remainder of the proposed budget.

Commissioner Proctor noted staff's recommendations to allocate surplus funds and asked why the IA Board wasn't allowed to determine what happens with surplus funds. Director White explained that the IA Board had the authority to accept or deny staff's recommendation and determine how to handle the surplus funds. Director Calder then explained that staff's recommendation for the surplus infrastructure funds were based on the approved priority list and that staff was recommending that funds go to the next project on the priority list. Commissioner Proctor asked about how surplus revenues were calculated and Blueprint Finance Officer Tres Long explained that a surplus is the result of receiving more revenue than budgeted and/or incurring less expenses than budgeted. Commissioner Proctor then asked about the \$2.4 million debt service allocations with the OEV proposed budget. Director Bowers explained that the debt service was for the \$10 million payment to FAMU and \$20 million payment to FSU for the stadium renovations and safety improvements.

Commissioner Proctor stated that he had reservations about the proposed budget and would want to defer any additional funding for the Airport Gateway until fiscal year 2026 or 2027. He spoke about the \$3 million contribution from FSU. Director Calder explained that FSU had committed to provide the \$3 million at the beginning of construction for the project. Commissioner Proctor spoke against the Airport Gateway Project.

Commissioner Matlow stated that he did not want to increase the Airport Gateway budget before it went out to bid. Commissioner Matlow then asked when funds from the SoMo Walls budget would be recovered and Director Bowers stated that the funds would be repaid in 2027.

Commissioner Cummings asked how the IA Board may be able to address the concerns expressed by some of the commissioners for the Airport Gateway Project before the final approval of the proposed budget. Director White explained that at the last IA Board meeting, the motion to initiate the substantial amendment process to change the scope of the Airport Gateway Project failed before the loss of quorum and that staff was proposing the budget recommendations based on the previously approved scope. He further explained that if the IA Board wanted to amend the scope of the Airport Gateway Project to align with the \$82 million budget it would require the substantial amendment process and a super majority vote. Commissioner O'Keefe asked whether the IA Board would need to resume the motion that was on the floor during the last meeting when quorum was lost. Blueprint Attorney Susan Dawson stated that she would need to do more research to respond to Commissioner O'Keefe's question.

**Commissioner Proctor made a substitute motion to accept staff recommendation for option #1 with budget recommendations A, B, and C, excluding funding for Segment C of the Airport Gateway Project. The substitute motion was seconded by Commissioner Matlow.**

Director White explained that the substitute motion only addressed the funding for Segment C and that if the intent was to fully remove Segment C from the Airport Gateway Project the IA Board would be required to complete the substantial amendment process to alter the scope of the project. Director White also explained that the IA Board would need to provide funding to

cover the current contracts and encumbrances based on previous IA Board direction for the project. Commissioner Proctor asked how much funding was needed to cover the cost of the current contracts and stated that he would prefer the IA Board pay the current obligations to complete the design of the project and delay funding for the construction until fiscal year 2026 or 2027.

Mayor Dailey spoke against the substitute motion stating that he believed that the substitute motion was essentially a substantial amendment to the project as it impacts the scope and prioritization for the project's completion.

Commissioner Caban spoke about his unreadiness for the Airport Gateway Project budget stating that he does not believe it is fiscally responsible to invest the more than \$124 million in the project based on a Letter of Intent from Florida State University. He stated he would be more willing to support the project with a binding contract from FSU.

Commissioner Matlow asked for clarification as to why staff was recommending a budget increase for the Airport Gateway Project when the last approved motion related to the Airport Gateway Project capped the project budget at \$82 million. Director White explained that staff is tasked with implementing IA Board direction which also includes implementation of the approved project scopes, he further explained that staff is attempting to reconcile the funding necessary to fully implement the approved project scope by requesting the funding increase.

Commissioner Proctor expressed reservations about FSU's commitment to the Airport Gateway Project. Director White explained that the next steps in the Airport Gateway Project include a JPA (Joint Project Agreement) with FSU for the \$3 million commitment that is to be provided when construction begins. Director White further explained that the full cost of the project will be determined following the completion of design and the award of a construction contract.

Commissioner Cummings asked for clarification as to whether the substitute motion was appropriate as it impacts the prioritization of the project. Attorney Dawson explained that based on the Board's Bylaws delaying or advancing a project would require a substantial amendment and that the substitute motion is improper because it would bypass the substantial amendment process. Commissioner Cummings asked for further clarification on the previous motion to reduce the project budget to \$82 million that was passed by the IA Board. Attorney Dawson explained that the IA Board would need to reconcile the project budget to the scope by either increasing the budget to implement the current approved scope or reducing the scope of the project through the substantial amendment process.

**Commissioner Proctor withdrew his substitute motion.**

Commissioner Welch commended staff for their work on the budget and spoke in support of the budget in order to move the projects forward. He stated that he believed the proper place to discuss initiating the substantial amendment process for the Airport Gateway Project would be in the Director Discussion portion of the 3:00pm business meeting.

Commissioner Caban asked about what would happen if FSU declined to honor the Letter of Intent. Attorney Dawson explained that FSU has been a willing partner but stated that if FSU walked away from the project, staff would return to the IA Board for direction.

**The original motion passed 6-5 (weighted: 34-29)**

**Commissioner Richardson was absent, and Commissioners Matlow, Porter, Proctor, Caban, and O'Keefe voted in opposition.**

III. **ADJOURN**

**The meeting adjourned at 2:54 p.m.**

*The next Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Board of Directors Meeting  
is scheduled for **May 16, 2024, at 3:00 p.m.***