

Project: Southwest-Central Florida Corridor Task Force Meeting #6 (Virtual)

Date: Thursday, July 23, 2020

Locations: **Public Viewing Location #1**

Whaley Hall at Lee County Civic Center

11831 Bayshore Rd, North Fort Myers, FL 33917

Public Viewing Location #2

Jack Stroup Civic Center

355 W Center Ave, Sebring, FL 33870

Attendees

In Attendance

L.K. Nandam, FDOT
 Tracy A. Hood, FDOT
 Jennifer Carpenter, FDEP
 Pam Johnson, FDEO
 Robert Richards, FDOE
 Tom Graef, FWC (Jason Hight substitute)
 Janet Taylor, FDACS
 Mark Futrell, FPSC
 Eric Anderson, Enterprise Florida
 Tim McGrath, FDBPR
 Donna Doubleday, CareerSource Florida
 Rechell Johnson, Volunteer Florida
 Melissa M. Roberts, South Florida WMD
 Brian Starford, Southwest Florida WMD
 Mike McCabe, Collier MPO
 Donald Scott, Lee County MPO
 Chris Constance, Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO
 Colon Lambert, Heartland Regional TPO
 Nat Birdsong, Polk TPO –City of Winter Haven
 Bill McDaniel, Southwest Florida RPC
 Pat Steed, Central Florida RPC
 Katie Worthington-Decker, Florida Chamber of Commerce
 Dave Rawicz, Florida Trucking Association
 Gerald Buhr, Florida Rural Water Association
 Bill Ferry, Florida Internet & Television Association
 Sherry Ambrose, FEDC
 Gary Ritter, Florida Farm Bureau Federation
 Dr. Jeff Allbritten, Florida SouthWestern State College (Bob Jones substitute)
 Glenn Little, South Florida State College
 Dr. Angela M. Garcia Falconetti, Polk State College
 Matt Caldwell, Maxwell, Hendry & Simmons LLC
 Andrew Dickman, 1000 Friends of Florida
 Dr. Paul Gray, Audubon Florida
 Elizabeth Fleming, Defenders of Wildlife
 Shannon Estenoz, The Everglades Foundation
 Jason Lauritsen, Florida Wildlife Corridor
 Wendy Mathews, The Nature Conservancy (Janet Bowman substitute)
 Penny Taylor, Collier County
 Cecil Pendergrass, Lee County (David Murphy substitute)
 Ken Doherty, Charlotte County
 Weston Pryor, Glades County (John Ahern substitute)
 Ron Handley, Highlands County
 Rick Wilson, Polk County

Not in Attendance

Stephanie Vick, FDOH
 Mitchell Wills, Hendry County
 Elton Langford, DeSoto County
 Mike Thompson, Hardee County

Task Force Meeting		
9:30 AM	Welcome	L.K. Nandam, Task Force Chair
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> L.K. Nandam welcomed everyone and introduced FDOT Secretary Kevin Thibault to share a few remarks. Secretary Kevin Thibault welcomed the Task Force members and thanked them for their consistent participation in this effort. He also thanked members of the public for being engaged in the process and stressed the importance of public participation. Updates on public written input will continue to be provided to ensure those voices are heard. He expressed his appreciation for subject matter experts who have provided their expertise which has helped develop high-level needs and guiding principles. Data points from the GIS tool have also helped to illustrate this information. He reminded Task Force members that the day's meeting would focus on high-level needs and guiding principles. Guiding principles will be used to steer the draft paths and courses which are planned to be presented at the next meeting in August. These paths and courses remain broad and completely undefined, so input and feedback continue to be critical. He reiterated how the program has reinforced partnerships and that the outcomes are critical to the well-being and the prosperity of Florida and its rural communities. The Department is ready to carry recommendations forward and is considering the processes needed to monitor and report on implementation of identified commitments. He again thanked the Task Force members and thanked Mr. Nandam for allowing him to address the group. Mr. Nandam thanked Secretary Thibault for his comments and addressed the Task Force. He distinguished the return to "meetings" and discussed the intent to keep everyone safe while moving forward in the process. He reiterated the importance of public input and how people can register for the public comment period, and other ways to provide comments. He reviewed the general purpose of the meeting then handed it off to Karen Kiselewski for agenda review. 		
9:35 AM	Introductions and Agenda Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Karen Kiselewski, Facilitator Marlon Bizerra, FDOT Production Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Kiselewski reviewed the public comment process then reviewed the Sunshine Law. She then addressed the agenda for this meeting and the discussion process. She concluded with a roll call before proceeding to the first agenda item. 		
9:45 AM	Public Engagement Activities	Wills Watts, FDOT Chief Engineer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Kiselewski introduced Will Watts, FDOT Chief Engineer, to present on the Public Engagement Activities and consolidated analysis of public input. Mr. Watts covered the presentation in full and called for questions. Ms. Kiselewski opened the floor for comments, questions and suggestions. <i>Shannon Estenoz requested an additional slot be made available for public comment during meetings. This will give the public multiple timeslots that they can chose from since people are not necessarily available at the one timeslot at the end. She also requested a clarification for the term "actionable input."</i> <i>Mr. Watts explained that these are categorized based on the comments received, meaning the 18 categories are just the accumulation of the 3 previous groupings.</i> <i>Ms. Estenoz asked if there is a synthesis of the comments so that the Task Force knows what the requests are for each topic, and how well the Task Force is addressing them.</i> <i>Mr. Watts described that comments are primarily about the program itself rather than the content of the meetings.</i> 		

- Ms. Estenoz asked if the form letters are treated differently than the individually written letters; and if so, how are they treated differently; and is it made known to the public how they are treated differently.
- Mr. Watts noted that the form letters are not discounted but consolidated into 11 letters representing the 9,600 form letters.
- Ms. Estenoz asked for clarification that they are consolidated to ease the burden of flipping through each individual name.
- Mr. Watts confirmed that they are reduced to the 11 letters so the Task Force members can see them easier and get a sense of the sentiment that those 9,600 letters were expressing. The other 1,900 letters were custom and are left in their individual format.
- Ms. Estenoz asked if the form letters are being represented as one individual comment or as their actual count. She gave the example of 500 letters being form letters of concern for the Florida Panther and asks if that is just 1 or if it is represented as 500 in a tally.
- Mr. Watts explained that they are not tallied into the custom letters' areas of interest but are made available as a separate bundle of 11 letters that the Task Force can read through to get an understanding of what those letters were reflecting on. "No Build" was a prominent theme in the letters and is always considered as an option.
- Ms. Estenoz thanked Mr. Watts for his response.
- Ms. Kiselewski thanked Ms. Estenoz and called on Andrew Dickman.
- Mr. Dickman expressed his concerns with continuing this Task Force under the existing circumstances concerning the pandemic and **asks that this process be paused** to allow everyone to focus on the work they normally do since this is difficult to do virtually. **He also expressed that the Task Force shouldn't have to spend time every meeting receiving an analysis of the public comment** because the Task Force members that are sticking around to listen to the comments or listen to them later are being "penalized" for spending that time only to get a synthesis of it later. He reiterated that he likes and wants the public comment but thinks there needs to be an emphasis on going back to what the law says they are charged to do.
- Mr. Watts thanked Mr. Dickman for his comments and explained the staff's emphasis on including the public comments as requested in prior Task Force meetings. He said the staff will try to include his comments in future meetings.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Elizabeth Fleming.
- Ms. Fleming expressed the lack of ability to communicate with other members of the Task Force, especially considering they are not permitted to do so outside of the meetings. She said that it is challenging to comment on someone's statement in this format. She agreed with Mr. Dickman that this process should be paused because this is not a sufficient medium for the magnitude of this project.
- Mr. Watts reiterated that all 3 Task Forces are still bound by the November 15th deadline. He also reminded everyone that they will make time for every comment and make sure everyone is heard. He encouraged anyone that wants to engage to do so.
- Ms. Kiselewski recognized a few more hands raised and asked if Mr. Watts would like to continue.
- Mr. Watts agreed.
- Ms. Kiselewski recognized Janet Bowman then Ms. Estenoz.
- Ms. Bowman reiterated that it would be **helpful if there was a way that they could send comments to FDOT before the meeting** to share with other members to save time and make the process more efficient so members can gather their thoughts prior to coming to the meeting.
- Mr. Watts said that there is an opportunity there, but staff wanted to give people a chance to discuss the "why" of their comments and that is effective in the verbal format.

- Huiwei Shen, FDOT Chief Planner, discussed **the plan to compile the comments from this meeting and from the emails (which she encouraged Task Force members to engage in), and get them out to the Task Force before meeting number 7.** She also reiterated Mr. Watts' point that the staff wants Task Force members to have the ability to discuss verbally the more critical comments and suggestions.
- Ms. Bowman asked for clarification that the Task Force members will be able to see the documentation.
- Ms. Shen confirmed that members will be able to see.
- Ms. Bowman thanked the staff.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Jason Lauritsen.
- Mr. Lauritsen **would greatly appreciate being able to read the words of his fellow Task Force members as they submitted them.** He stated that if anyone's taking the time to put down their thoughts and positions explaining where they stand on various issues, not just related to the guiding principles, he would love to have a record of that and have that to inform how he approaches each meeting.
- Ms. Shen thanked everyone for their submissions and assured everyone that staff will document their comments, but she would still like to see the key comments aired out in the meetings themselves for discussion.
- Mr. Lauritsen thanked the staff and reiterated that this is the piece that is missing to get the Task Force to a point where they can find consensus on items.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Mr. Nandam.
- Mr. Nandam reminded everyone of the purpose for this meeting and was encouraged by the back and forth displayed thus far, suggesting that this can be an effective way to conduct meetings despite the difficult times.
- Ms. Kiselewski recognized Ms. Estenoz and Ms. Fleming and then Angela Falconetti.
- Ms. Estenoz supported the Task Force members being able to read directly the comments of the other Task Force members. She reiterated that this project is a very large undertaking and she would like to see an effort made to push back the deadline.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Ms. Fleming for a follow up then something new from Dr. Falconetti.
- Ms. Fleming expressed her agreement with Ms. Estenoz but was confused as to how the comments will be added to the public record. She wanted to know if someone from the public were to make a comment in this meeting how long would it be until she could see this comment.
- Mr. Watts thanked Ms. Fleming and reiterated that the staff is trying to make communication more efficient, but that the staff is trying to make the debate in the public forum as much as possible. He said there may be some efficiencies in these documents, but that the debate is good.
- Ms. Fleming asked if they could be included in the packet that the Task Force gets before the meeting.
- Mr. Watts said they will consider that option and it will get figured out.
- Ms. Kiselewski said that there is a clear desire from the Task Force to see comments documented and stated she would address Dr. Falconetti and Penny Taylor before moving on.
- Dr. Falconetti wanted to express that she was pleased with how FDOT staff were handling comments thus far and thinks the staff are doing a good job of getting everyone's thoughts heard and consolidated.
- Ms. Kiselewski thanked Dr. Falconetti and called on Ms. Penny Taylor.
- Ms. Penny Taylor asked, **"how do we appeal this arbitrary deadline that has been put upon this group and the other Task Force regarding the M-CORES project?"**
- Mr. Watts recognized the desire to move the timeline and reminded the Task Force that FDOT staff have introduced more meetings and added tools for them to use so the deadline can be met.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Kiselewski recognized the still raised hands and assured everyone that they will be called upon later, but that the high-level needs section needed to be addressed. 		
10:15 AM	Refine High-Level Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Marlon Bizerra, FDOT Production Lead Beth Kigel, Task Force Support Team Karen Kiselewski, Facilitator Task Force Members
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Kiselewski reviewed the updated high-level needs and discussed the objectives of this section before calling on Gary Ritter to start the discussion. Mr. Ritter felt that agriculture is being pigeonholed because it isn't just environmental protection and natural resources, but also plays a critical role in the economy. He suggested that the Task Force look at improving transportation, technology, connectivity for agriculture and other resource-based businesses. He also recognized the importance of not fragmenting, but there seems to be only a focus on environmental concerns. He feels it is important that the Task Force improve broadband connectivity for agriculture, especially as transportation routes and transportation corridors are improved. He would also like to maintain the ability to access and manage agricultural lands and adjust crops. Ms. Kiselewski thanked Mr. Ritter and called on Katie Worthington-Decker. Ms. Worthington-Decker agreed with Mr. Ritter, that the agricultural side seems heavily environmentally focused and not economically. She would like to see the high-level need wording changed or pulled out separately to address transportation and technology, agribusiness, connectivity, and even the discussion of fragmentation. Fragmentation may not always be a negative thing if connectivity is also a goal. Ms. Kiselewski asked the Task Force members for suggested wording changes. Mr. Nandam thought that some good points were made and recalled some of the wording associated with the high-level needs: "protect, connect, and enhance environmentally sensitive areas, natural resources and ecosystems", "improve access and interregional connectivity for residents, freight, and visitors between communities and markets" and "help rural and underserved areas improve infrastructure for people, freight, and technology". He asked that they suggest a little bit of changes to those 3 to reflect the points that were made. Ms. Shen suggested that FDOT staff pull some language from other high-level needs and create a stand-alone need. Ms. Kiselewski asked Mr. Ritter to follow up. Mr. Ritter suggested sending written comments. Ms. Kiselewski agreed and asked it be sent to Marlon Bizerra, FDOT Production Lead. Mr. Ritter agreed. Ms. Kiselewski called on Colon Lambert. Mr. Lambert added that he thinks the fragmentation may be left to the micro part of this, meaning the fragmentation can be left to the individual landowners impacted. Ms. Shen said the staff would revise the high-level need and make sure their comments are addressed. Ms. Kiselewski called on Mr. Dickman then Chris Constance. Mr. Dickman expressed frustration about his ability to comment on agenda items that have already passed and not being able to voice his opinions in a timely manner. He suggested "supply everybody during these meetings with staffs' emails and even maybe all of the Task Force emails" to make things more efficient. Ms. Kiselewski thanked Mr. Dickman for the comment and stated that she would get to people in a more timely manner in the future then called on Mr. Constance. 		

- Mr. Constance voiced that he would like to see a **specific portal that's open to the public and that each Task Force member would have a page where they can publish whatever thoughts and comments or manifest those that they want to put for the rest to read and for the public to read.** He felt that the high-level needs are very broad, general topics. He asked if there is someplace where the Task Force will take these high-level needs and expand them.
- Ms. Kiselewski noted that the staff will bring the guiding principles in later and that is where he would see the specificity.
- Mr. Constance expressed his belief the portal concept has merit.
- Ms. Shen asked the Task Force to **let staff explore some options to effectively let the Task Force members see these comments and bring a solution before the next meeting.**
- Ms. Kiselewski called on more members.
- Bill McDaniel echoed the importance of agriculture to the communities and the state as a whole and wanted to see that formatted in some form or fashion into the high-level needs. He asked his colleagues serving on this Task Force to be mindful that not everyone is a lobbyist and are here to do the task before the Task Force. He mentioned that this was not a perfect world, but he would like to see this completed within the timelines that have been set forth.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Janet Taylor.
- Ms. Janet Taylor requested to save her comments for the guiding principles.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Paul Gray.
- Dr. Gray echoed what Mr. Ritter said, that **agriculture should have a standalone bullet.** He stated his primary concern is to protect natural systems and biodiversity. There will never be enough resources to purchase lands to protect wild ranging species and agriculture offers semi-natural lands of value to them. Fragmentation is a threat to sustainable agriculture and protecting a viable agriculture landscape is important.
- Ms. Kiselewski noted the schedule and asked for brief commentary before calling on more Task Force members.
- Mr. Lauritsen echoed Mr. Ritter and Dr. Gray and suggested that, if ranching or silviculture is lost because it is not economically viable, then the wildlife corridor throughout the state is hampered. He also echoed Mr. Constance's calls for exploring the solution of a portal.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Ms. Fleming.
- Ms. Fleming asked for a revision to the sensitive areas high-level need to **reinstate the word "wildlife"**. She felt that without specifically stating "wildlife" the need is too general.
- Ms. Kiselewski had no response on a call for objections and continued with other Task Force members.
- Mr. Dickman stated that there's a need for financial feasibility for the corridor, and he believes it is a very high-level situation. He stressed that the most important issue here is whether this is really financially feasible for each corridor, and he was not sure where that falls in the need.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Ms. Shen or Mr. Watts for comment.
- Ms. Shen responded by acknowledging that the project is at such an early stage that there isn't the data to perform that analysis. She recognized the need for financial feasibility and suggested that become a part of the narrative and/or the instructions.
- Mr. Dickman agreed.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on more members.
- Ms. Estenoz felt that the high-level needs were not necessarily framed as needs. She was expecting needs to be framed in a way that the need could be read and followed by "therefore we need a tolled transportation corridor." She suggested that, for some, they don't read like that at all; particularly the environmental protection needs. She thought there was an opportunity for wording more like: "transportation corridors have disconnected and harmed environmentally sensitive areas, natural

resources, wildlife and ecosystems. M-CORES could reverse, or restore these areas, therefore we need an M-CORES corridor.” She also recognized the need for data, particularly that she has not seen data that connects enhancing access to education, healthcare, goods and services to building a tolled transportation corridor. She also supported a separate agricultural high-level need but caveated that if it's worded in the same way as these, she would have that same general problem. **She supported Mr. Ritter’s point that it needs to be broken out as a caveat of all of them, and supported Mr. Constance’s suggestion of a portal or some such tool.**

- Ms. Shen reiterated that the M-CORES program is broader than just a tolled highway facility. It affords the Task Force the opportunity to talk about some innovative solutions in terms of conservation, providing broadband and utility services to Florida’s rural residents, including advanced multimodal transportation options. She reminded everyone that, when the discussion on guiding principles starts, there are 2 overarching guiding principles that will be talked about. First, consistency with state, regional, and local plans, which is a two-way street. And the second overarching guiding principle is talking about, when considering transportation improvements, what is the priority order? The first priority is to look at operational improvements to existing facilities, and then look at how to improve existing facilities within already disturbed right-of-way, and then the third step is to think about any new transportation improvements that need to be made. She emphasized the broadness of this program and all the partners that are going to be included every step of the way.
- Ms. Estenoz stated that she has come up with some language for the financial feasibility and the multimodal, unique aspects of M-CORES. If the vision includes coordinating with other agencies, the Task Force should think about how that is included in financial feasibility. She felt that not enough discussion has happened on the topic of hurricane evacuation and preparedness, so she wants to see more of that. She also noted that this Task Force, specifically, is charged to deal with wildlife crossings and panther conservation. She believes there may need to be **a high-level need to focus specifically on this one species.**
- Ms. Shen responded by letting Ms. Estenoz know there will be presentation in the future specifically regarding hurricane evacuation but appreciated the commentary and getting everyone to think about that.
- Ms. Kiselewski called for follow-up questions.
- Ms. Bowman noted that the legislation provides many of the high-level needs and reminded the Task Force of the need for data and acknowledges that the PD&E will use that data. She stated that qualitatively **in the narrative there needs to be a recognition of the traditional needs in terms of traffic and financial feasibility.** Secondly, panthers are the state animal and the statute specifically directs the Task Force to look at panther issues, and the word panther is nowhere on any of these materials; so that needs to be beefed up.
- Ms. Kiselewski recognized Mr. Nandam.
- Mr. Nandam summarized the commentary around adding an agriculture-specific need, addressing wildlife as it is a specific charge, and bringing financial feasibility into documentation while keeping in mind the “no build” option. He reminded everyone that this is working towards planning and preparing for a multi-use corridor.
- Ms. Kiselewski noted that there are 2 others who want to speak.
- Jason Hight suggests the **term “natural resources” in the high-level need is a bit problematic because that also includes extractive things like oil, gas, and minerals. He thinks that should be rephrased or removed.**
- Ms. Kiselewski asked for any objections. After not receiving any, she called on Ms. Penny Taylor.
- Ms. Penny Taylor agreed with the idea of some kind of portal for communicating outside of meeting. She also suggested that the language makes big promises of improvements for communities, but that

the Task Force should be careful with this language because people may end up not receiving these benefits, as is the nature of limited access roadways.

- *Ms. Kiselewski called on staff to respond.*
- *Mr. Watts reminded everyone that the staff is open to all kinds of enhancement related discussion, and that, just because something isn't brought up in the first phase, doesn't mean it can't be addressed in the numerous other phases to come.*
- *Ms. Shen reiterated that project staff are committed to working with locals on getting things that they need and welcomed commentary on how the corridor can improve on job growth and all the other aspects.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski called on more members for comment.*
- *Ms. Fleming clarified that if **"natural resources" can be taken out of this, concepts such as water don't get eliminated with that.***
- *Ms. Kiselewski suggested **"environmental resources" instead of "natural resources."** She assured the Task Force that staff will make a rework to the wording and called on more members.*
- *Mike McCabe discussed his experience biking across the U.S. in small town America and noted that Ms. Penny Taylor has a good point: limited access corridors can deteriorate rather than improve. He suggested that this needs to be done carefully.*
- *Mr. Watts agreed with Mr. McCabe that this can be done, but it needs to be done carefully and correctly.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski called for a final comment.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski thanked everyone for the commentary and handed the discussion to Mr. Nandam.*
- *Mr. Nandam called for the lunch break.*

11:30 AM	Break for Lunch	
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1:00 PM	Review and Refine Guiding Principles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marlon Bizerra, FDOT Production Lead • Beth Kigel, Task Force Support Team • Karen Kiselewski, Facilitator • Task Force Members
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- Mr. Nandam welcomed everyone back and recapped comments from the morning. He commended the "back and forth" commentary. He introduced Ms. Kiselewski for the "Review and Refine Guiding Principles" section.
- Ms. Kiselewski reviewed how the public can make comments during that portion of the meeting, then covered the afternoon's agenda. She handed control to Beth Kigel, Task Force Support Team, for the presentation.
- Ms. Kigel reviewed what Guiding Principles are and how they will be used. She handed control back to Ms. Kiselewski to cover the discussion process for this section.
- Ms. Kiselewski reviewed the process of this section then handed control back to Ms. Kigel to begin the presentation for the first principle.

Consistency with Statewide, Regional and Local Plans and Visions

- Ms. Kigel reviewed the first principle then handed control to Ms. Kiselewski to facilitate the discussion.
- *Ms. Kiselewski called for big picture commentary.*
- *Ms. Estenoz would like to see **qualifying language like "to the greatest extent possible" removed.** She also asked for clarification on what paths and courses are.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski stated that "paths and courses" would be covered later.*

- Ms. Estenoz **recommended shorter lunch breaks**. She also recommended that these be broken up into **working groups so sections can be refined a bit more efficiently**.
- Ms. Kigel made a note with respect to the working groups.
- Ms. Kiselewski called for more comments.
- Ms. Penny Taylor asked if staff is accepting instruction suggestions.
- Ms. Kiselewski said they would take down any suggestions, but the focus of the discussion now is guiding principles.
- Ms. Penny Taylor agreed with that.
- Ms. Kigel reminded the Task Force that the same process will happen for the instructions as well.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Dr. Gray.
- Dr. Gray noticed there are fewer guiding principles in this presentation than in the meetings before and asked if it was some kind of consolidation effort.
- Ms. Kigel confirmed that this is the evolution of the guiding principles.
- Dr. Gray stated that he was trying to match the current ones with the ones from before and needs to cross-reference.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Ms. Bowman
- Ms. Bowman expressed concern that some of the specificity lost in this iteration needs to be captured, so there needs to be some sort of cross referencing.
- Ms. Kigel confirmed that the intention was to make some guiding principles broader so that the specificity can fall into the instructions under the umbrella of a larger guiding principle.
- Ms. Shen acknowledged the removal of qualifying language and discussed how there has been a refinement process.
- Ms. Bowman stated that she was commenting more on the distillation process and fears they are losing some important specificity.
- Ms. Shen agreed that specificity shouldn't get lost and that it would get added to the instructions, but if there are any areas where Ms. Bowman would like to see specificity added back to guiding principles to let the staff know.
- Ms. Bowman thanked the staff.
- Ms. Kiselewski polled the Task Force on removing qualifying language and acknowledged members that disagree with removing qualifying language.
- Mr. McDaniel said he would be in favor of leaving it in to accommodate for the diverse population the Task Force has to transect at this particular time.
- Ms. Kiselewski acknowledged the pushback and suggested the staff remove qualifying language where reasonable.
- Brian Starford thought that there was room for some of that qualifying language at this level, but, if it is going to be removed here, it needs to be removed in the definitions as well. He requested to bring up a point from earlier this morning.
- Ms. Kiselewski agreed as Mr. Starford had technical difficulties earlier.
- Mr. Starford thought conservation lands were left out of the high-level needs about environmentally sensitive lands. **He believed the intent was to cover that but thought it would be good to specifically talk about conservation lands in that higher-level need**. He asked if instructions are any more or less important than the high-level needs and guiding principles.
- Ms. Kigel mentioned that instructions are there to provide instruction for FDOT as they are going through the PD&E process and beyond.
- Ms. Shen explained that there is no difference in their importance, just that as the Task Force drills down from high-level needs to guiding principles to instructions there is more specificity and details.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Mr. Nandam.

- *Mr. Nandam thought it would be a good idea to **include the specific monitoring sites for Mr. Starford in the instructions.***
- *Ms. Kigel assured Mr. Starford that the staff is very mindful of that priority.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski reminded the room again about leaving qualifying language and members that would like to see that language removed are called on.*
- *Mr. Dickman thought the Task Force needs to be very specific and the qualifying language is too broad.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski asked if the individuals wanting to keep the qualifying language would agree to allow that specificity to have some way of coming back in the next round.*
- *Mr. Hight said to reiterate other people’s comments, we can get granular all day long. If it’s in the statutes, rules, and PD&E, I don’t know if we have to reiterate that every time in every principle.*
- *Mr. McDaniel thought the guiding principles need to be global and allow for flexibility, and not be specific. The specificity is going to come in the next step. He would like that flexibility to the extent that it is not duplicative in another level, but, if it is duplicative, then he is fine with taking it out. He is considering flexibility for the communities.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski called for Ms. Shen to respond.*
- *Ms. Shen explained that what she **synthesized from the discussion so far is that the Task Force wants to have the appropriate level of specificity in these guiding principles.** The staff will go back in these and bring another draft in light of this.*
- *Ms. Kigel called for a note to the draft guiding principles.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski said there are new members that want to weigh in.*
- *Ms. Worthington-Decker asked FDOT staff if they agree that it is unneeded because it is in the statute.*
- *Ms. Shen said, based on the discussions from the other 2 Task Forces, the members agreed to remove these qualifying phrases as much as possible.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski clarified because they're covered in statute.*
- *Ms. Shen confirmed.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski called on Ms. Penny Taylor.*
- *Ms. Penny Taylor said she would appreciate this Task Force to be consistent with statewide, regional, and local plans and ambitions. She does not like the loophole “to the maximum extent possible.”*
- *Ms. Shen explained that the qualifying language was not put in there intended as a loophole, it was intended to provide flexibility for localities.*
- *Ms. Penny Taylor understands and reiterated that the qualifying language is covered in the statute and the localities’ Comprehensive Plans are going to express the local desires.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski thanked Ms. Penny Taylor for the locality input. **She directed, for a note, to put underneath it that we need to revisit how to make flexible as well as not look like it's a loophole.***
- *Ms. Kigel refined the comment as “**revisit the qualifying language relative to.**”*
- *Ms. Kiselewski reminded everyone this language will come back.*

Maximizing Use of Existing Facilities

- *Ms. Kigel presented on the next guiding principle.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski asked to hear from some of the MPO partners and called on Task Force members for discussion.*
- *Ms. Worthington-Decker thanked FDOT for their collaborative relationship. **She addressed a red pen typo on the 4th bullet down with the instruction for project development.***
- *Ms. Kigel noticed it as well and thanked Ms. Worthington-Decker.*
- *Ms. Worthington-Decker asked if number 2, “Add capacity to existing transportation facilities including co-location,” needs to be more explicit on where expansion of existing right-of-way fits into*

that? ***She just wanted to make sure that the Task Force can expand if needed to address capacity and safety issues in that statement.***

- Ms. Kigel explained that the language refers to adding capacity, so expansion is included on that so long as it's along existing right-of-way.
- Ms. Worthington-Decker asked for confirmation that expansion is included.
- Ms. Kigel confirmed.
- Ms. Worthington-Decker thanked staff.
- Ms. Kigel reminded the Task Force that the instructions will have more specificity.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on more members.
- Ms. Estenoz asked about addressing "paths and courses."
- Mr. Nandam said it would be covered coming up.
- Ms. Estenoz had hoped to see the first priority as to try to meet all needs and benefits within existing corridors. ***Then if, and only if, that can't be done through co-location or expansion and the toolbox you have in M-CORES, then evaluate new corridors. But the first priority is to look at existing corridors for benefits and needs.***
- Ms. Shen recognized that maybe the language isn't that clear, but that is what it is trying to express. ***She suggested the staff revise to make sure that is explicit.***
- Ms. Estenoz thought it was a structure issue. ***She suggested a statement about meeting all needs and benefits in existing corridors first, and secondly look at new corridors.***
- Ms. Shen expressed that the staff understand what she is trying to say, namely existing facilities first and delete 'where necessary' in the third bullet.
- Ms. Estenoz thought ***it can just be reordered because it is trying to create a prioritization. Look at existing corridors first.***
- Ms. Shen asked if there is any other feedback from members.
- Ms. Kiselewski recognized the other Task Force members.
- Pat Steed expressed her concern that ***number 2 is too specific and may run into conflicts with certain decision-making that have to be made by MPOs.***
- Ms. Shen clarified that staff will ***reword 1 and 2, and maybe combine those a little bit more higher level, and then remove the "where necessary" in bullet.***
- Ms. Kigel asked if that was satisfactory.
- Pat Steed agreed that it would be.
- Ms. Kiselewski recognized Mr. McDaniel.
- Mr. McDaniel concurred with Ms. Steed. ***He suggested that the Task Force gets into the weeds a little bit later on bullets 2 and 3. He thought number 1 needed to stay where it is because it is the state and federal departments' Northern Star. He also concurred with 30-minute lunches.***
- Ms. Kigel clarified that, within the use of existing facilities, this layout makes safety and operational improvements a priority within that, and capacity the next priority.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Ms. Estenoz.
- Ms. Estenoz emphasized that ***she agrees with both Ms. Steed and Mr. McDaniel on this. She thought there's too much detail there.***
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Mr. Ritter.
- Mr. Ritter concurred with 30-minute lunches. He reflected on statements about these kinds of projects not helping the communities and suggested that these kinds of projects are often good for rural areas and the people living in these areas want them.
- Ms. Kigel said that this particular guiding principle is overarching and is intended to cut across all needs. Some of the language Mr. Ritter is talking about will also be included in instructions.
- Mr. Ritter agreed.

- Ms. Kiselewski reminded staff that they need **to revisit the language regarding specificity and prioritization.**
- Mr. Nandam thought the overwhelming feedback was that this guiding principle was too specific and needs to be higher level.
- Ms. Kiselewski agreed.
- Ms. Kigel suggested that the note read **“combining 1 and 2, and the language used for 2 we make that less specific than what it is. And the removal of the qualifying language in number 3.”**
- Ms. Kiselewski asked if there is any disagreement and there was none.

Social and Community Context

- Ms. Kigel thanked everyone for the discussion and presented on the next guiding principle.
- Ms. Kiselewski called for comments or concerns, especially from the rural community representatives.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Ms. Steed.
- Ms. Steed thought this was very consistent with the Heartland 2060 Vision.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Ms. Estenoz.
- Ms. Estenoz thought that this was tremendously important and that this guiding principle sounds right.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Ms. Penny Taylor.
- Ms. Penny Taylor agreed that she is comfortable with this.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Dr. Falconetti.
- Dr. Falconetti didn't think that anything was missing here and that it was pretty comprehensive.
- Ms. Kiselewski gave other members an opportunity to weigh in with no response.

Economic Development

- Ms. Kigel presented the Economic Development attractions slides, presented on the next guiding principle and called for comments.
- Ms. Kiselewski called Eric Anderson.
- Mr. Anderson thought it was important to **put something in here about supporting existing businesses.**
- Ms. Kigel asked about adding to instructions.
- Mr. Anderson was fine with that but **suggests that compared to job creation, retention and expansion is a bigger item.**
- Ms. Shen said it is probably important to be at the guiding principle level but opened it up for Task Force member discussion.
- Ms. Kiselewski opened the discussion up to other Task Force members.
- Dr. Falconetti asked **if it would be prudent to add something like “Technical Training” in the second bullet.**
- Ms. Kigel reminded the Task Force that this is a discussion on the guiding principles.
- Ms. Kiselewski addressed that Dr. Falconetti **is suggesting adding “training” to the high-level needs of “enhance access to jobs, education, healthcare, and training.”** She checked for consensus and received no opposition, then called for Mr. Nandam to discuss.
- Mr. Nandam supported what Dr. Falconetti said.
- Ms. Kigel said that revision will be made to the high-level needs.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on more members.
- Ms. Penny Taylor was very comfortable with the changes to add training. She readdressed that **she is a little worried about creating this bubble of what it would be lovely to do, which is bullet number 3. Employment opportunities particular to lower income residents and help retain younger residents**

in the area. Those are wonderful goals, but she doesn't think it belongs here. She suggested that these are words that are meaningless in the greater scope of what is being done here. She was just trying to be realistic.

- *Ms. Kiselewski asked if Ms. Penny Taylor is wanting to change the high-level need or if that particular need doesn't belong with this guiding principle?*
- *Ms. Penny Taylor was not suggesting that staff remove the high-level need of Economic Development, she is suggesting to not amplify or dress it up promising things that the road won't bring if there's not a lot of interchanges. **She would like to see bullet number 3 removed completely.***
- *Ms. Shen stated that Department staff understand the concern and the list is to facilitate the discussion. She reminded the Task Force that M-CORES is a program which offers the chance to work with locals and the conservation community to come up with innovative approaches. Today's focus is on guiding principles and draft high-level needs which the guiding principles can help accomplish.*
- *Ms. Kigel added that there are still opportunities to discuss whether to use things like limited access facilities.*
- *Ms. Penny Taylor appreciated the response but thinks that this is misleading and it's not clear that employment opportunities will be created, except for construction of the road. She did not think that there should be discussions of creating employment opportunities, especially to assist low-income residents, because it's too specific.*
- *Mr. Nandam expanded on Ms. Shen's statement that M-CORES isn't just a toll road but a complex program. This is beyond the infrastructure need and is about multi-use including roadway and multimodal as well as other infrastructure necessary for the success of the rural community. The guiding principles will help reflect the high-level needs and the instructions tell the local communities and the department what to do to help the vision of the high-level need. It may not be the corridor but other elements which will help with job growth and employment opportunities. He suggested the Task Force members focus on the other aspects of a multi-use corridor when trying to decide on which needs to keep and as they work on guiding principles.*
- *Ms. Penny Taylor stated that it does not change her mind but that his sentiments help.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski called on Glenn Little.*
- *Mr. Little expressed that he was confused by the wording "of most need" and asked what was intended by it. Rural areas? Job development? Or job creation of greatest need in rural areas?*
- *Ms. Kigel clarified that it was based on Task Force member comments and perhaps other members would weigh in on how they interpret it.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski recalled that this came from coastal communities' comments that they had economic needs as well, so the wording was made broader but with an emphasis on rural areas. She then called on Sherry Ambrose.*
- *Ms. Ambrose responded that there was a designation "Rural Areas of Critical Economic Concern" but now "Rural Areas of Opportunity" is used. This language may be from some of the former state language, but it is kind of consistent with the understanding of the development of the economic community. She also stated that she originally raised her hand to support Mr. Anderson's comments on retention of existing jobs.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski asked if any rural or coastal areas wanted to weigh in and then called on Jennifer Carpenter followed by Mr. Dickman.*
- *Ms. Carpenter wanted to look back to Ms. Penny Taylor's comments and agreed with her that it could be misleading without the right instructions. She thought that the multimodal and multi-use components are an opportunity to make job creation a reality. Something like a multi-use trail through the communities for tourism or eco-tourism could connect with trails or other activities in rural communities. She wanted to remind staff to think outside the box since this is not a typical road*

project as Ms. Shen stated. Multimodal and multi-use is a big component of the legislation and should be incorporated as much as possible in the guiding principles and instructions.

- Ms. Kiselewski then called on Mr. Dickman.
- Mr. Dickman wanted to make suggestions on the guiding principles. He suggested **“sustainable economic development, job creation and community development in rural areas, but without creating suburban sprawl”** and explained why. He believes that all rural areas in Florida are important and that all people in rural areas are important, regardless of what they are doing. His concern is that roadways are an attractor for development and doesn’t want job creation to just be construction which is why he suggested “sustainable economic development”. There is untapped potential in the rural area, especially if broadband is brought in. He does not want suburban sprawl to be the main economic development for an area because of an interchange. He also agreed with the comment about rural areas of most need because rural areas and the people that live there are very important. “Avoid suburban sprawl” should be added so that there is a focus on real sustainable permanent job creation.
- Ms. Kiselewski then called on Mr. Anderson.
- Mr. Anderson did not agree with the word sustainable since everyone has a different definition for it. Economic development follows the vision of a community so if the vision is to start having development, and develop that kind of economy, then that's what's going to happen. It's dependent on the vision of the community, and the comprehensive plan and this isn't the place for that.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Matt Caldwell.
- Mr. Caldwell reflected on the fact that most of this route will go through the Heartland communities and he's inclined to lean on the perspectives of those folks - the commissioners, the economic directors, and the people on this Task Force that represent those Heartland counties. There should be a recognition that these communities have a vision for themselves already and the Task Force's proposals should not conflict with that vision, but rather enhance it or help achieve it. Some aspirational goals, without major investment, are just going to remain ideas rather than be realized and achieved for the betterment of the community. His inclination is to follow the pathway that those communities have already laid out in their comprehensive plans.
- Ms. Kigel reminded the Task Force members that the first guiding principle is “consistency with the statewide, regional and local plans” which applies to everything.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Gerald Buhr, John Ahern, and Colon Lambert. [Mr. Ahern and Mr. Lambert removed requests to comment based on the discussion.]
- Mr. Buhr appreciated Ms. Kigel's comments and emphasized that the communities he represents and has spoken to (Zolfo Springs, Bowling Green and Avon Park) are all very anxious to see this roadway go through. They need some economic relief, especially in Hardee County. He is not as concerned about sprawl as it would need to be in line with the comprehensive plan and they could guide that growth.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Ms. Steed followed by Mr. McDaniel.
- Ms. Steed said she works on a regular basis with at least 20 of the local governments and is doing regional economic development planning with all of them and rural areas of opportunity. She thinks the guiding principle is in line with these plans, but perhaps it should say “rural areas of opportunity” so that it's consistent.
- Ms. Kiselewski thanked Ms. Steed and called on Mr. McDaniel followed by Ms. Estenoz.
- Mr. McDaniel agreed with what Ms. Steed said. He didn't necessarily see a need to add any additional language with expressions of concern for sprawl. Those, he said, can be dealt with at the local levels. Additionally, he said if Ms. Steed's suggestion about rural areas of economic opportunity is a better language use, he is okay with that.
- Ms. Kiselewski called for final thoughts.

- Ms. Estenoz wanted everyone to keep in mind that the statute does have a provision that requires local governments to come back and amend their Comp Plans to make way for some of the facilities, including interchanges, that the road produces. She thought the Task Force should also give some thought to more aspirational words. She summed up saying **“let's not forget that the legislation is going to force these communities to make way for this road by amending their comp plans, she thought by 2023; so the more aspirational and the more forward-thinking the Task Force can be the better.”**
- Mr. Nandam confirmed that in the statute local governments will be required to update their Comp Plans, and the department committed to providing them the assistance and resources that are available.
- Ms. Kigel summarized the changes as such: **“One suggestion was to include business retention and expansion within the guiding principle, and the other was a suggestion to change the language from ‘rural areas of most need’ to ‘rural areas of opportunity’.”**
- Ms. Kiselewski moved to the next section.

Agricultural Land Uses

- Ms. Kigel presented on the next section, Agricultural Land Uses, and opened for comments.
- Ms. Kiselewski called for discussion.
- Ms. Janet Taylor stated that the Task Force ignored the economic needs of our agricultural sector. She suggested, **on the high-level needs, maybe the Task Force needs to shift to “improve transportation and technology connectivity for agriculture and other resource-based businesses.” Additionally, she suggested the guiding principles should be to “improve transportation connectivity to and from the market, and all the places in our agricultural supply chain, improve broadband connectivity which is very important for running businesses and for deploying technology-based solutions which is really important to running our modern agriculture.”** She also stated that fragmentation is not as important as **making sure that agriculture can access the road and other transportation.**
- Ms. Kigel recognized that some of the language suggested for the need is an example instruction in Economic Development.
- Ms. Janet Taylor thought it should be included in Agriculture Land Use.
- Ms. Kigel stated that there is a draft instruction to **“maintain and improve transportation connectivity for natural resource dependent businesses.”** She mentioned this because there is a listing of high-level needs that have been addressed by the Task Force, so the Task Force would have to consider pulling one of those.
- Ms. Janet Taylor said this is environmentally sensitive and not focused on the agriculture.
- Mr. Nandam suggested that since this is related to a conversation this morning about agriculture the staff be **given a chance to work on a high-level need, and then bring it back to the Task Force and then work on guiding principle and instruction to follow.**
- Ms. Janet Taylor agreed.
- Ms. Kiselewski called for more comments.
- Ms. Steed reminded the staff **that the prime farmland layer that was included in the GIS information is actually a soils layer and does not necessarily predict actual agricultural use. So, there needed to be something that tied this to lands that are actually in agricultural use.**
- Ms. Kigel said that based on feedback from the Task Force the staff have a map in there that has farmland data that is probably more reflective than the prime farmland that was in there before.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on more members.

- *Mr. Dickman thought the Task Force needed to be very specific about what the guiding principle are. **He had a real problem with “to the extent feasible,” because at the end of the day that’s going to leave a lot of leeway.***
- *Ms. Kigel said that will be a consideration as staff work on drafting the guiding principle, to make it more holistic.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski called on more members.*
- *Ken Doherty supported taking another look at the wording and supported what Mr. Nandam said earlier.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski called for final comments.*
- *Mr. Ritter would like to see the phrase **“by maximizing the use of existing facilities” added into the principle** because one of the ways we can minimize this fragmentation is to utilize existing facilities that we have.*
- *Ms. Kigel said staff is **going to review this entire guiding principle to make it holistic and try to accomplish all those things.** She summarized comments as: **“rework the draft guiding principle to have more of a holistic view that also includes Economic Development and connectivity, and also align them with the proper purposes and draft high-level needs.”***
- *Ms. Kiselewski called for objections and received none. **She stated that staff will bring the remaining guiding principles back with the revisions discussed for meeting number 7.** She reminded everyone they can submit materials to Marlon by end of next week.*
- *Ms. Kigel would like the Task Force to look at the next 3 guiding principles prior to the next meeting as they are a good segue from this topic, and there is a lot of information there.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski introduced Ms. Shen for the next section.*

2:30 PM

Task Force Report Outline and Drafting Process

- Huiwei Shen, FDOT Chief Planner
- Task Force Members

- *Ms. Shen presented on what the Task Force should expect the report to include. She described the report as doing several things. First, the report will document how statutory requirements were met. Second, the report will describe Task Force activities, including public comment. Third, the report will present the Task Force Recommendations. She clarified that coordination with the other Task Forces will be limited to ensuring similar level of detail. The content will be fully based on this Task Force’s recommendations and commentary. She then discussed the drafting process, which will include bringing sections to the Task Force for discussion in an iterative process.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski called for questions.*
- *Ms. Bowman asked if avoidance or attraction maps are going to be included in the report.*
- *Ms. Shen said yes, staff is going to make the connection from the guiding principle to the GIS tool to document that.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski called on other members.*
- *Ms. Estenoz asked if FDOT is giving any consideration to maintaining some sort of **stakeholder advisory process in the PD&E?** If so, she thought there is some precedent in the Wekiva process, and that should be in the report.*
- *Ms. Shen said she will if that is the desire of the Task Force. **She said she can bring some language back to the Task Force for consideration at the next meeting on that specific topic.***
- *Ms. Estenoz asked if there would be time on the agenda in the next meeting to offer up suggestions for a financial feasibility guiding principle. **Essentially, will there be an opportunity to add new guiding principles?***
- *Ms. Shen confirmed that there will be opportunities for that. At the next meeting there will be more time to focus on the guiding principles.*

- Ms. Kiselewski called on more members.
- Ms. Fleming was also interested in the possibility of an advisory group. She asked if the Task Force **will we be able to refer back to the schedule that was just gone over?**
- Ms. Shen responded that it will be posted and is flexible.
- Ms. Fleming asked to have a copy of what was just gone over so she can plan internally.
- Ms. Shen responded that it will be available online.
- Ms. Fleming said the next meeting is going to be important.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on other members.
- Ms. Janet Taylor asked, for conservation land, about prioritizing existing, **can we delete “and proposed land”?** It should only be dealing with existing lands.
- Ms. Kiselewski responded that those guiding principles weren’t covered but will in the future. She called on other members.
- Mr. Constance suggested, for the sake of consistency, **if staff is finding at the other Task Force meetings that there are good ways to approach certain issues, none of the Task Force would be opposed to having staff bring them forward.**
- Ms. Shen said she will do that if that is what the Task Force desires but didn’t want to make anyone feel pressured.
- Mr. Constance thought they can be phrased as “we saw this going on.” He believed he will have more to say in future meetings, but as the Task Forces develop guiding principles, and then as they get rated/prioritized, it would push the road one way or another based upon what this Task Force deems is the most important things versus other Task Forces.
- Ms. Shen agreed and explains how the guiding principles will be used to develop a path/course in the next meeting.
- Ms. Kiselewski called for a final comment.
- Mr. Dickman reiterated that he would like staff to **look into a way where the Task Force members can communicate with one another while other things are going on, that would be really helpful.** He also put together more information and **emailed it to Ms. Shen and Ms. Kiselewski.**
- Ms. Shen confirmed that FDOT is talking with the Attorney General’s office about some of the options to consider.
- Mr. Dickman thanked the staff.

2:45 PM	Corridor Planning Activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will Watts, FDOT Chief Engineer • Marlon Bizerra, FDOT Production Lead • Task Force Members
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- Ms. Kiselewski introduced Mr. Watts to discuss the Corridor Planning Activities.
- Mr. Watts presented the Corridor Planning Activities. The first section looked at enhancements, specifically environmental, economic, transportation and technology. He reiterated that staff have a comprehensive list of 19 projects, but for this presentation a summary for each category was provided. He then reviewed the co-location priority as set forth by the Task Force. He also discussed the ability to address connectivity gaps in across all industries, not just transportation.

2:55 PM	Next Steps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • L.K. Nandam, Task Force Chair • Karen Kiselewski, Facilitator
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- Mr. Nandam closed out the meeting and discussed the next steps. He first reminded the Task Force that meeting materials will be posted to the website and that revisions will be made as discussed so they are ready for the August meeting. He reiterated that staff are available for questions and that they will be in touch with Task Force members as the August meeting approaches. He introduced the public comment period.

3:00 PM

Public Comment

- L.K. Nandam, Task Force Chair
- Karen Kiselewski, Facilitator

- Ms. Kiselewski explained the process of the public comment period.
- Lindsay Cross greatly appreciated those on the Task Force who raised concerns regarding lack of data for the need, and the financial feasibility of the roads. She had concerns that a thorough review of public comments had not been shared with the Task Force or the public. She was also concerned with the huge economic burden these roads will put on Florida taxpayers. While Governor DeSantis cut funding for other important things, the M-CORES budget has actually expanded. Much of what the local community desire, such as broadband and water quality infrastructure can, and should be developed without a toll road. She suggested that local residents don't want more pollution, more concrete, or more sprawl. The Task Force needed to take into account the strong opposition from the public, and the overwhelming need to protect our water, wildlife, rural communities and taxpayers. Thank you.
- Herman Younger stated that information from No Roads to Ruins found that 88% of the comments were not in favor of this disastrous toll road project. He said this does not include the vast majority of the 7,272 public comments received through form letters. He urges the Task Force to strongly consider this data when making recommendations, and that they echo the voices of the public and recommend No Build.
- Amy Datz commented that only 11,571 comments have been received, or 1/3 of 1% of the over 3 million residents from the 18 counties in the project area. She suspected that the pro-project members are being silenced for fear of group expulsion. She also suggests that less than a fraction of 1% of the members in the Sierra Club and Nature Conservancy is interested in opposing this project. Her solidarity was with the 700,000 families that do not have internet, and so cannot state their support for getting internet from this project. She was also grateful that this Task Force group has placed emphasis on the necessity of agriculture to our state's economy and well-being. She would like the Task Force to consider allowing vehicles dedicated to the movement of farm produce and livestock to pay reduced or no toll to reduce the economic impact of the toll road in this industry. She also suggested grade-removed agricultural crossings if fragmentation is necessary to reduce costs. She asked to please continue the mixed in-person and internet public comments, being over 65 it's a matter of life and death for her.
- Michael McGrath discussed the severity of the pandemic on Florida specifically, and suggested that continuing with M-CORES at this time is a bad idea. He said each of the M-CORES corridors lacks a documented needs analysis and reliable projections for its fiscal feasibility. He referenced the immense cost of the project and a lack of communication from FDOT on project details. He was impressed by the critical conversation by many of the Task Force members, and strongly agrees with the comments made by some Task Force members to make the financial feasibility either a high-level need or guiding principle. He suggested the project is blowing out the state budget and that it has actually seen increased funding in spite of cuts in other important programs. He asks elected officials on the Task Force if they are getting the money for projects they promised. He asked if M-CORES really was the best use of our taxpayer dollars and on the state budget during this pandemic? He closed with "please, don't build this road."
- Gary Stillwell suggested that it might be advantageous if the folks that might be able to do this, get together a glossary of critical terms so everyone knows what is meant by a term. He referenced statute 338.223 talks and states that "any proposed project be constructed must have economic feasibility statements done and an environmental feasibility study done prior to the department ever approving that, and then that design of that project then must be finished before it ever goes to the legislature." He thought that seemed a little backwards. He also noted the financial implications of trying to fund the project with bonds. He suggested there are some really strict issues going on here.

- Eugene Kelly said he was gratified to hear financial feasibility mentioned today. The government needed to live within its means the same as a private business would. He noted that funding was removed from the state budget for many things, but the M-CORES budget grew. He said toll revenue would need to exceed the main line of the Turnpike on a per mile basis to cover the statutorily required minimum share of debt service on any bonds that would be issued to finance construction. He asked the Task Force to please resolve to include clear reservations about the financial feasibility of M-CORES and the unrealistic timeline for a project with such immense financial and environmental implications.
- Matthew Schwartz suggested that whether it's a toll road or co-location or multimodal, this process should not be starting with these Task Forces trying to come up with recommended routes. He said there is no needs analysis. He referenced the boondoggle of the Kanter Realty oil well and the Jet Port in Big Cypress swamp. He also referenced a recent Florida Gulf Coast University project that would have threatened the Florida Panther. He asked this Task Force to recommend don't build in the final report.
- Vivian Young encouraged both the Task Force members and staff, to read the 1000 Friends of Florida recommendations and incorporate them into the final document. She believed that the M-CORES statute set a far higher standard than exists for any other state or federal highway in Florida. She stated that a new highway could ultimately encourage sprawl and destroy the community. She also noted that the statute requires that natural areas be protected not "mitigate impact." She recommended that the Task Force decide the forecast population and employment be based on each local government comprehensive plan. Regarding need and feasibility, she believed there first should be a determination of need and financial feasibility pursuant to state and federal guidelines. Only if both needed feasibility are determined should FDOT consider proceeding with planning for the applicable corridors.
- Jessica Bispa appreciated the changes to the public comments that allows folks to decide in real time during the meeting if they wish to comment. She said this the first time she's heard Task Force members really have an opportunity to engage with each other in a meaningful back-and-forth manner. She noted that in the public comment review staff provided comments on the topics but no positions on the topics. She noted the Task Force needed to rush through some agenda items. She mentioned that building roads will not, and cannot protect the environment, and that is a statute charge. She hoped that the jobs referred to in this meeting were meaningful jobs, not short-term construction. She said she is supportive of broadband being brought into rural areas. She closed saying that alternative transport and automated vehicles are not an excuse to build a road.
- Richard Grosso voiced that he believes the set up a Task Force to put site-specific mapping and policies and information for this broad general policy statement. He said that the Task Force also needs to determine what kind of corridor is going in based on need. He also mentioned that this Task Force had been given some very specific instructions about Environmental Protection and Panther protection. He suggested that the policy guide uses language that is no more specific than the statute itself and suggested that at the end of the process the project is no further along than if there was never a Task Force to begin with.
- Kristen Ruben said that when private companies want to build something, they need to do studies to make sure the environment is safe, and it is financially feasible. She said no feasibility study has been done on this corridor. She said things can't be put back the way they were once they are disturbed. She also said that Floridians will bear the brunt of the cost of this unbelievably inept idea. She mentioned there is a pandemic to worry about and that this project is not what the people want.
- Julianne Thomas asked if and when there will be an efficient transportation decision-making process, which is Florida's screening process to review potential environmental impact for transportation projects. She also reminded the Task Force members that in October of 2019, a 50-million-dollar

contract was signed with a consultant for the PD&E study for this corridor, and wondered what they have been doing this whole time? She also reminded the Task Force that in 2007 the Heartland Parkway was considered for almost the same pathway and it was deemed to be financially infeasible. She asked that the Task Force please demand that the Florida Turnpike Enterprise do their feasibility study to understand if this is financially feasible. She reminded the Task Force that transportation projections are not accurate so please do the feasibility study.

- Ms. Kiselewski checked the in-person sites in Lee County Civic Center and the Civic Center in Sebring and both had no persons who would like to make a comment. She concluded the public comment period and handed over to Mr. Nandam.
- Mr. Nandam made his closing remarks and adjourned the meeting.

TBD	Adjourn	
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Text Format:

Regular – Agenda outline; *Italic* – Discussion notes; **Bold** – Action items