L.K. Nandam welcomed the attendees and thanked Polk State College for hosting the meeting. He then led the room through the Pledge of Allegiance.

Angela Garcia Falconetti, President from Polk State College expressed appreciation for the opportunity to host meeting and welcomed attendees. She provided an overview of Polk State College and recognized staff.

Mr. Nandam encouraged the committee to maintain its focus on the legislation and to provide recommendations on the project, focusing on goals and guiding principles. The committee should maintain focused on the charge given by the legislation. He stated that this second meeting is for continuing the considerations discussion – including Avoidance, Minimization, Mitigation, and Enhancement (AMME) – which will lead to the foundation of the planning process starting in January.
• Mr. Nandam clarified the recent news reports, he said we have not changed what were charged to do, we are focusing on areas of opportunity and we are not drawing lines on the map. He further clarified that this is a preplanning phase to prepare for the planning phase that starts in January. He reinforced that the recommendations will focus on the guiding principles. He said that there are three broad sets of options: developing new corridors, enhancing existing corridors, or taking no actions for some portions of each study area. The No Build Option is still on the table and a No Build Option will be evaluated through the Project Development and Environment Study (PD&E) process and the Task Force will focus on what is in the legislation.

• Mr. Nandam reminded the Task Force that public comments are taken through the public comment station, court reporter, or a speaker request card for discussion during the public comment period. Task Force members are encouraged to stay during this phase. He said The Community Open House is on November 12 at the Wauchula Train Depot for opportunity for public input. Comments are also able to be submitted through the online website FloridaMCORES.com or via email to FDOTlistens@dot.state.fl.us. He concluded by discussing the process for uploading all public materials on the website and stated that the meeting is also being recorded live on the Florida Channel.

• Mr. Nandam introduced Karen Kiselewski, the meeting facilitator and thanked the Florida Channel staff who were streaming the meeting.

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<tr>
<th>10:05 am</th>
<th>Introductions and Safety Briefing</th>
<th>Karen Kiselewski, Facilitator</th>
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<td>• Karen Kiselewski reviewed the various groups involved in the Task Force. Introductions were made from each Task Force member with their name and organization and an indication if any members were new or substituting.</td>
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<td>• Mr. Nandam introduced additional FDOT staff.</td>
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<td>• Ms. Kiselewski introduced note takers and technical experts and concluded this session by conducting a safety briefing.</td>
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<th>10:15 am</th>
<th>Government in the Sunshine Law – Video Refresher</th>
<th>FDOT or AG Staff</th>
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<td>• Ms. Kiselewski introduced and played the Government in the Sunshine Law video. She also reviewed key questions from the first Task Force meeting including that the three Task Forces are separate entities and members can discuss projects between the Task Forces but not within. She referenced that this and other answers are provided in the packet the task force members received. She introduced John Fricke from the Florida Attorney General who was available for questions throughout the day.</td>
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<td>• Members were asked if there were any questions about the Sunshine Law and none were asked.</td>
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<tr>
<th>10:30 am</th>
<th>Task Force Meeting #1 Recap and Meeting #2 Objectives</th>
<th>Karen Kiselewski, Facilitator</th>
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<td>• Ms. Kiselewski provided an overview of the previous meeting including the morning sessions, the consideration discussion and what was needed for recommendations moving forward. She stated the Objectives for Meeting #2 which are to start with the avoidance and minimization discussion, with maps placed around the room to facilitate the discussion. She also stated that there would be time for public comment. She provided an overview of the Task Force work plan which was revised to reflect comments from the previous meeting. She asked if everyone was in consensus to move forward with the work plan and there were no objections.</td>
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<td>• She also discussed the Task Force engagement plan including the meeting outcomes and the guidance for achieving how to get to recommendations. The next meeting will provide adjustments to these plans based on comments from Task Force members from today’s meeting. Final recommendations will come with consensus which she reviewed the requirements for this for moving forward. Ms. Kiselewski also discussed the discussion guidelines for Task Force members providing comments. She reinforced</td>
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that right now this is a preplanning phase to prepare for the next phase of the project. Ms. Kiselewski finished this discussion by reviewed today’s agenda, the purpose and objectives of today’s meeting and the expected outcomes.

- Andrew Dickman made a request commenting that a lot of local governments use Tuesday and Wednesday for local meetings and encouraged FDOT staff to conduct meetings on Monday instead of Tuesdays.

- Ms. Kiselewski indicated that staff will consider that request for the future meetings and stated that they understand not everyone can attend every meeting which is why alternates are allowable.

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<th>10:50 am</th>
<th>Overview of Public Comments Summary</th>
<th>Darcy Foster</th>
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- Ms. Kiselewski introduced Darcy Foster
- Darcy Foster summarized the public comments from the previous Task Force meeting. Highlights from Ms. Foster presentation included the following:
  - The public voice was heard and is important to this process. She shared some statistics regarding public input. She highlighted the word cloud showing map, rural, wildlife, and corridors as the major words. This is something they will incorporate into public meetings.
  - Public comments were organized into six MCORES themes or topics. For the topic of Mobility this was to maximize existing facilities in line with the guiding principles. Also, this included utilizing information from past studies.
  - Connectivity comments were to look for opportunities to collocate and use current infrastructure. Prioritize existing resources and not take funding away from other state priorities. Consider elements beyond roads such as broadband and sewer.
  - Opportunity comments were for land development opportunities and beneficial needs for the entire state of Florida including the rural parts of the state.
  - Resiliency comments were on evacuation and how MCORES will assist with evacuation. These corridors can assist with this especially for staging relief supplies. The MCORES program does not impact existing maintenance needs but this will be considered for innovations when building the corridors. The MCORES corridor will be designed to keep in mind future conditions.
  - Environmental comments were on how the MCORES program will look to combine right of way (ROW) and conservation opportunities. Environmental and local agencies will be consulted as well.
  - Safety comments are a top priority, specifically with evacuation. All options are considered including use of existing infrastructure and future construction. Resilience is a vital feature.

- Shannon Estenoz asked a process question for the Task Force regarding responses to the public questions/comments that Ms. Foster presented. She wanted to know if there’s a presentation for the Task Force with data and analysis. For example, she wanted to know what the mobility challenges in Polk County are, or what are the current hurricane clearance times for Collier County, or what are the standards and what problems are being solved in this effort. She mentioned that she was expecting this in the first meeting to help with decision making and she wanted to know when the Task Force will get this information.

- Ms. Kiselewski responded that there have been a lot of similar comments in the Task Force comments. These topics will be brought up later in the process depending on how technical it is. Information about mitigation and enhancement will be part of meetings four and five.

- Mr. Dickman concurred with Estenoz’s question and asked that for example with resilience and evacuation are you talking about “get out of town” or “shelter in place”. He expected more work to have been conducted by the Department since the first meeting and for this to have been provided. He stated that FDOT is not polling members on when the best time for the Task Force is to meet.
• Ms. Kiselewski responded that later portions of the presentation may answer some of those questions.
• Mr. Nandam directed the Task Force to focus on the four definitions – for AMME. He stated that Ms. Kiselewski had a great point that these conversations will be discussed in the future meetings because they tie into the other areas. For now, the focus is on avoidance and minimization to get to the foundation of the planning process. The second thing he wanted to discuss is that there are certain things about analysis that are reviewed in other phases of the project. Today is focused on corridor analysis which may not include all of the things Task Force members are requesting.

11:00 am
Task Force Members Comments Summary

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<th>Comments</th>
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<td>Ms. Foster summarized the Task Force members’ comments from the last Task Force meeting. Highlights from Ms. Foster presentation included:</td>
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<td>o The comments were organized into the MCORES categories like the public comments received.</td>
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<td>o The Mobility comments focused on roadways, how to use these roads and maximize facilities, what are the origin and destinations of travelers, what is the purpose of the corridors - to come to or pass through.</td>
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<td>o The Connectivity comments were about broadband/multiple connectivity concepts.</td>
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<td>o The Opportunity comments focused on quality of life, economic, innovation and technology, and right of way.</td>
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<td>o The Resiliency comments focused on costs, infrastructure, and climate vulnerability.</td>
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<td>o The Environment comments focused on land, water, and wildlife.</td>
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<td>o The Safety comments included hurricane evacuation, traffic, safety, and public health.</td>
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• Ms. Foster concluded this discussion by reviewing the current and existing studies related to the project which included Polk Parkway, Central Polk Parkway and Heartland Parkway preliminary planning and feasibility analysis, SR 29 and I-75.
• Ms. Kiselewski said there have been request on these reports – these will be added on the MCORES website under Useful Links. She stated that the recommendations can be organized in the same fashion. She acknowledged that there is more work to do but the framework is only just starting to be set up for what the recommendations might be, and which topic areas should be addressed.
• Ms. Kiselewski asked for any other clarifying questions of which there were none.

11:10 am
GIS Interactive Mapping Tool using data layers within Study Area – DEMO

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<th>Comments</th>
<th>Kyle Purvis, FDOT District 1 TDA Administrator &amp; Jozette Calvert</th>
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<td>Ms. Kiselewski introduced Kyle Purvis and Jozette Calvert.</td>
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<td>Kyle Purvis discussed that in the first meeting there was a request to see more site-specific data. As a result, the data has been compiled into one tool. Mr. Purvis said the tool can be accessed at FloridaMCORES.com and works best with Chrome and Firefox. The tool will be live on November 1st.</td>
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<td>Mr. Purvis walked them through the tool’s navigation on the website. He then reviewed some of the data sources, stating they come from state and federal sources. The comprehensive list of data layers used in the tool is available in the handout in the Task Force packet. He demonstrated how data used in the tool was downloaded from the sources by showing an example of Eagle Nests data which comes from FWC GIS website.</td>
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<td>Ms. Jozette Calvert walked through a live demonstration of the GIS tool while Mr. Purvis discussed the features and functionalities of the tool. They highlighted the base map, measuring tool, share button, zoom, and other basic features. They also discussed how to turn on and off layers, print, etc.</td>
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<td>Mr. Dickman stated that he appreciated the tool but it’s mostly visual. He asked if the shapefiles will be available to other organizations to actually do analysis by combining layers.</td>
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<td>Mr. Purvis responded that all the files are publicly available and can be downloaded from the source.</td>
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Jennifer Carpenter wanted to know if there is there any description of what data is specifically for each of the layers embedded in the map.

Ms. Calvert responded that the metadata is available for the whole map but if you want a description for an individual layer you should go to the source.

Ms. Carpenter further wanted to know how to recommend additional layers if members think it is something important for the Task Force to see.

Ms. Kiselewski responded that FDOT is comparing layers that others have recommended to add and seeing what to show. Any additional layers should be sent to Ms. Kiselewski.

Mr. Nandam reminded that all Task Force matters should be channeled to Karen.

Jason Lauritsen had a question on additional layers, and he mentioned that he would love to see what other layers are being suggested and if it is possible to see the reasoning for these additional layers.

Ms. Kiselewski responded that this topic will be discussed later in the day.

Elizabeth Fleming wanted to know how members access the GIS tool.

Ms. Kiselewski responded that this is available on the MCORES website and instructions are in the brochure in Task Force packet.

Mr. Nandam introduced Huiwei Shen and reminded the Task Force that Ms. Shen’s presentation is a precursor for the afternoon’s avoidance and minimization discussion.

Ms. Shen provided an overview of the AMME consideration process and the corridor development process. She discussed how FDOT works with the wealth of data to inform the preplanning and planning processes. This included understanding the environment like the natural, cultural, social, and physical and how AMME is applied to this. She said these ideas help with the development of guiding principles. Today’s discussion is focusing on the natural environment, in line with the legislation of the environment being a key priority. She highlighted the Wekiva Parkway and the East Central Florida Corridor examples. Ms. Shen discussed how another Task Force member, Mr. Charles Lee, highlighted how for the Wekiva Parkway very implementable ideas came out of the guiding principles, such as collocation, purchase of conservation land, and land use controls. Ms. Shen discussed and highlighted the process board. We are developing guiding principles for AMME – these will help the department to get into the corridor planning process. Ms. Shen finished the discussion by reintroducing the work plan, the role of staff, and incorporation of public feedback.

Mr. Dickman commented that he understands that the Wekiva Parkway is the gold standard. He looked at the I-75 Relief Task Force and found 20 recommendations in that project. He wanted to know if I-75 and other similar projects will be considered. He wanted to know how FDOT is going to make local government implement their plans. The state land planning agency isn’t really involved.

Ms. Shen responded that she was involved in the I-75 process and clarified that FDOT was just bringing a couple examples to show lessons learned, not an exhaustive list. She mentioned that the project can still pull other lessons and processes from these projects. Regarding the local government following their local plan, Ms. Shen said the legislation required that by December 2023 we will share with them, however we want to engage with the local government very early to make sure our guiding principles don’t conflict with their plans.

Mr. Nandam said we will engage local governments to make sure the guiding principles will support their local visions. Mr. Nandam clarified that the different Task Forces are used as examples. FDOT is trying to leverage the process and lessons learned not the recommendations from those projects. He indicated that this is a different area and FDOT wants to make sure they are using recommendations specific to this corridor.
- Ms. Shen also added that the guiding principles need to be specific for this area and they need the Task Force’s help for this.
- Gary Ritter questioned that FDOT had mentioned two examples of conservation easements and asked for an example. He assumed that FDOT was talking about private lands.
- Ms. Shen responded that FDOT will need to get back to Gary on this question but with the Wekiva example there were three parcels acquired and 90 percent of those were for conservation.
- Mr. Ritter further indicated that FDOT doesn’t have to acquire land to development a conservation easement, FDOT can use private land to do that.
- Ms. Kiselewska mentioned that this topic will be discussed later in the afternoon with support from the technical team.
- Katie Worthington wanted to know if it would be helpful if local officials are aware of projects - for example Winter Haven’s Water Master Plan. She asked if they should make the project team aware of these relevant plans to support this process.
- Ms. Shen responded that this is very helpful and she asked the members to share any local information with Karen to ensure we can review and incorporate as applicable – even identifying persons.
- Paul Gray mentioned that the roads themselves, being 100 yards wide, are going to have an impact and we have to look at avoidance and mitigation. An even bigger impact is the location of an interchange with the associated development for housing, gas station, etc. He wanted to know if FDOT has predictable tools to help understand these growth impacts for the future.
- Ms. Shen responded that this is a good suggestion. That is why the Wekiva process limited the number of interchanges, however we are not there yet. She suggested the focus now should be on developing the guiding principles, but we will look at that in the future.
- Ms. Fleming asked a question about the different planning efforts taking place over the years, for example the Heartland 2060 study. She wanted to know how are all these bodies of work conducted in the region going to fold into this.
- Ms. Shen responded that this is being leveraged. We are not starting from scratch and will provide a synthesis in future meetings of these studies.
- Ms. Fleming stated it would be helpful to see a compilation of various studies conducted in the region.
- Ms. Shen responded that these are just a few high-level examples and there will be more time in the afternoon for this information.
- Mr. Lauritsen mentioned that when adding additional data for the group to consider, he would like to hear from them on why it is important and why include them. Meeting time is very limited so it would be helpful to step away and digest some of the information.
- Ms. Shen agreed with this and said that is a great point. She mentioned that they are having these discussions with the Task Force members and owners of data like Kent Wimmer.
- Mr. Gray wanted to know if FDOT has studies that show problem areas within these corridors. There need to be studies saying, “here’s problem corridors, here’s where we have too much congestion”, etc. He indicated that the Task Force should not try to build something that is not needed.
- Mr. Nandam reiterated the focus on the purpose of the Task Force, and they are defining the factors to consider for the PD&E and not purpose and need. Remain refocused on the AMME principles.
- Mr. Dickman indicated that every local government has a capital improvement schedule so we can leverage this.
- Ms. Kiselewski mentioned that they are talking about areas of opportunities and large swaths to consider. Specific locations will be delved into further on in the planning cycle.
- Ms. Estenoz mentioned that she thinks Task Force members are going to continue to feel confused and frustrated because they are being wedged into the AMME framework. Focusing on the avoidance and minimization framework means there is an implied need, and it is difficult to separate the two. She
thought that when she looks at the examples the difference in the language is very subtle and nuanced, and it seems like the Task Force can do that in ten minutes. She stated that she will continue to feel frustrated and questioned whether or not the Task Force work here is particularly useful.

- Ms. Shen responded that the legislation outlines the objectives so by helping FDOT define the guiding principles the members can help guide future work. We are not at the point of drawing lines on a map yet. She asked for patience and to work with FDOT as today we want to focus on the natural environment and what we need to avoid and/or minimize. She stated that she hopes the afternoon session will relieve some of this frustration.

12:00 pm  | ***Lunch*** on your own
1:30 pm  | Overview of Avoidance and Minimization Considerations Presentation | Marlon Bizerra, FDOT Production Lead

- Mr. Nandam said the afternoon portion will be about figuring out the avoidance and minimization guidelines and introduced Marlon Bizerra. He said Marlon’s presentation is available on FloridaMCORES.com.
- Mr. Bizerra provided an overview of the Avoidance and Minimization considerations. His presentation included defining the terms, reviewing the laws of the Endangered Species Act, Clean Water Act and others, identifying key resources, examples, and a series of example composite maps that led into the discussions.
- Ms. Kiselewski said Mr. Bizerra set up for discussion about what is missing in the maps, she emphasized the discussion should be on avoidance and minimization and what are the areas of opportunities to avoid and minimize as much as possible.
- Gary Ritter asked how you look at conservation easements on private lands in those particular situations. They are defined more on publicly owned lands but wondered how you deal with private lands.
- Ms. Kiselewski called Sierra (subject matter) expert to clarify on the conservation easement question on private lands. Sierra mentioned that the layers shown also include privately owned conservation easements in the managed areas layer; ones protected in perpetuity but remain private are included.
- Bill McDaniel questioned the weighting system with the layers and wanted to know the metrics utilized to determine the weighting and if the Task Force would be told this information.
- Ms. Kiselewski stated that the weighing will happen later in the project development process and that FDOT will get back with the Task Force on this.
- Chris Piazza (another subject matter expert) stated that the team is doing land suitability mapping and the weighting will happen there and they will bring the weighting to the Task Force for this to show what is being done.

1:50 pm  | Avoidance and Minimization Considerations Discussion | Karen Kiselewski, Facilitator & Task Force Members

- Ms. Kiselewski wanted to discuss the avoidance and minimization topics and what is missing in the composite maps; and invited the Task Force to start with a conversation on Conservation Lands.
- Mr. Lauritsen indicated that he knew a few layers which may be helpful, and that Kent Wimmer has a database for the Defenders of Wildlife and wanted to clarify that FDOT was using this.
- Ms. Kiselewski stated that this data was included.
- Mr. Lauritsen then stated that in 2013 FWC did a blueprint pilot project on panther corridors in the area. He does not have the dataset but would like to see this included. He also stated that the consultation area for Scrub Jays is included but is there not something more refined. Distinct populations of scrub jays should be included on the map.
• Mr. Gray recommended including Dark Sky overlay (International Dark Sky Association) not that we are starting to realize the impacts of light pollution on the ecosystem. He also recommended that, as the highways are designed, lighting that shines straight down should be used to minimize the light pollution.

• Mr. Dickman stated that there are a series of maps from the GeoPlanning Center from the University of Florida (UFL) and he is unsure if these have been included on the composite maps. He suggested that we need to add data on composite biodiversity, such as aquifer recharge areas, not just surface water. He recommended that socioeconomic data and existing small towns to avoid also be looked at as transportation impacts the livelihood of those towns.

• Ms. Fleming wanted to know where the Florida Ecological Greenway Network fits in and that this should be included, not just conservation and managed lands.

• Ms. Kiselewski said that is in the wildlife layer.

• Mr. Lauritsen had a refining question on an existing layer. For the wetland layer with freshwater wetlands, it would be helpful for the weighting process if it were not so aggregated. It should be separated by wetland types as some have been largely impacted historically. He also stated that cropland and pasture have considerably different ecological functions and should be separated.

• Pat Steed stated that there are certain priority easements that are in the process for acquisition which are also important to include in the layers such as the one from Nature Conservancy.

• Ms. Kiselewski asked what is important to conserve and what areas are MOST important for avoiding and/or minimizing.

• Mr. Gray emphasized the importance of the “green interior in Florida.” He stated that many of the ranches and aquifers have a lot of value for the wildlife. A proposal between 17 and 27, in concept, would open up the green area that has value for agriculture and wildlife and would open it up to exploitation. He would prefer to follow existing roadways not just for environmental reasons but for agriculture as well.

• Gerald Buhr both meetings so far have had a lot of discussion on environmental. He said that there has been nothing in the objectives about quality of life and economics and asked at what point are we going to discuss human needs. Mr. Buhr stated that some communities could really benefit from such a limited access highway.

• Ms. Kiselewski said the human environment will be discussed in the future meetings, but today’s focus is the natural environment. Note: a list of “parking lot” items were created and documented on a flip chart during the meeting. These are re-documented at the end of these Meeting Notes.

• Mr. Ritter wanted to go back to Mr. Gray’s comments about conservation easement land. When layers are considered, public and private easements have been lumped together. He stated that it would be nice to see what is public ownership versus private.

• Matt Caldwell said that he appreciates that the Task Force has gotten to this point. For what has been touched on at this meeting and for what the Task Force wants, we want to avoid all of them. He stated that this does not give us anything productive. An idea was put out at the last meeting and there are real decision points which will influence how this will all turn out. There are a mix of conservation and native lands from Charlotte to Okeechobee with seven roads through there, six of which are paved. He wanted to know if we will use one of those six cuts through the woods and not build a new roadway as that is a major decision point. Further, if that is the case, he wanted to know how the roadway would get into Collier County. I-75 could be used to the coast, or you would have to deal with a conservation corridor that already exists down to Ave Maria or take the corridor out to Immokalee. There are implications with each of these.

• Ms. Kiselewski stated that that is touching on a guiding principle if the Task Force was interested in making that kind of recommendation. This is partly tied to the exercise today – where we can/cannot/should not go.
Mr. Lauritsen asked if the Task Force was being asked what we would like to avoid among the layers listed.

Ms. Kiselewski stated yes, if we can.

Mr. Lauritsen recommended the **wildlife corridors and wetlands should be avoided**.

Karson Turner wanted to follow up on Mr. Caldwell’s comments and, knowing that there is a process, asked **when FDOT anticipates that the corridor would actually be laid out**. He wanted to know when that next step happens.

Mr. Nandam stated that he did not know if we would get there through the Task Force process. The Task Force is developing the guiding principles that will inform decisions through the planning and PD&E processes. Something like “avoid agricultural areas but leverage existing corridors” might be something that the Task Force could recommend and take forward as a principle in the future process. There is an opportunity to rank these principles for consideration which will be used for the planning and PD&E processes.

Ms. Estenoz stated that the only thing she is currently certain about is wanting to **avoid constructing new roads**. She stated **she does not have enough information to go forward** otherwise. If this counts as a principle to come out of the Task Force, then that is one she is willing to discuss. Looking at the maps and trying to build a new road, the word “avoid” means “do your best” but otherwise minimize. She would like to avoid new roads.

Brian Starford said that the point that has been hit on several times already is “what is important”? This is incredibly broad but **lands that are owned fee or less than fee, and conservation lands are incredibly important from his District perspective**. He stated that the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) will make sure their GIS layers are up to date.

Mr. Gray stated that Florida is about 20 percent urbanized but the U.S. average is around 2 – 3 percent. Florida has way more development than other states with a whole bunch of new developments still being built. Florida is going to continue to grow so we **need to focus new developments towards urban areas as much as possible and protect rural landscapes**. This is important for agriculture, wildlife and ways of life. Florida will keep developing but this road can guide development towards developed areas rather than new areas.

Nat Birdsong stated that the **Peace River watershed areas need to be strongly considered** as well.

Ms. Kiselewski stated that she knows local county commissions have a perspective on what is important to communities and started another dialogue focused on what is important and missing from the Water Resources conversation.

Ms. Carpenter stated that water quality is a priority for the state right now. There needs to be a **layer on waters not meeting/maintaining standards, BMAPs, and priority watersheds** identified in the Governors Executive Order 1912. This may be something that will be really important even in the enhancement phase.

Mr. Caldwell stated the project should avoid building “square ponds.” Since the Task Force is talking about natural resource opportunities, **landscape scale stormwater management** would be a better place for water over a pond that no one uses.

Mr. Starford stated that there are a tremendous amount of **surface and groundwater monitoring sites from the WMDs should be added because certain groundwater sites need to be maintained**. He stated that he could provide this layer.

Ms. Kiselewski started the conversation on Agriculture in terms of what was missing and what should be avoided.

Ms. Estenoz stated that most **county comprehensive plans include agriculture preservation areas** that local governments have decided to preserve which may be helpful.
Meeting Notes

- Mr. Lauritsen stated that rural and family lands protection properties should be added as well as smoke sheds for burning (environmental implications).
- Mr. Caldwell added that it would be helpful to get some representation of existing land use plans, particularly for the non-urban areas. For example, what acreage is currently in long term, high density agriculture use.
- Ms. Kiselewski stated that that is part of the built environment.
- Mr. Dickman stated that taking the future land use maps in existence and putting them together would be highly instructive. He advised the avoidance of breaking up large scale cattle ranches that are historic to Florida.
- Mr. Gray stated that most people have heard of fragmentation wildlife habitat, but it happens with agriculture too. A cow getting out of its pasture in an agricultural space is different from it getting out into a neighborhood. This needs to be separated from everything that comes with urbanization. This should be a guiding principle in his opinion.
- Ms. Steed stated that there is a generalized future land use for seven of the nine counties. This protocol could be used to complete the remaining two counties.
- Ms. Kiselewski started the conversation on wildlife opportunities - what are we missing and what is important.
- Ms. Fleming indicated that the Task Force is hemmed in by the suggested and mapped categories. She asked if there are layers for endemism of species, rare species, and plants? There is a Priority 1 layer, but it would be nice to see all of the other priorities. In addition, endangered/threatened animal species are represented but are only a part of the diversity of Florida which makes this region unique. Plants should also be represented.
- Ms. Kiselewski started the discussion about the composite mapping and asked what is important to be included with regard to natural environment asked what we should avoid or minimize.
- Penny Taylor stated that everything is connected. To prioritize what is important, she stated that they can’t because it is all connected. She said it is very difficult to prioritize one resources and let the other go.
- Ms. Kiselewski responded that connectivity is important, and we will bring the rest of the layer in the next meeting.
- Melissa Roberts stated that this may be covered under conservations lands, but mitigation banks should be highlighted.
- Ms. Estenoz wanted to say it slightly differently, that if government counts it, it is important. So, if it is on a government map or protected in statute is important. This extends to things that government hasn’t counted but science has said is important. If you have a map or law, it is important. It seems completely inappropriate to say the Endangered Species Act isn’t important or that conservation overlays aren’t important.
- Ms. Kiselewski stated that the guiding principles may say that all of these are important. We need to talk about the “what if they can’t be avoided” piece.
- Ken Doherty, in light of what Ms. Estenoz and Mr. Caldwell said, indicated that all the resources are regulated by state, regional, or federal agencies. He said that, if FDOT has to have this under construction, it will probably have to avoid anything that would require a federal permit and federal regulators. The alternative analysis alone could take years for this. He suggested documenting resources and a list of agencies who would have to give a permit. This will help with the “avoid this” component.
- Mr. Caldwell stated that state lands bill developed or implemented a plan for mitigation (related to Florida Forever) it may have data that we are discussing today so it is good to look at it.
Ms. Kiselewski asked for other strategies like the suggestion of looking at affected processes as a way to organize or rank items.

Mr. Dickman stated that legislation separates out federally and state regulated lands. He thinks this is a great point and would like to see it on a map as it will dictate the processes to go through. He further said that he was uncomfortable trying to come up with what is most important for 1000 Friends of Florida. **We need to have a data driven thinking and not just what we think is important** as everything people have put on the list is important.

Ms. Kiselewski concluded this discussion by asking Task Force members what they would want to see in a composite map.

Bill Ferry stated that it’s unfair to ask the group to prioritize anything that’s all interconnected. He said that he and Taylor do not normally agree but they do on this. They are sitting here telling FDOT that it’s all important. **If we are avoiding all we possibly can, then we have to stay on the existing roads** because he does not want see Andrew say it is more important to protect the panther than caracara.

Sherry Ambrose stated that it would be nice to see a composite map with existing roadways on it.

Mr. Doherty asked if the legislation allows this project to be phased or does the entire project have to be built by 2030. Phasing would give you more time to negotiate regulatory approval.

Mr. Nandam responded that the legislation states “substantial” completion by 2030.

Mr. Doherty said so it can be phased.

3:00 pm  Break

3:15 pm  Guiding Principles for Avoidance and Minimization  Karen Kiselewski, Facilitator & Task Force Members

Ms. Kiselewski started the discussion on how to develop guiding principles for avoidance and minimization.

Ms. Estenoz asked for a follow up at the next meeting for an interpretation of the statute that establishes the Task Force in terms of evaluating the need. The implication is that the Task Force engages in the needs conversation.

Mr. Gray indicated that the Task Force needs to consider the phosphate mining in this corridor, and we need to consider this as unique landscape.

Ms. Kiselewski began the official dialogue on guiding principles for Conservation. She asked Brian ten Siethoff (staff recording discussion) to go over the notes.

Mr. ten Siethoff said he grouped the comments where they fit in the discussion categories and reviewed the comments with the Task Force. He said for Conservation data consideration we need to look for additional conservation easements including public and private ownership and other non-governmental entities that have land in conservation or plans to acquire land; information regarding developed Florida Forever Trustee, smoke sheds and rate plants. In terms of avoidance he said he heard we need to avoid lands that are owned fee or less than fee.

Mr. McDaniel stated to specify in the avoidance category lands that the water management district owns, this would be captured through lands that are fee or less than fee.

Mr. Starford said the map does not include District owned land, but you may capture it by lands that are owned fee or less than fee.

Mr. Caldwell stated he has never had a good answer for where phosphate lands are and what happens when they are reclaimed.

Weston Pryor suggested that splitting the agricultural ranches should not be up to the Task Force and should be left to the owners.

Ms. Fleming wanted to make sure that endemism is captured.
Brian ten Siethoff said that it is captured under the wildlife habitat section.

Chris Constance reiterated the mining question and stated that the Task Force should have a mining map or overlay to include.

Ms. Kiselewski said yes that was the request and it will be shown.

Mr. Turner stated that the Task Force has discussed mines and agriculture but the one thing absent today has been the Seminole Tribe of Florida. They have a large footprint in Glades and Hendry Counties and Trust Lands in Polk and Collier Counties which should be another overlay.

Ms. Kiselewski asked if you would avoid those lands.

Mr. Turner answered yes.

Mr. McDaniel said what is important is communication, government to government communication with the tribe and their lands is important.

Mr. ten Siethoff said that he had moved the mining comment to the agricultural category.

Ms. Fleming stated that military lands should be considered and is it assumed that these can’t be used anywhere. These lands are important for conservation.

Ms. Steed indicated that this is important to track and avoid. There are other lands surrounding that in the planning area, some of which are conservation, and some are military mission. Both should be included.

Ms. Estenoz wanted to add to Mr. Turner’s comments that this should be “tribal lands” as the Miccosukee also own land.

Ms. Kiselewski stated that tribal lands would be added.

Mr. Gray stated that Avon Park has a buffer zone around the property for pilots flying in low and the property includes lands for military mission lands. Buffer zone is larger than the property, so we need to get clarification of what that is.

Cecil Pendergrass stated that Lee County welcomes the project.

Ms. Kiselewski started the same discussion on Water Quality and developing the principles in this topic for avoidance and minimization.

Mr. ten Siethoff showed a summary of consideration for data he captured from the previous discussion which included potential to separate wetland by type, mitigation banks, aquifer recharge areas, impaired water, priority watershed, and water quality monitoring sites and avoiding Peace River Watershed and surface and groundwater features.

Mr. Starford clarified that both water quality and water levels monitoring sites need to be considered as they have been there for many years.

Mr. Constance stated that based on the hydrology of the area, it is going to be impossible to avoid water impacts. He said it is worth separating that, so he suggested that this comes down to minimization and mitigation – it is going to come down to sheet flow. Something is going to be affected but it is a trade off and a question of how you deal with impacts.

Mr. Gray stated that water quality is an important topic. Almost all of this is about water supply/water sheds, so he wanted to know why this category is just “water quality”. This is also about watershed integrity, water resources, and the potential impact on our resources/watersheds so it should be more inclusive.

Ms. Kiselewski suggested we call it “water resources.”

Mr. Gray agreed with that.

Ms. Estenoz wanted to push back on that concept. In partnership with the anxiety she expressed in the morning, without a discussion of the need, avoidance has no meaning. It appears to be a foregone conclusion that we are building the road, so avoidance is meaningless. For example, if the Big Cypress National Preserve is added, she does not mean avoided to the greatest extent possible, she means avoid it completely. She wants to know how to avoid this conversation as there are resources in this corridor.
that are not negotiable. She wanted to know if we can really afford to build a new road through the Big Cypress National Preserve and to go back to the “avoid new roads” idea.

- Ms. Kiselewski asked what else would be on the avoid list.
- Ms. Estenoz stated that she was not even suggesting that it be put on a list. **A list implies that if it is not up there, it is not important.** When we say avoid, we mean additional impacts. She did not presume that this would rip up existing infrastructure. Ms. Estenoz clarified that **avoid new impacts to be the principle.**
- Ms. Fleming wanted to know if this captures the fact that roads acts as dams and create run off. **We want to avoid doing that,** but a paved road will do that unless we elevate the roads or some other way to avoid that.
- Ms. Kiselewski responded that is minimization.
- Ms. Fleming apologized that she did not know the correct place to make comments.
- Ms. Kiselewski stated any place the Task Force wants to make them is fine.
- Ms. Kiselewski initiated the discussion agriculture and avoidance and minimization principles to include.
- Mr. ten Siethoff showed a summary of consideration for data he captured from the previous discussion which included **separating cropland and pastureland, consider wildlife value of agricultural areas, agricultural preservation areas, rural and family lands, and mines; and avoid fragmenting agricultural lands.**
- Mr. Constance stated that **mining lands have already been pretty affected, and a road can go through there because it has already been adulterated.** If there are large areas of mining country the roads can go through there. It is important to show mining on a map and where a roadway could go through.
- Ms. Pryor stated that this is saying ranchers can’t split up their land, but that’s their land.
- Tracy Hood stated that **future land use should be captured** in the list as it has been discussed and was not included in the summary.
- Elton Langford stated that, touching on agricultural lands, one of things he fears with this roadway is that this stuff has been protected for a long time. **If a road is put in, that won’t split the ranches up, but development will.** With running water, broadband, etc., it entices development on land that has been owned by families for generations. He stated that they need to consider farmland, and this should be protected because Florida is one of the most agriculture producing states in the Union due to weather and the availability of water to irrigate. We need to protect both cattle ranches and farms along with all the other things that have been discussed (water, wildlife, etc.). He agrees with a lot that has been said but his number one goal is **protecting agriculture.**
- Ms. Kiselewski said it is an interesting balance to allow landowners to take advantage of their land as they want to.
- Mr. Pryor concurred with Mr. Langford saying that he is the same as Mr. Langford and he wants to **protect his people and make sure they have a say in this process.**
- Mr. Caldwell stated that some of these things we can talk about later but there are ways to compensate property owners no matter where they are in the study corridor. He stated that he doesn’t think avoid is where they should put agriculture. They should not assume that tribal lands would not want a road there. He stated they **should consult the tribes and the landowners on what they want.** There are probably **about two dozen families that own most of the land in the study areas and a map** of that would be helpful. The families may not want to be involved but an overlay should at least be included.
- Mr. Nandam stated that one of the things that is specified in the legislation is that these are going to be toll roads and with that development can targeted. One of the things the Task Force should be considering is connection points in order to protect agriculture lands.
- Rick Wilson stated that **phosphate lands are not going to be productive and they are an ideal place for these roads.** The Task Force was brought together to come up with ideas to figure out what is best. If
everything is added on top of the map, we can’t build anything. We need a report to the governor in less than a year and we still have a lot to do so we need to use common sense. Putting a road through the middle of the state is a big undertaking and there is a lot of great information at the meeting but at the end of the day there has to be some results. **A lot of people in the room know their area and what can be done. Moving a road five miles either way will make a big difference.** He stated that a lot of people do not want this road and he doesn’t like change either, but the Task Force can find a way to do it.

- Ms. Ambrose stated that the future land use should include other uses such as industrial uses apart from just agriculture.
- Ms. Kiselewski initiated the discussion on wildlife and guiding principles.
- Mr. ten Siethoff showed a summary of consideration for data he captured from the previous discussion which included cooperative conservation, defenders of wildlife database, scrub jays population, endemism of species, rare species, rare plants, biodiversity data from GeoPlan Center, and avoid Florida wildlife corridors.
- Ms. Fleming stated that when we talk about avoiding the Florida Wildlife Corridor and the Ecological Greenway Network, the corridor is just part of that principle. The state of Florida has gone through a great effort to acquire and secure land from development so that there are green spaces. We should avoid going through any conservation lands and try to maintain this block of undeveloped lands for species such as panthers and bears. Highways are the number one source of mortality for the species and there’s a reason why the internal part of the state is so important for agriculture and wildlife. This road may open up the area to intense development.
- Ms. Kiselewski facilitated additional guiding principles discussion.
- Mr. ten Siethoff showed a summary of guiding principles considerations which included avoid fragmentation of conservation lands and agricultural lands, wetlands, acknowledge interconnected nature of these concepts, things are statute or regulation.
- Ms. Estenoz said the best time to make these decisions is in the planning process and we shouldn’t trust these resources to future permitting processes. As part of the fundamental process, by the time it goes to permitting, options are gone. If the permitting process was perfect, then we wouldn’t have endangered species. **In the planning stage we should be considering these things and not just assume they’ll be kicked to some future permitting process.**
- Ms. Kiselewski agreed that we need to look at this as early as possible
- Ms. Estenoz responded “now”.
- Ms. Carpenter stated that one of the things to explicitly say is avoiding any degradation to any water quality. Hydrology was captured a bit too and she liked the idea of landscape scale projects. May want to use “avoiding interrupting major flow ways” as a principle.
- Ms. Kiselewski stated that these did not need to be fully teased out today and that staff can work with them a bit.
- Jim Brooks stated that this is the second meeting he has attended and listened to and, with all of the things that have been listed, if you put them on a map it is going to be a solid map this will show no place to build. This is not reality. Some of the things mentioned, like avoiding agriculture fragmentation, if you remember when Florida’s Turnpike was built in Lake/Sumter, it separated a lot of citrus groves and a huge cattle ranch. Overpasses were built for cattle to cross but now this is becoming part of the Villages. Now you have potential sand skinks, gopher turtles, etc. The regulation of sand skinks, at least in Polk County, is based on soil type and elevation which includes all of the ridge area of Central Florida. Sand skink surveys can only be done two months out of the year and then undergo mitigation. Mr. Brooks stated that he has lived here for 70 years, and there were less than 3 million people in Florida at the time; today there are 20 million. Everybody realize now it is almost impossible to go from one point to another in Florida. We have got to do this project and we have to do it in the best
way possible. We can list everything we want to avoid but we have to find a way to go there. Mr. Brooks is from an agriculture county and we need to check with landowners and see what their feelings are. He has also served on planning and zoning boards for 20 years and each county has their future land use maps. There is worry about development around interchanges, but we can work with the counties on what is allowed there. Rather than listing all of the things to avoid, we have to figure out how to happen.

- Ms. Kiselewski stated that she heard a few ideas of innovative design to reduce impact in that statement.
- Mr. Gray stated that he agreed with the statement about landscape level watershed management, but stormwater ponds don’t help with landscape. Urban stormwater helps with the first flush of junk coming out of parking lots, so we need both in various contexts.
- Mr. Constance stated that we can’t stop migration to Florida, there are 900 - 2,000 people come here every day and that’s what the issue is. If you could turn off the spigot that would solve it. The South Florida model of urbanization and urban sprawl didn’t work. It is concrete the entire way - paved from the coastline to the Everglades. Southwest Florida is green and has done a good job of managing growth, but we may urbanize ourselves to death if we aren’t careful. There is a cost in putting this road in, but there is also a cost to not planning. We are dealing with sea level rise, climate change, and other things, as we are trying to plan for 50 to 100 years in the future. There is an opportunity to decide where, if we are going to, direct development. If we make it a corridor that goes through with water to flow and wildlife to flow, this can limit development. Development may also take a while to occur. This can decompress the coastline. People are going to come anyway, and it is not safe or healthy to over urbanize, it is better to allow for proper growth. The legislature is being very responsible, and all opinions are very good. We still need to minimize impacts and that is why the Task Force is sitting at the meetings. He reminded them not to lose focus.
- Ms. Estenoz said that the thought is that “this” is going to happen and maybe is people understood what “this” is that that would be helpful. She wanted to know if it is expanding roadways, elevated highways, or is it because fellow citizens in Collier County can’t evacuate in time. “This” can be something the Task Force builds consensus around, but they do not even know what “this” is. She bristles a little against “this is going to happen” because she doesn’t know what “this” is. She feels like she sounds like a broken record, but the Task Force needs to know what they are talking about. Until she knows what “this” is, her instinct is to avoid anything of value until she knows what those valuable things are being risked for.
- Ms. Kiselewski said that this is part of next steps and that the next meeting will talk more about what the purpose is from the legislative perspective. As for corridor opportunities, example swaths may help as well.
- Ms. Fleming said the elephant in the room is the way the process that came about. Generally, FDOT does a feasibility analysis to determine the need, but this was not undertaken in that way and was pushed through legislature. This is an unconventional way to build and finance a road.
- Mr. Dickman stated that part of the reason 1000 Friends of Florida opposed the bill is because of the assumption that there is a need to get from point A to B on these corridors. FDOT does data driven planning and the group should be provided with background data with who made these assumption originally. We are not given an option of we should not do this in the first place, other modes, etc. Maybe it should just be rail for freight and passengers. He hopes that the Task Force can get some information on why the assumption was made that we have to have these corridors. He wanted to know if the Task Force has the ability to say no.
- Ms. Kiselewski stated that the Chairman mentioned in the opening that the Task Force could recommend some areas for no action.
Mr. Constance asked if the Chairman put something together to see what a 5-mile piece of this might look like as a teaching tool. This will show number of interchanges, if you are separating the two areas how will the animal look like, and sheet flow. There is way more engineering knowledge today than when roads were put in 40 years ago. He doesn’t know what this would be, but it could be a teaching tool of what is would look like. He doesn’t want a line on a map but an example of how water can flow, and animals can get back and forth if a roadway separates two areas of land.

Mr. Nandam responded the presentation does have examples from other corridors. This can be circled back to at the next meeting. Mr. Nandam further clarified that that the statute says the Department has to go through the planning process, project development and environmental process which will go through different alternatives and consider a no build alternative. The statute also says possibly leveraging existing corridors. Additionally, the task force has ability to use innovative right-of-way procurement for mitigation. Those provisions are provided in the statute for a reason because there is a need to look at enhancement and mitigation options.

Mr. Lauritsen stated that 2070 maps and trend lines are frightening if we aren’t planning. It is early but what is really important to avoid is critical. There are a lot of scarce resources scattered all over the state and part of the conversation is to shine a line of these features. For example, there are 111 bottlenecks on wildlife corridors across the state. Some are quite scarce, but we have to bear with the process on what to avoid.

Mr. Caldwell said that, while this isn’t an avoid topic, he wants to build on Ms. Estenoz’s comments about not going back and tearing up an old road. There is an opportunity to not only bring infrastructure and development to rural communities but also a vehicle to fund landscape scale conservation that is underfunded. We can get ideas about achieving the avoid by focusing on the enhance.

Ms. Worthington stated that there is a lot of data regarding future-casting, at least for the 10 years for when the road would be complete. This includes where people are going to move to which is an important part of the discussion to look at that data as an additional piece. The strategies may persuade where that is or not.

Ms. Kiselewski initiated the discussion on other topics that Task Force would like to see for the future.

Mr. Buhr stated that there are 20 large landowners in this area and there is also a lot of devastating poverty. This could bring benefits to those areas, such as economic growth, which certainly should be a consideration. Right now, these are helped by grants.

Ms. Estenoz stated that in south Florida we have a bad history of economic and/or environmental justice where roads that are passing through and do not stop in certain distressed communities. Similar things happen with other projects like stadiums. She stated that justice in general and consider positive and negative impacts of transportation corridor on communities.

Mr. Constance stated that the future competitiveness of Florida’s economy should be considered. This is an opportunity to bring broadband to places it isn’t. With IT you can do things in your house but if you don’t have lightning speed you will fall behind. More people can have the ability to telecommute and can do so anywhere in the state.

Mike Thompson said he wants to give Mr. Constance an amen and that if you look at the next 10-year forecast, 3 – 4 million people are expected to move into Florida. They can’t all live on the coast, so we need to be prepared. Regional economic significance is in the name and it’s important to the small counties that are fiscally constrained.

Mr. Caldwell wanted to build on that and said that just as much as existing infrastructure was discussed, we should avoid new infrastructure with additional needs. Avoid and minimize brand new interchanges and use existing growing communities where the people and infrastructure already exist so that a small town doesn’t have to spend money on infrastructure.
- Mayor Birdsong stated that Polk County is currently having a large discussion about transportation and needs. They have been trying to develop the Central Polk Parkway, US 27 corridor and high-speed internet connectivity. Really important to this is the water infrastructure to Peace Creek/Peach River – all of these are very important to the communities in Polk. They have a logistics railway there where truck traffic is going to grow really large so there needs to be a multimodal aspect.
- Ms. Estenoz stated that the specific information from Mayor Birdsong is the information that is helpful. She said that the information that is persuasive to her is bringing economic opportunity to places that need it. She does not agree with the argument of “they are coming and therefore we need to accommodate them” That part of it – maybe the Task Force can help her understand – but she is a 5th generation Key West Conch and there is not a lot they do there to accommodate people. There is a terrible affordable housing crisis and she understands helping those people but not folks coming from out of state.
- Mr. Wilson stated that he wants to see where the road goes and that it can go into Polk County and connect to the Central Polk Parkway. If the roadway can connect to existing roadways, then it will save money and have very minimal impact as it is already there and that would be a good thing.
- Ms. Steed stated that they have a regional roadway network designated across the Heartland and the principles in the Heartland 2060 say if there are to be new corridors, they should tie in in the existing roadway network to provide access to the existing communities to ensure coordination and employment. The second comment that Ms. Steed added was regarding economic development where each of the 9 counties falls within the comprehensive economic development strategy which is a five-year plan regional economic plan which has identified projects that have opportunity areas of regional significance and these should be considered.
- Mr. Langford asked if they are looking at things that would be able to accommodate the rail and port connectivity. He can think of at least one that would help rural counties of economic concern. If you don’t have decent jobs, there is no sense to get revved up about new water lines and sewer lines.
- Ms. Kiselewski responded that we will be looking at the whole work force development and tying with the ports will be discussed in the future.

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<th>4:15 pm</th>
<th>Next Steps</th>
<th>L.K. Nandam, Task Force Chair &amp; Karen Kiselewski, Facilitator</th>
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<tr>
<td>Ms. Kiselewski polled the Task Force if December 9 (Monday) would be okay instead of Tuesday. There is a consensus that the meeting should be held on Monday December 9.</td>
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<td>Ms. Kiselewski reviewed the next steps for the project and highlighted action items, which included</td>
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<td>o Posting reports from prior studies on the MCORES website</td>
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<td>o Determine and collect evaluation data that is available</td>
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<td>o Push out GIS tool for Task Force member review (November 1st), any comments should be emailed to Karen Kiselewski (<a href="mailto:kkiselewski@camsys.com">kkiselewski@camsys.com</a>)</td>
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<tr>
<td>o Task Force members can share information on relevant local plans and project by emailing Karen Kiselewski (<a href="mailto:kkiselewski@camsys.com">kkiselewski@camsys.com</a>)</td>
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<td>o Provide compilation of existing plans and prior visioning efforts such as Heartland 2060</td>
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<td>o Gather input from local governments, tribal nations, agriculture and other landowners</td>
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<td>o Develop visual of a corridor with limited interchanges and limited environmental impact</td>
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<td>o Gather information for potential opportunities for enhancement</td>
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<td>o Draft guiding principles</td>
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<td>o Bring back parking lot items.</td>
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<td>Ms. Kiselewski reviewed what will be posted online and reminded Task Force members to complete the evaluation form.</td>
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Meeting Notes

- Mr. Dickman was intrigued that the legislation can include existing thoroughfares and wanted to mention **the possibility of utilizing I-75 and rail** - this is an interesting concept to consider.
- Mr. Gray suggested that the Task Force review the legislation as they do the agendas and **prepare agendas in a format to make sure the requirements of the legislation are covered**. He expressed concern that some of the future topics don’t match this list.
- Ms. Fleming asked about an item for enhancements as Mr. Caldwell said a specific one is landscape level land acquisition.
- Ms. Kiselewski stated this would go under guiding principles.
- Mr. Nandam thanked the task force and asked them to stay for the public comment period.
- Mr. Pendergrass thanked the Chairman and the staff for their efforts.

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<tr>
<th>4:30 pm</th>
<th>Public Comment</th>
<th>L.K. Nandam, Task Force Chair &amp; Karen Kiselewski, Facilitator</th>
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- Mr. Nandam thanked the public for their participation and stressed the importance of public comments. He stated that responses would be available through the FloridaMCORES website.
- Ms. Kiselewski described the public comment process and called forward those who filled out speaker request cards.

1. **Sally Baptiste (Self)**
   - Sally stated that she was born and raised in Orange County and transportation has been a big issue with her. This is a bad situation in Orange County. There are transportation town halls where the mayor is wanting more taxes. She has heard a lot about trust and Mayor Demings keeps talking about trust when it comes to transportation. She heard the same things today - is there a need and who benefits. She doesn’t believe that you are doing what the people want. What is happening in Orange County is a mess and this is reckless growth management. Don’t build it, they won’t come. We have to decide how we are managing this state and how we will pack everyone in here. Orange County is the perfect example. Transportation is a disaster. They have money to give to corporations like Universal’s new theme park but can’t manage the transportation they have today. Orange County is getting worse. Land is destroyed, destroying the wetlands, and flooding people’s homes. Orange County just destroys more wetlands. Some of it is already flooded but they can’t widen roads or manage it. We have to get a handle on it. She is sick of people saying they are going to mitigate the wetlands, but we won’t have control over Mother Nature. We can’t do that. We truly need an hour to discuss Orange County and they are coming after us for more money. This is manufactured growth not real growth. SunRail and mass transit operate at a $60 million deficit; we don’t have the money. There is reckless growth. This Task Force was supposed to be an open discussion about issues, but people got shut down. The Florida Constitution gives us a right to vote on toll roads and this toll road violates the constitution.

2. **Barb Toepke (Self)**
   - Barb is a member of the Sierra Club but speaks for herself. Avoid minimize mitigate enhance. Avoid building this road - why spend billions on a road that isn’t necessary. Use the money to repair existing roads and bridges. Please don’t minimize destruction of wildlife. Don’t minimize the waste of taxpayer dollars. Why destroy wetlands and then try to create new ones when we don’t need a new road. One way to enhance the Florida environment is to buy more land. We don’t need a new toll road. We don’t need this for wildlife. The name is multiuse corridor to be used by trucking companies, construction companies, and broad band companies. What will they use — wetland corridors, wildlife corridors, and billions of taxpayer dollars for a road that
isn’t used. Local roads, bridges, and buses can’t use this money then. The name is a multiuse corridor and she would propose a multimillion-dollar use corridor.

3. Mable Patterson (Self)
   - Mable is from Tampa and lives in Riverview in Hillsborough. She agrees with all of the environmental arguments against the roads. Speaking as a taxpayer and a driver, we voted last year to raise our own taxes in order to relieve the congestion that exists in our urban areas and suburban sprawl. Her gut reaction was why – no one has done anything or very little for urban areas and now you want to build roads to serve hypothetically populations in 20 years. With climate change, Florida may not be a big draw. She came to the last meeting in Tampa to learn about what was going on. She wanted to know what was going on and this whole process is backwards - generally you look for a need and then address it. Now we have three roads in search of a reason for their existence. There is not a single goal that couldn’t be done effectively without the road. She doesn’t see the need for a road for congestion reliever in the only area of the state without congestion. She doesn’t see how a limited access highway is going to connect rural communities – how are you going to have jobs with a road you have to pay for. Why can’t there be broadband without a road? She doesn’t see why you need this for an evacuation route when the best way is to move people inland and this is not addressed. How do we get people off of barrier islands or away from Sanibel, and why isn’t money provided to build schools to serve as shelters.

4. Julieanne Thomas (Conservancy of Southwest Florida)
   - She stated that it has been an interesting day with interesting conversation. One of the concerns is that a PD&E is starting in March but the guiding principles aren’t due until October. She wanted to know how you guide a process that starts six months earlier. This isn’t appropriate and you shouldn’t accept this. A lot of time and energy is going into these meeting and it should mean something but because the process is getting ahead of itself and it is just for show. The guiding principles won’t guide anything and it’s troubling. A toll road is being provided as an answer to a question that was never asked and you all have not been able to provide a reason for this road. What we have done for the past seventy years hasn’t worked. We can’t continue to keep doing the same things we have to make better decisions. We know more now and have to make better decisions and the she is counting on the Task Force to guide the way. That decision shouldn’t be a new toll road. She wanted to remind everyone the legislative session is coming up. If it turns out there needs to be changes, then this needs to be taken back to the legislature and the core issue should be addressed as this is not a good use of anyone time or money.

5. Lindsay Cross (Florida Conservation Votes)
   - Lindsay Cross stated that tomorrow is Halloween and the state of Dia de los Muertos, a three day celebration of the dead and a time to honor things that have passed. She had that this resonates at the meeting because this road will constitute death and destruction for our state and our water supply. This is an ominous day that precludes the destruction unless the Task Force recommends the no build option. The Southwest Central Florida Connector is nothing more than the Heartland Parkway trying to be risen from the dead which was rejected by local communities. A zombie has returned to our state. Instead of learning from the past we are doing the same. Just last week the Florida Wildlife Corridor did an expedition along the Lake Wales Ridge which is one of the most biodiverse in the nation. Florida has the most ancient plants in North America and is only behind California and Hawaii for endemic plants. Many of these endemic species are within the counties which would be impacted by this road. This is special and should be treated as such. We are giving the short stick to biodiversity. The Florida panther has made strides in recovery north of the Caloosahatchee, this is an underdog success
story which can only continue with greater protection. Despite the claim these roads will be good, the next chapter of the panther will not be a happy ending. No build is the only option if we care about the state, it is also the most economically responsible thing to do as this road is a horrible use of taxpayer dollars. The MCORES toll roads are not good for the state and are a black hole of spending.

6. Marian Ryan (Green Horizon Land Trust)
   - She has helped to acquire and preserve land in the central Florida ridge area. These three toll roads will bisect the largest remaining expanses of sensitive land in Florida. The new toll roads will destroy these landscapes and the remaining wildlife corridors. Agriculture contributes second to tourism and encompassing many areas in the corridor. The three studies cover huge swaths. The Heartland Parkway was rejected in 2007 for financial infeasibility and environmental impacts. MCORES is much larger and covers more of the panther habitat. The corridor has thousands of conservation acres and this acreage underscores tremendous conservation resources. The Northern Turnpike crosses the highest watersheds and Florida springs lie in their path, water resources will suffer. The FDOT has not identified a need for these roads and diverted billions from roads and hurt real transportation needs. Enhancing the current network should be the focus of future transportation investments. We found out the consensus building process is designed to avoid a no build option and to keep Task Force members quiet. For these many reasons we strongly oppose the construction of MCORES through wild and agricultural lands.

7. Mike Britt (City of Winter Haven)
   - Mike Britt is the assistant utility director for Winter Haven but also the local water resources guy. The City has adopted a sustainable water resources plan which covers a lot of what was discussed at the meeting. A good portion of this will impact the Peace River, of which Winter Haven is at the headwaters. There is a long range plan that shows how to grow population at the same time as they protect the water resources and restore hydrologic components of the Peace River. He stated that they want to work with this process and take a look at the enhance part of the opportunity. The upper watershed is part of the Ridge Lakes – the Peace River doesn’t meet its minimum flows. There is a lot of work that can be done in the upper part that would benefit the system and everyone downstream. We have talked to the staff and hope to share the plan for an opportunity to work together.

8. Susan Caruso (Sierra Club)
   - Susan stated that what she wanted to say changed throughout the course of the meeting and she is encouraged that everyone on the Task Force seems to have the best interest of the people and the state at heart. As she started listening, she was reminded of the movie Sophie’s Choice in that everyone has been put in this position needlessly. To think that this bill was done to benefit rural communities and not developers is dubious. The project was put together without feedback from the public. Those who passed it were not FDOT, they just thought if it was built, they will come. The Task Force is not a deciding body and their recommendations for mitigation may not happen, so who gets to decide that. The project will be given to the cities in 2023 but development starts in 2022 so what does that say about how much we get to say about the project. Senate Bill 7103 had an amendment which will punish people if they challenge the development and if you lose you pay the developers’ costs too so who would ever challenge it. The legislature decided what they wanted to do and anyone against it will not succeed. She came from Fort Lauderdale and the only congestion she saw was in her own Broward County. She has her own cabin in the woods near Gilchrest and Alachua where her kids would rather go to play in the river, without phones, as a way to disconnect and enjoy it. If there is a value in these roads that is more important than that, then she is on board.
9. Raymond Royce (Self)
- Raymond Royce is a fifth generation Floridian who currently lives and works in Highland County. He is actively involved in the planning and visioning community and also involved in the business communities. He is the executive director of Citrus Growth, Town Council of Lake Placid, and is on multiple advisory committees. He commends the commissioners because the bottom line is that the time is well past for this type of infrastructure in South/Central Florida. He believes that FDOT can meet the goals and complete these corridors. This is about economic development and quality of life through infrastructure investment. He doesn't believe widening US 27 or 17 is a viable option. There needs to be a new limited access highway with western Hendry preferable to provide the widest benefit to the region. There is now the ability to direct the route to areas selected through this mechanism. These right of ways should have been preserved decades ago. The human community of the Heartland needs consideration just like the natural community and the Task Force should move forward in a thoughtful and expeditious manner. If you drive across Highlands County along portions of Highway 70, you will understand why proper investments are needed. They are losing economic opportunities every day as some employers will not put their employees on that section of road and he would not allow his daughters to drive on it.

10. Chris Costello (Sierra Club)
- Chris Costello told Task Force members that they have been told at this meeting that need and purpose are not within their purview. The no build option has been completely eliminated from the facilitator’s vocabulary and members have been told to wait for any exploration of that option. Some members have recognized this. There is method to this madness - the facilitators and some Task Force members want you to assume the inevitability of this toll road, but it is not a done deal. Task Force members can demand to discuss the no build option now and some already have, this is the only responsible thing to do. You can refuse to accept the destruction of wetlands. You can refuse to accept the destruction of family farms. You can also refuse to reach consensus on watered down guiding principles. What is even meant by the best we can minimize to the extent practicable. These are impossible to define and are open to the widest of interpretations. They are purely a cloaked device to give a thumbs up for unmeasured destruction. We urge you to be bold and represent Florida taxpayers. Refuse to accept the inevitability of toll roads. We know that this was not part of FDOT’s five-year plan and that it was dropped into your lap, but it is FDOT’s responsibility to ensure this process is not just a rubber stamp.

11. Eugene Kelly (Florida Native Plant Society)
- Eugene Kelly wanted to thank the representative from the Defenders of Wildlife for mentioning plants. He was squirming in his seat looking at the slides for endangered animals without mention of plants. There are at least two dozen plant species in this corridor. One word which has come up several times is endemic species, most of the plant species are endemic to this very area and occur nowhere else on Earth. This needs to be front of center of the conversation. There is readily available data – Florida Forever Conservation data shows this information. The Florida Ecological Greenways Network is another dataset. He hopes that these data will be part of the process. Rare species are habitat conservation priorities, including plant species. There are 250 imperiled species, most are not in this area but several dozen are. He again wanted to highlight that not only plants or animals can be imperiled but also plant communities, of which there are two in Florida, the scrub habitat and dry prairie. Some animal species are imperiled because they are solely dependent on these habitats.
12. Doug Morrison (Self)
- Doug Morrison is from Southeastern Polk County and came to the meeting on behalf of 100 people deeply opposed to the project. This project is not in FDOT’s 5-year transportation planning process where the feasibility study is. Florida needs to decide what the carrying capacity is of this sandbar that we live on. We have to decide where we draw the line, this corridor will not slow things down. If you haven’t driven Highway 17 it is an awesome 4 lane divided highway and can connect to Highway 31 to get to Naples. That is the ultimate way to deal with this issue, we don’t need a new highway. This project is an illegitimate baby and the Task Force and citizen input was added to create legitimacy. Our input is useless unless we reach a no build decision.

13. Doug DeNeve (Self)
- Doug DeNeve is a Bartow resident and the conservation chair of Tampa Audubon but is speaking for himself. Much of what was missing from the discussion before lunch has now been covered. There are a lot of wetlands, preservation, and endangered species and he wanted to make sure the Task Force does not forget about endangered plants and upland habitats to protect as well. Specifically, the Florida scrub and Lake Wales ridges. There are a number of endemic species found nowhere else in the world that need to be preserved if we are going to be any kind of good stewards of the land we live on. One particular tool for the management of scrub habitats are controlled burns, mentioned as smokescapes earlier. If developments come along, and there is new development off of the road as well, the ability to use controlled burns to manage environmental lands is diminished. The smoke will go across the road and make it undriveable, not to minimize the wetland and endangered animals. He knows this road isn’t necessary. And most of the Task Force knows that this road isn’t being built because it was needed. This road is not necessary. Please reject the road and if you can’t, keep it away from Lake Wales Ridge.

14. Travis Thompson (Cast and Blast Florida)
- Travis Thompson says that this is a surreal situation as he is standing here as a conservative and a hunter fisher. He wants to know if Senator Galvano knows something that everyone else doesn’t or has some data that we are not privy to. In 10 years, we have spilled billions of gallons of sewage, we need a new sewage system, not new roads. We talk about nutrient flow and this is a complicated situation. I don’t understand how we come out of this better as a state ecologically. Leopold once said that the penalty for ecological education is that the layman won’t understand. Layman are understanding and are up in arms as they keep seeing problem after problem. The Task Force is sitting at the table representing us and it’s a hard situation but stand up and be our voice to push back on this. He goes to meetings all the time and there are discussions about lake levels and management due to growth. We have to take into account all of the variables. It feels like this is being slammed in and we are skipping a lot of steps, like the PD&E. He wants to know how this happened and if FDOT is skipping things because the Senator has secret data. Why is this so critical and where is the data for this need?

15. Adam Bass (Self)
- Adam Bass is a concerned citizen and wanted to follow up on Mr. Thompson’s points. This is rushed and is avoiding traditional planning senses for this road. This is important because it affects his day to day routine. He woke up at 4 AM and drives to Glades to work on cattle. This takes him back to the 40s when another group had an important thing to decide. There is a massive dike you see on US 27 on the Kissimmee River. Damage was done in the 60s when people rushed something without taking the environment into account. We see it every day, water is not a problem because of big agriculture, it’s a problem because of lack of planning, poor planning, and rushed planning. That is what we are dealing with today. He thanked the
Task Force for attending and taking the time to think through this. The Task Force is stuck between a rock and a hard place, but the legislation is at fault for rushing this through.

**16. Sharon Garrett (Self)**
- Sharon Garrett has lived her whole life in Polk County. Her parents have moved here after World War II. She guesses she lived a deprived life because they didn’t have electricity except for a generator at night. It wasn’t so bad being “economic disadvantaged”, she’s been a farmer and an orange grower. This doesn’t make her a dummy as she has attained a Master’s in Business. This is a method to show the road is a done deal. This is all a show and they are going to do it anyway and will benefit massive development. She drove to Apopka and it is now development after development. They knock the tops off of hills, filled in wetlands, and cut down oaks. She used to watch TV and see California with all of the traffic jams and was thankful she didn’t live there. Florida is now almost like California. If you are worried about water, water is not used every day for citrus and farmers are your safety valve. For every acre of agriculture production, it only covers two to three houses because they use water every day. If you need access to CSX then you need to 4 lane the rest of SR 60 and that would facilitate things quite a bit, along with a few others in Winter Haven. Just bringing jobs that pay minimum wage does not make us better off and we need another industry that is not just continually building houses.

**17. Bruce Kistler (Self)**
- Bruce Kistler lives in Winter Haven and has spent most of his career as an urban planner. Millions of dollars are spent by cities to develop comprehensive plans to manage the unchecked growth. Millions of dollars are spent for coalitions for visioning exercises showing the disasters we will face if we do business as usual but also options for smart growth. He guesses that all of those studies that have done have been in vain because this throws smart growth under the bus. We have learned nothing. Where major highways are constructed, urban growth will follow. Consider I-4. We are not talking about a road but a megalopolis stretching from coast to coast. This will take the nature areas of Central Florida and turn them into strip malls and subdivisions. This is poisoning the goose that lays the golden egg. The politically well-connected will profit from these roads and those seeking to profit are pulling strings in the name of freight movement and mobility. You are just puppets that go along with this charade. No build.

**18. Daniel Zydek (Self)**
- Daniel Zydek is with Extinction Rebellion. He finds it interesting that we have scientists who did the Florida Wildlife Corridor expedition who didn’t think this road was an awesome idea despite claims of how it will protect wildlife. He heard the discussions earlier like avoiding, cause no impact, as if there was a possibility of building a road. If you cut Florida Wildlife Corridors in half, they are no longer a corridor. There is no way to slice it up and have it remained connected. The problem is with the avoid concept, the procedure is confusing as we have some layers of maps and we are spit balling through what we are considering important. He thanks the Task Force members who expressed their confusion of the overall procedure. They are trying to pigeonhole the conversation and it is confusing to decide where these things will go when we don’t even know we need them. We have goals that are pretty preposterous, and he doesn’t know who holds the power, but he guesses FDOT can do whatever they want. He has a cease and desist order from the people and read aloud from it.

**19. Warren Whistler (Extinction Rebellion)**
- Warren Whistler is an environmental activist and, compelled by the opportunity of the platform, he feels as though he doesn’t have a choice and implores the Task Force to save our ecology. He chose his shirt to discuss the collapse of industrial civilization. The toll road complete is set for 2030 but the IPCC (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) report tells us that within 11 years the worse effects of climate change will barrel down upon us. If we look at the future, in a
collapse situation, Floridians will be retreating from Florida in droves. The real estate and insurance industry will collapse. Algae blooms – the food shortages. When we lose the artic, we lose the globe. The minimum sea ice is going to disappear. Why are we discussing growth? We are ground zero for climate change. I would get out of this state. We have choices for this project I say no build. This will push us into a world of mad max. People are not dumb – the changes that are coming. I urge you to rise as climate activist. The media is not informing us.

20. Mike Pottit (Self/Extinction Rebellion)
   - Mike Pottit says that everything is wrong with the toll road. It is bad for our health, will increase air and water pollution, and will interfere with wetlands. A March 2017 study concluded that the manufacture and placement of asphalt is a significant contributor of greenhouse gases. $135 million has already been diverted to this project even though our infrastructure is crumbling. This is bad for our iconic wildlife and is going to damage all wildlife in the path of the project. This is bad for democracy as there is every reason to believe that this project was rushed through legislature to benefit wealthy individuals. If you look at the website Strong Towns, an April 30, 2019 article by an urban planner states this is not how to do it. It should not be a speculative road to nowhere. It should be built in smaller incremental steps in places with existing proven demand such that we respond to development plans, not create them. Tell the truth about this as you are not hearing the truth on the mainstream news, things are not normal. Dr Herald at the University of Miami said that by 2095 there will be 15 feet of sea level rise, NOAA only says 7 feet. People aren’t coming here by the time the road is finished and will run the other way. Tell the governor to read some science and set aside some money to help the people get out when it’s time.

21. David Price (Self)
   - David Price is a 32-year resident of Central Florida. He is thankful for holding the meetings for the citizens. He speaks in favor of roads as they are important and the lifeblood of a community and the economy. Investment has to occur with a forward view for what we need in the future. We need to maintain and modernize what we have. Our town and communities along these corridors are a great capital investment and roads are a huge capital investment. US 27 was built in 1932 and still has not reached capacity. Building new roads to rural areas takes funds from existing roads. MCORES would go through wild lands which we have worked to preserve. Floridians have voted to support environmental protection efforts on the ballot such as Florida Forever in 2000. According to an FSU poll, 88 percent of Floridians believe the state government should give more attention to the environment. The MCORES is going counter to good planning and stewardship of tax dollars. We are proposing running a death trap through panther territory just when they are doing better. He wants money to be used wisely. If this project goes through, it will take money away from our communities and rank up there with draining the Everglades and other poor environmental decisions. We don’t want new roads and it doesn’t make sense unless you have land to develop along the corridors. The politics of this smells. This project and the committee have been rushed and given little power. We don’t need new roads to waste money. There is a no build solution which he challenges the Task Force to consider.

22. Diana Umpierre (Sierra Club)
   - Diana Umpierre wanted to thank the Task Force members who stayed and wished they all had. She has heard that population forecasts are out there and are for sure happening, so we have to build these roads. She has a different perspective, population forecasts are not meant to be self-fulfilling prophecies, that’s not how the planning community uses them. She used to work as certified planner and had to study planning history in order to not make the same mistakes. Population estimates are not crystal balls, what we do determines what happens next. What happens if it is 2030 and the new roads open up and we meet the population forecasts, will the
legislation pass another law for another road? And then again? Population projections are planning tools to help us course correct to fix bad patterns of growth when needed. We don’t want to eat up the rest of our natural resources. There was a project by FDOT in the US Geoplan Central, Florida 2070, where they tried to answer those questions. She wanted to know how many people have read it cover to cover. Building hundreds of miles of toll roads is trying to solve a 21st century problem with a 20th century mentality.

23. Camille Caldwell (Self)
   - Camille Caldwell did not come prepared to say anything in particular and while she felt she couldn’t top any of the other speeches, she seconded them. The Task Force should represent “We the People”. We the people were not asked about this project because this is something intended for developers to make money, not for our benefit. You would have Floridians say we don’t want this road, but we want environmental protection. We don’t need further destruction. Please don’t build.

24. Jeff Mathewson (Self)
   - Jeff Mathewson is glad to see so many in opposition to this project. He has lived in Polk County for several generations and doesn’t want to see this destroyed any more than it has already been. With more building and further development, eventually the climate is going to collapse. Rather than planning in a smart way, there is just a push for more and more growth. The uniquely fragile ecosystem of Florida can be found nowhere else. If all of this growth is going to occur, we need to plan in a better way with real public input. FDOT has the real power here and each member needs to recommend the no build option. This is the only option which will actually help the people of Florida move into the future. Each of the Task Force members has the power to recommend no even if they say they can’t. This is a huge sham. The Task Force needs to look into their hearts and recommend no build. You can help us stop it, we don’t need it, and no one asked for it. This is not going to help anyone except the people who are already rich and powerful. There are better options. No build is what has to be recommended.

- Mr. Nandam thanked the public for being at the meeting and providing comments.

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Parking Lot Items:
- Towns and communities
- Social and economic opportunities for small areas/towns
- Encourage growth in already urbanized area
- Rural and family lands
- Local future land use
- Logistics
- Direct Development
- Plan Ahead – Smart Growth, Proper Growth
- Elevated roadway need to understand potential concepts
- Existing system and impacts currently
- Rural infrastructure
- FL Future Casting
- Where people will move – data/projections
Text Format:
Regular – Agenda outline; *Italic* – Discussion notes; **Bold** – Key items

Notes Taken By: Erin Kersh, Sharisse Kenney, and Levi Hannon.