

## Task Force Meeting Notes

Subject: Northern Turnpike Corridor Task Force Meeting 7 (Virtual Meeting)  
 Date: Wednesday, August 26, 2020  
 Location: Virtual Meeting

**Public Viewing Location #1**

Plantation on Crystal River  
 9301 West Fort Island Trail  
 Crystal River, FL 34429

**Public Viewing Location #2**

Sumter County Fairgrounds  
 7620 State Road 471  
 Bushnell, FL 33513

## Attendees

In Attendance	Not in Attendance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jared Perdue, Florida Department of Transportation</li> <li>• Christina Colon, Florida Department of Transportation</li> <li>• James Stansbury (alternate for Mario Rubio), Florida Department of Economic Opportunity</li> <li>• Chris Wynn, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission</li> <li>• Mark Futrell, Florida Public Service Commission</li> <li>• Eric Anderson, Enterprise Florida</li> <li>• Scott Koons, North Central Florida Regional Planning Council</li> <li>• Charles Lee, Audubon Florida</li> <li>• Kent Wimmer, Defenders of Wildlife</li> <li>• James R. Maher, Florida Department of Environmental Protection</li> <li>• Nancy Brown, Florida Department of Education</li> <li>• Michael Napier, Florida Department of Health</li> <li>• The Hon. Matt Surrency, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services</li> <li>• The Hon. Kathy Bryant, Marion County</li> <li>• Warren Zwanka, Suwannee River Water Management District</li> <li>• Jennette Seachrist, Southwest Florida Water Management District</li> <li>• Jeff Prather, St. Johns River Water Management District</li> <li>• The Hon. Valerie Hanchar, Ocala/Marion County Transportation Planning Organization</li> <li>• The Hon. Russell "Rock" Meeks, Levy County</li> <li>• Sean Sullivan, Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council</li> <li>• Bradley Arnold, Sumter County</li> <li>• Philip Fulmer, Florida Trucking Association</li> <li>• Christopher Saliba, Florida Rural Water Association</li> <li>• Bill Ferry, Florida Internet &amp; Television Association</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Katie Troncoso, Volunteer Florida</li> <li>• Mike Woods, Lake~Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization</li> <li>• Rusty Skinner, CareerSource Florida</li> </ul>

In Attendance	Not in Attendance
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Danielle Ruiz, Florida Economic Development Council</li> <li>• Curt Williams, Florida Farm Bureau Federation</li> <li>• Dr. Stanley Sidor, Lake-Sumter State College</li> <li>• Paul Owens, 1000 Friends of Florida</li> <li>• Jason Lauritsen, Florida Wildlife Corridor</li> <li>• Zachary Prusak, The Nature Conservancy</li> <li>• Hugh Harling, East Central Florida Regional Planning Council</li> <li>• The Hon. Jeff Kinnard, Hernando/Citrus Metropolitan Planning Organization</li> <li>• The Hon. Scott Carnahan, Citrus County</li> <li>• Jim Patton, Florida Department of Business and Professional Regulation</li> <li>• Dr. Vernon Lawter, College of Central Florida</li> </ul>	

Text Format Legend:

Regular – Agenda description (staff/facilitator)

*Italic* – Discussion notes (staff/facilitator/Task Force member)

**Bold** – Action items

## Notes

9:00 am	Welcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Jared Perdue, Task Force Chair</b></li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secretary Jared Perdue welcomed everyone to the Task Force meeting. He reminded the Task Force that August 27th marks the one-year anniversary of the first Task Force meeting in Tampa. Secretary Perdue discussed the following in his opening remarks:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ The meeting was streamed live on the Florida Channel and its recording will be made available on the M-CORES website.</li> <li>○ There were also two in-person locations where the public could view the meeting.</li> <li>○ Members of the public could give comment by registering on the M-CORES website before 4:00 pm.</li> <li>○ A community open house is scheduled for August 27th.</li> <li>○ This meeting's discussion revolved around potential termini in environmentally sensitive areas and illustrative graphics that will evolve based on the Task Force's suggestions and recommendations.</li> <li>○ Task Force comments have been compiled and added to a revised draft of the guiding principles. The goal was to look at intent and commitment as the guiding principles are refined.</li> <li>○ Early sections of the Task Force report were reviewed to help move forward in development of a working draft.</li> <li>○ Task Force meeting #8 is tentatively scheduled for September 22 and Task Force meeting #9 is tentatively scheduled for the week of October 19.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	

<b>9:05 am</b>	<b>Introductions, Update, and Agenda Review</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Christine Kefauver, Facilitator</b></li> <li>• <b>Jennifer Stults, FDOT Production Lead</b></li> </ul>
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- Christine Kefauver reviewed the meeting agenda. She said the public comment period would begin at 5:00 pm or immediately after the Task Force meeting concludes. Requests to make comments virtually must be received by 4:00 pm through the online registration on the M-CORES website. Today’s meeting materials will be made available on the M-CORES website.
- Christine Kefauver showed a video explaining the Sunshine Law requirements before introducing John B. Fricke from the Office of the Attorney General who was available to answer any questions.
- Christine Kefauver conducted Task Force member roll call—see attendees list above.

<b>9:15 am</b>	<b>Moving from Task Force Recommendations to Corridor Planning and Project Development</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Will Watts, FDOT Chief Engineer</b></li> </ul>
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- Will Watts reminded the Task Force that FDOT sent out additional comments to the Task Force before the meeting.
- Will Watts gave a presentation about how Task Force recommendations will be used in the corridor planning and project development to determine the location of paths and courses as FDOT moves into corridor planning and project development.
- Will Watts presented illustrative paths/courses which were developed starting with the four-county study area and considering: will not impact, no new corridor through areas, attraction areas, and potential co-location corridors that were discussed in the previous meetings.
- Will Watts presented four potential starting locations which are CR-470 with potential interchange at I-75; continuation with SR-44; existing terminus going north along power line easement; existing terminus going north and then west. He highlighted three environmentally sensitive areas—the Cross Florida Greenway, Withlacoochee River, and the Goethe State Forest as examples of environmental resources that would constrain the location of the paths/courses. He discussed attraction areas including opportunity zones, future land use (commercial, industrial, and city), and electrical powerlines and gas lines that may direct where the paths/courses could go.
- Will Watts said the next steps in the development of illustrative paths and courses are to identify and refine potential paths and courses by looking at bypass areas, and co-location opportunities.
- Will Watts presented feasibility, as defined in the Florida Statutes, and potential funding sources. Feasibility includes environmental feasibility through the Task Force and Project Development and Environment (PD&E) studies, economic feasibility through the design phase and traffic and revenue studies. The first step is determining estimated net revenue. The next step is determining Turnpike funding contribution. The last step is to address funding shortfalls and the project will be prioritized through the work program just as any other FDOT project.
- *Chris Wynn asked if the Task Force will be able to advise on mitigation ratios within the instructions or does that come at a later point in the project. Will Watts responded that we have wetland mitigation ratios. The other ratios can be within the Task Force recommendations. FDOT wants to hear from the Task Force.*
- *Bradley Arnold said he had provided written feedback regarding illustrative paths. He was concerned about the terminus at I-75 and its consistency with the M-CORES statute. The southernmost path (CR-470) presented has a terminus in Lake County which is not in the study area. He asked, how do we deal with that or should we just ignore that path/course? Will Watts responded that if there was Task Force consensus to remove that southern path/course, then the Task Force can recommend that moving forward.*
- *Commissioner Jeff Kinnard said co-location with SR-44 is a great opportunity for co-location and crossing the Withlacoochee River. Co-location with the Sabal Trail Pipeline and Duke Energy line easement is good and appreciated as well. Commissioner Kathy Bryant reiterated Commissioner Kinnard’s comments. She said that initially Marion County was not in the study area and they*

asked for a seat at the table not to be considered but to be able to keep an eye on things. She said some of the areas considered make no sense due to population density. It makes the most sense to run through Citrus County from the current terminus of the Turnpike.

- Vice Mayor Valerie Hanchar agreed with Commissioner Bryant. She added that Marion County just wanted to be a part of the discussion but does not support bringing the road through Marion County. She also commented that the pie chart of funding shows local funding would be needed. She wanted to know what would happen for cities like Dunnellon that don't want the corridor, and also for cities that want it but need funding assistance from FDOT. With regard to the Sabal Trail Pipeline, Vice Mayor Hanchar said we wouldn't be talking about paving over that. How does the co-location work with that pipeline? Will Watts responded that any environmental impacts will be avoided and enhanced. He clarified that the pie chart was just an example highlighting when the financial feasibility is evaluated, the toll revenue is just part of the various funding sources. Some projects do have local funding, but this is just an example of options and does not mean that this project will require local funding.
- Mayor Matt Surrency responded to Vice Mayor Valerie Hanchar that you would not pave over the Sabal Trail Pipeline, but using it as co-location and the pipeline would not be running under the road. Mayor Surrency added that the SR-44 co-location is what he favors most. If we considered a southern path at CR-470, with all of the freight centers in Ocala, would we be looking at improvements on US-27 with a bypass in Williston, would that solve the I-75 between I-10 and Ocala problems? Will Watts responded that these paths and courses are only looking at the starting points, but future discussions will include looking at more specific areas the paths may go. Mayor Surrency asked if the enhancements to US-27 would be okay with Marion County.
- Jason Lauritsen said he submitted comments related to SR-44 and Cross Florida Greenway. He asked if Will Watts could give feedback on how to provide comments on the paths/courses. Will Watts responded that these are the start of the production process, so they need to make sure the language is crafted appropriately for the production team to help with the guiding principles and instructions. Jason Lauritsen added that there are some areas where the paths and courses cross the Cross Florida Greenway that are concerning, and he just wants to make sure those are covered. Some of the narrow areas have impacts from the existing corridors and changes to those areas might provide an opportunity for enhancement elsewhere.
- Paul Owens referenced one of four recommendations made to staff by his agency— when the cost of this highway is estimated, will it include cost for all construction, land, mitigation, and design? He said this was in reference to needing a new I-75 interchange and the widening of nearby highways that would be necessary to satisfy the program. Will Watts answered that project cost will include costs for every project component.
- Charles Lee agreed with Bradley Arnold's concerns on CR-470. He said CR-470 doesn't follow the M-CORES statute. Additionally, he said if you go west, you run into the Withlacoochee State Forest and very dense conservation lands before you get the opportunity to connect to SR-44. He also agreed with Commissioner Kinnard about co-locating with SR-44. He favored the north and west alternative. It is virtually all a co-location route with the Duke Energy powerline. Just a little south where the line crosses the Withlacoochee River, there is a gap in the conservation lands. Charles Lee recommended removing the southern orange arrow and the green arrow that crosses the Cross Florida Greenway as both paths will go through the heart of undeveloped agricultural lands.
- Commissioner Kathy Bryant wanted to make sure she understands Mayor Surrency's questions and comments. Mayor Surrency suggested that you could take traffic up I-75 and then across US-27 for truck traffic. Commissioner Bryant responded that there are two commerce parks outside of Ocala. There is a new interchange at US-326 and US-27. There isn't a reason for this traffic to go south and then north. One of the most highly traveled sections on I-75 is from the terminus of the Turnpike up to SR-200. This supports keeping a potential corridor south of Marion County to help solve bottlenecks and other issues. Mayor Surrency agreed with that explanation. He liked the SR-44 co-location option more, but wasn't sure if the other option would help.

- *Commissioner Kathy Bryant commented that there is a need to keep the traffic off of I-75, so the southern route makes more sense. Marion County certainly doesn't want to do anything that crosses the Cross Florida Greenway.*
- *Bradley Arnold said he would support removing the orange arrow over CR-470. With SR-44, this was discussed earlier and Sumter County has no objection. Sumter County would want to study SR-44 and its significance to the evacuation process, as the most major concern is the mass movement from south Florida during hurricane evacuations.*
- *Danielle Ruiz asked at what point [in the process] do the real estate questions start. Will Watts responded that once the paths and courses are narrowed down to the corridors and the PD&E has a preferred option, the right-of-way phase will start.*
- *Philip Fulmer commented that the Florida Trucking Association would support getting the trucks off of the smaller rural roads through Lake and Sumter Counties.*
- *Commissioner Scott Carnahan agreed with Commissioner Bryant and said traffic needs to come off turnpike south of Marion County. Regarding co-locating with SR-44, he would like to get around the City of Inverness to avoid bottlenecks.*

<b>9:45 am</b>	<b>Update on Work Plan and Recommendations Framework</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Huiwei Shen, FDOT Chief Planner</b></li> </ul>
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- Huiwei Shen presented overarching topics based on Task Force comments from the previous meeting. Her presentation highlighted the following:
  - Pre-planning focuses on high-level regional needs tied to statutory purposes.
  - Both the guiding principles and instructions carry weight in the recommendations from the Task Force. She suggested that an ongoing Corridor Advisory Group be created to continue after the Task Force. This would include local governments, state and regional agencies, environmental groups, and industry partners. This group would help advise, track, review, and reach out throughout the project.
  - Task Force meeting #8 is tentatively scheduled for September 22.
  - There are Community Open Houses scheduled for August 27 and September 23.
  - There will be an opportunity for public comment on the report in October.
  - Task Force meeting #9 is tentatively scheduled for the week of October 19.
  - Task Force report is due to the Governor and Legislature by November 15.

<b>10:00 am</b>	<b>Review and Refine Guiding Principles and Instructions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Jennifer Stults, FDOT Production Lead</b></li> <li>• <b>Billy Burke, Task Force Support Team</b></li> <li>• <b>Christine Kefauver, Facilitator</b></li> <li>• <b>Task Force Members</b></li> </ul>
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- Jennifer Stults introduced the guiding principles and instructions discussion.
- Billy Burke and Christine Kefauver began the discussion on the guiding principles and instructions and reminded the Task Force that there is no priority order to the guiding principles. Guiding principles #14-18 would be reviewed first because they weren't addressed in the last meeting. The desire was to focus on major comments during this meeting, but more detailed, editorial comments can be sent to Jennifer Stults by Wednesday, September 2.
- Billy Burke read guiding principle #14 and the draft instructions.
- Don Lewis presented on the M-CORES emergency considerations. There are four phases of emergency management: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery. M-CORES impacts all four phases of emergency management. Each level of government has a different role in Emergency Management. There is more north/south capacity needed, not only for evacuation but also for return of people and supplies. During Hurricane Irma there were serious traffic capacity issues, especially along I-75. Public sheltering does play a very critical role for evacuations.

- Don Lewis said due to COVID-19, there has been a stronger desire to shelter in place. Less than 10% of the evacuating population go to public shelters. These concerns may not be there when M-CORES projects are implemented, hopefully this virus will be gone.
- Don Lewis said local counties' emergency challenges include long traffic clearance times and difficult decision-making, better control of evacuee egress out of storm surge areas, separation of local and through evacuation traffic in many areas, preservation of local shelter space for local needs, and messaging to through-traffic to control local impacts. Scenarios that revolve around track and efficiency, public participation, in-county versus out-of-county destinations, traffic control and messaging, and tourist populations will all play a role in M-CORES and the emergency benefits and usefulness. He said the Task Force should be aware that Southwest Florida and Tampa Bay are the most difficult evacuation areas in the US.
- *Bradley Arnold said there are concerns about SR-44 and evacuation. He suggested considering the January 2018 study recommendations that included Wildwood as a distribution center for fuel for evacuees. He suggested to consider distribution centers in the M-CORES project.*
- *Charles Lee commented that the hurricane evacuation protocol has recently shifted and is less manageable. During Irma, the call by the Governor to evacuate south Florida put millions of evacuees on the road including people evacuated out of "post-Andrew" homes. Most of evacuees had nowhere to go after leaving their homes. Charles Lee stressed the importance of thinking about the end point and where the people will go after evacuating to central and north Florida. Don Lewis responded that the official guidance for any coastal county is to evacuate storm surge areas as well as mobile homes and structures that are sub-standard. When you throw in an extra 10-20% evacuation rate, the evacuation traffic is enormous. It would never be suggested to evacuate an entire county.*
- *Kent Wimmer commented on the ability to traverse the Cross Florida Greenway. He said he still stands by no impacts to existing and proposed conservation lands. He added the lifespan of this potential highway is over 100 years so the state should consider building the corridor to withstand at least Category 3 storm events as Category 1 and 2 are now prevalent. He was interested to hear from state agency experts.*

10:45 am	BREAK	
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10:55 am	<b>Review and Refine Guiding Principles and Instructions (Continued)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Jennifer Stults, FDOT Production Lead</b></li> <li>• <b>Billy Burke, Task Force Support Team</b></li> <li>• <b>Christine Kefauver, Facilitator</b></li> <li>• <b>Task Force Members</b></li> </ul>
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- *Sean Sullivan said Floridians and tourists alike are intelligent and if they choose to evacuate, they will know and have a place to go. He said the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council released a study on hurricane land fall in the area (<http://www.tbrpc.org/phoenix/>) and encouraged the Task Force to look at it.*
- *Chris Wynn asked if Don Lewis has any comments on the last bullet in the draft instructions. We saw a lot of issues with debris and trees after Hurricane Michael, is there a place for the Task Force to emphasize on how to mitigate risks and design infrastructure to withstand impacts like during Hurricane Michael? Don Lewis responded that it may be difficult because people who like trees want them as close to the corridor as possible. Once the storm is through, those trees that were so beautiful make it difficult to get into certain areas and create hazards for search and rescue, emergency response, supply delivery, etc. He posed the question back to the Task Force.*
- *Commissioner Rock Meeks commented that Charles Lee touched on evacuations, and being in a rural, small county, one of the issues they run into is the order of evacuation from south to north.*

*During Irma, there was a statement to evacuate that took fuel from areas where there is never a shortage. This puts locals in a bad spot. People from south Florida are evacuated first and the fill local shelters before people in Levy County can move to the shelters which force local residents have to evacuate further north. Commissioner Meeks asked is there anything in the plan for making areas be available for shelters if this corridor is going to be used as an evacuation route. Don Lewis responded that M-CORES could give an opportunity to message evacuees on shelter availability. Since some of the larger urban areas provide shelter space for people from other parts of the state, messaging could direct people to those locations. Don Lewis added that one of the destinations that isn't officially recognized are parking lots in rural areas where evacuees can hang out and access amenities, so there may be opportunity to enhance that.*

- *Billy Burke asked Task Force members to comment on the emergency response and preparedness guiding principle. He clarified that the order was changed to match what Don Lewis presented: mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.*
- *Mayor Matt Surrency suggested to look at some bridge enhancements on SR-44 option considering similar issues with I-75 and the risk of the Santa Fe River as it rises. **Christine Kefauver acknowledged the request.***
- *Charles Lee commented that potentially having more corridors gives the opportunity for more evacuation. He was interested in construction of temporary large shelters in the Wildwood/Ocala area for housing 25,000 people to provide a destination for evacuees. He said there are a lot of modular construction techniques like the large manufacturing warehouses or similar that could be quickly constructed for people to shelter.*
- *Bradley Arnold asked to include fuel and electric charging stations at interchanges to address evacuation needs in the instructions. He supported the draft instruction that includes sheltering. Christine Kefauver responded that electric charging station has been addressed in a different guiding principle which will be reviewed later.*
- *Commissioner Jeff Kinnard added that fueling and charging stations need to be a part of the discussion, but not the large-scale sheltering facilities that Charles Lee mentioned. This discussion needs to be about the evacuation corridors and necessary utilities. Christine Kefauver responded that they refer to coordinating with state, regional, and local response plans. They want to make sure we have a comprehensive conversation and that FDOT is in partnership and not owning but responding to that instruction.*
- *Philip Fulmer commented that truckers are mostly looking to get away from the winds, so getting north of Florida to a parking lot to hunker down for a little bit is what is needed. He said charging and staging areas are extremely important for evacuation and bringing in supplies. Christine Kefauver responded that is on bullet four in the instructions; and asked Philip if that addresses the needs for the trucking industry. Philip Fulmer thought it does and emphasized the importance of staging areas during evacuations. Billy Burke responded that SB 7018 referenced in the instructions authorizes FDOT to plan and construct staging areas as part of the Turnpike system.*
- *Kent Wimmer commented that the last two bullets in the instructions need to be enhanced. Plan and develop corridors that withstand risk should advocate for higher standards for design for these roads. Chris Wynn added as we are thinking about recovery, the aftermath of having debris in the road is a real risk. He said he cannot see how FDOT would not be designing the corridor to withstand Category 3 or 4 storms with the current guiding principles. He suggested including use of native plants along the sides of the roads that withstand these storms.*
- *Billy Burke summarized the changes that will be included in the guiding principle and Jennifer Rhodes noted on the worksheet.*
- *Billy Burke read guiding principles #15 and #16 and the draft instructions. He clarified that facilities means electric generating stations, water supply plants, and wastewater treatment plants.*
- *Christine Kefauver asked Bill Ferry if he had any thoughts. Bill Ferry commented that the draft guiding principles look good. He suggested to define facilities in the instructions. Regarding the word co-locate in the second instruction, he said for each provider to have equal access to run its own utility lines along a dedicated utility easement, they would need to be able to run their own lines, not in a dedicated duct bank. This gives the opportunity for a provider to give access to future customers. Bill Ferry also suggested to consider non-discriminatory and competitively*

neutral language. He said the other instructions look fine. Christine Kefauver acknowledged the request.

- Commissioner Scott Carnahan agreed that the local leaders need to be on the forefront of the utilities. He said Citrus County is already coordinating with FDOT to lay dry pipes where the County thinks they need to be laid. Billy Burke responded that “local governments” was added to the second instruction for that reason.
- Mayor Matt Surrency commented that for the septic to sewer conversions, as we are expanding the conversion and regional discussions are taking place, there is a state law that requires property owners to connect if the pipe runs within so many feet of their property. This may cause issues in the agricultural communities where septic is sufficient. We are normally thinking of these high-density communities because they don’t have the available space to deal with the number of tanks. He therefore advised considering the unintended consequences of this. Vice Mayor Valerie Hanchar added that there is so much space in rural areas, septic to sewer conversion doesn’t make sense if you owned a large tract of land and it would be quite a burden on many families. There is a negative impact on areas, especially rural, requiring everybody go on sewer. She suggested adding this to the guiding principles. Commissioner Scott Carnahan responded that the state regulates the septic system; so there is no doubt that this corridor will not allow sewer everywhere. He said coordination with local governments is required to connect to their systems. Certain areas need to be moved to sewer for water quality. He added that enhancement of septic system is required in a new BMAP (Basin Management Action Plan) area. He said Citrus County was able to receive a large amount of money to update its system. There is no doubt that this corridor is not going to allow sewers everywhere. There are areas that will never get off of septic, but BMAP areas needs sewer conversion to improve water quality.
- Charles Lee suggested the sewer instruction start with “explore opportunities”. He supported Commissioner Carnahan’s comment as there was nothing in the guiding principles that required all central sewer conversion. Rural areas are not going to be targeted but rather higher density areas. He suggested to add “explore opportunities in coordination with local governments and utilities.” In Citrus County, there were some arrangements between FDOT, local government, and utilities that resulted in sewer connections. The route of SR-44 will give the opportunity to run through some high-density areas. The question of who has to hook up to sewer and who doesn’t will be tied to the local governments and what FDEP requires. Mayor Matt Surrency reiterated a need to consider and address unintended consequences as the central sewer system is implemented.
- Commissioner Rock Meeks commented that in municipalities like Chiefland and Bronson, there are sewer systems, but in the rural areas, there is no way sewer would work. Who is going to pay for these systems and is the state going to help maintain these systems in the future? Once these systems are deployed, where is the funding going to come from in the future? Christine Kefauver responded that M-CORES is a program and where possible we look to maximize solutions and partnerships. FDOT has the opportunity to partner with local governments and utilities and that’s what these guiding principles and instructions are highlighting.
- Billy Burke summarized the discussion and Jenn Rhodes added notes to the guiding principles and instructions.
- Billy Burke read guiding principles #17 and #18 and the draft instructions. He added that the last two came from previous discussions on other guiding principles.
- Charles Lee suggested an addition in the draft instructions to limit the number of interchanges in rural areas. Billy Burke responded that looking at the first one, does it get to what you are suggesting? He cautioned about restricting local governments ability to control growth. Charles Lee responded that generally you constrain interchanges to major road crossings to prevent greenfield sections of the route from creating new developments. He referenced the Wekiva Parkway Task Force which specified where the interchanges should be placed in rural areas. Huiwei Shen responded that the Wekiva Parkway covered a smaller geographical area and the transportation need was more defined than in M-CORES. She suggested possibly adding a broader language to help locals and not be so specific like Charles Lee suggestion.

- *Commissioner Jeff Kinnard said he understands where Charles Lee is coming from in directing the interchanges. But he disagreed about eliminating coordination with local officials. Local officials need to be part of the discussion at every point of the process.*
- *Bradley Arnold suggested to eliminate the second instruction and change the first instruction to read “shall coordinate.” This would support Charles’ comment. Charles Lee agreed with the suggestion. He said he did not propose to cut local governments out of the process. However, if there is a proposal for a new access road in the local plans, then it has to be considered. He emphasized a need to have a policy “firewall” to protect against a large landowner to be given access for an interchange in a rural area without consideration for other landowners and the environment. He stressed that interchanges should be expressed through transportation need. Paul Owens responded in reference to a firewall and using the Wekiva model, there should be legislative approval for any interchange not included in the original plan. That kind of requirement would prevent the proliferation of interchanges spawning development in rural areas.*
- *Commissioner Rock Meeks agreed with Charles Lee and said interchanges should be at major county roads or state roads if the purpose of the roads is to move traffic and not create urban sprawl. There are some economic benefits for the rural counties, but that should be up to the county to decide. Huiwei Shen commented that the goal is to have consistency with all local and regional plans. The hope is to have agreement between FDOT and its partners. Interchange management and technical assistance will be planned out to make sure the Future Land Use is accommodating.*
- *Vice Mayor Valerie Hanchar mentioned that when referencing preservation areas, people may not be in specific preservation areas, but they want to keep the same look and feel they have now. She suggested including aesthetics or heritage in the instructions.*
- *Commissioner Scott Carnahan commented that it is important to give FDOT credit as they build many roads and they don’t just put off ramps every two miles. Citrus County is addressing its comprehensive plans for the interchanges. FDOT understands where these off ramps need to go and follow what is in the comprehensive plans.*
- *Billy Burke summarized the discussion and including suggested refinements to the guiding principles and instructions.*
- *Secretary Perdue dismissed the meeting for lunch.*

12:30 pm	BREAK FOR LUNCH	
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1:30 pm	Review and Refine Guiding Principles (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jennifer Stults, FDOT Production Lead</li> <li>• Billy Burke, Task Force Support Team</li> <li>• Christine Kefauver, Facilitator</li> <li>• Task Force Members</li> </ul>
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- Secretary Perdue welcomed everyone back.
- Christine informed the public that they must be registered by 4:00 pm today to provide public comment during the meeting. Comments can always be submitted to [FDOT.Listens@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:FDOT.Listens@dot.state.fl.us).
- Billy Burke said the next discussion will review the environmentally based guiding principles.
- Billy Burke read guiding principles #7 and #8 and the draft instructions.
- He added that a lot of the changes were made based on the comments received at the last Task Force meeting.
- *James Stansbury suggested to specify in the instructions resources that should be absolutely avoided. Billy Burke responded that there are three other groups of guiding principles that may address this suggestion. Chris Wynn asked do we want to specify potential mitigation ratios if that option will be considered in the future? Billy Burke responded the agencies require different mitigation ratios for different things, so it may be difficult to specify one ratio. Chris Wynn agreed. He added that on the last bullet about CLIP (Critical Lands and Water Identification Project), this model will likely have updates throughout the duration of the project, so he suggested removing the reference to Version 4 in the instructions. Jason Watts expanded on Billy's response and said the agencies need to understand that the statute allows FDOT to go above and beyond what they normally would and so the conversations with the agencies need to happen. **Jason Watts suggested changing the Version 4 in the CLIP instruction to "the most current version."** In regard to conservation lands in the guiding principle, he suggested including community or local plans. He said that was discussed in the Southwest-Central Florida Corridor Task Force.*
- *Kent Wimmer agreed with Jason Watts. He said existing public and private conservation lands should not be impacted at all. There is not enough commitment that FDOT will provide suitable mitigation ratios or enhancements to make up for the impacts this corridor will have. He suggested ratios higher than the current standards. He would like to hear from Huiwei Shen on having an environmental advisory group and how that becomes a part of this plan, and the action plan that comes with this. Huiwei Shen responded that the advisory group is supported by several Task Force members. The report action plan section will address this group. She will look to the Task Force for input and recommendations.*
- *Charles Lee suggested to coordinate language with the Suncoast Corridor Task Force on the same topics. He suggested to adopt the structure of the Suncoast presentation of the guiding principles and instructions. No new impact [will not impact] and no new corridors through should both be outlined in the guiding principles. In the paragraphs that talk about minimization and avoidance, there needs to be a tiered structure. He suggested that the guiding principle should be worded "avoid, and when avoidance isn't feasible, minimize and mitigate." Lands on the priority list of agencies and organizations should be included. These lands should be treated as no new corridor through. In regard to the ratio discussion, Charles Lee said we are talking about what happens when you can't avoid a given piece of conservation land, what do you do in the way of replacing this. In regard to replacement of conservation lands that cannot be avoided, he suggested the Task Force to look at some of the Suncoast Parkway 1 and 2 mitigation and their mitigation ratios of 10:1.*
- *Jason Watts agreed on the orderly structure that Charles Lee suggested. **Jason Watts said FDOT can work on this draft language that the first choice is always to avoid. Next would be enhanced based on the statute, not minimize.** We can come up with something more definite for the conservation lands comment. For the ratio discussion, he said FDOT used great ratios before, and the statute allows FDOT to do more, but he is not sure how to deal with that in*

draft instructions. With the avoidance layers, Jason Watts said those listed were committed by FDOT for the avoidance maps. If the Task Force come to the decision to add other lands or layers and there is consensus, we can certainly add those.

- Commissioner Scott Carnahan disagreed with the advisory groups. He reminded the Task Force that FDOT did a great job planning through Citrus County and avoiding impacts. Vice Mayor Valerie Hanchar suggested to add a note in the guiding principles if they correlate with other principles or instructions. Commissioner Jeff Kinnard also disagreed with the advisory groups. He said ultimately when this Task Force completes its work and compiles this report, it is then in FDOT's hands. He doesn't want an advisory group fine-tuning things at a later time. He added that he would oppose drafting language from another Task Force because their project is for totally different areas.
- Paul Owen suggested to add an additional instruction for the areas that are at most risk and lands within 10 miles of each interchange. Additionally, he suggested to list the following resources for protection and purchasing: Land identified as CLIP Priorities 1, 2, or 3, Florida Rural and Family or Florida Forever lands, springs protection zones, and Florida Wildlife Corridor which is the Florida Ecological Greenway Network Priorities 1 and 2. Jason Watts responded that typically lands around interchanges are left up to local communities to identify what they want to do with those areas. He cautioned that if restrictions are included in the guiding principles, they may limit what those communities decide they want to do in those areas.
- Commissioner Jeff Kinnard pleaded with the Task Force not to limit local governments in deciding what they want around their interchanges. Local governments have put a lot of time and effort into planning for the future. Local officials in every community deserve the right to decide what looks good for them.
- Billy Burke read guiding principles #9 and #10 and the draft instructions.
- Billy Burke read guiding principles #11 and #12 and the draft instructions.
- Billy Burke read guiding principle #13 and the draft instructions.
- Regarding wildlife connectivity, Jason Lauritsen was happy with how habitat connectivity is expressed. He added that under the first instruction, "including" lands identified, he wanted to make sure the principles acknowledge that Florida Ecological Greenways Network Priorities 1 and 2 are included.
- Jennette Seachrist said the water resources principles and instructions seem to cover where the Water Management Districts want to go. Warren Zwanka agreed with Jennette's observations.
- Jason Lauritsen commented on the second bullet. For conservation lands and looking at partnering with the acquisition agencies, there are narrow bottlenecks that are typically overlooked because they aren't high scoring in the priority lists. It is important that guiding principles communicate the mechanisms for including these bottleneck corridors for wildlife that may not be picked up in the Florida Forever or Rural and Family Lands as some of these are picked up in the Florida Ecological Greenway Network Priorities 1 and 2. Billy Burke asked Jason Lauritsen if those smaller bottlenecks are covered in the Florida Greenways Network. Jason Lauritsen answered that they are but may not score high.
- Warren Zwanka added that most of Levy County is considered to be a water discharge area and subject to groundwater flooding. The avoidance of sinkholes and karst areas is going to be difficult to do in most areas across Florida. There are already stormwater Environmental Resource Permits (ERPs) rules that apply here, and he suggested a need to meet and exceed them.
- Chris Wynn said there seems to be a lot of duplication between the conservation, wildlife corridor, and water resources. There is value in being consistent and regrouping into one natural habitat category, it may make it easier for FDOT, the public, and the Task Force to understand.
- Charles Lee added that he was not talking about qualitative content in Suncoast, but the overall structure. Under the wildlife habitat and connectivity principle, he asked what "leverage partnerships" means. In SB 7068, the cost of funding some of these acquisitions is going to be FDOT dollars. In the second bullet for wildlife crossings and fish passages, he suggested to remove "where feasible." He added that, what needs to be looked at are the sections of the new road that need to be built on elevated bridges. In the water resources area, there is a lot of karst

in Florida and it would be hard to avoid entirely. He suggested replacing with a language to avoid high density karst areas with mapped underground channels.

- Christine Kefauver went back to guiding principle #13 and asked if Task Force members could make sure it has been addressed in the previous discussions. Mayor Matt Surrency responded that it looks good with more detailed draft instructions.
- Curt Williams commented that in the agriculture lands guiding principle, we address farmland, silviculture, and cattle ranches, but not some of the other related industries (equestrian, ornamentals, etc.). He wanted to make sure they are captured in the instructions.
- Jason Watts reminded everyone that the goal is to protect the environment through PD&E while remaining flexible to listen to the local communities. These guidelines will help in addressing some of the concerns. **Jason Watts said we will look at some of the language for next steps for enhancing or minimizing these resources. We will also look at the qualifier language to see if it is needed or not.**
- Billy Burke read guiding principle #5 and the draft instructions.
- Vice Mayor Valerie Hanchar said they look correct and reiterated the need to maintain and protect community heritage.
- Paul Owens suggested to add “protecting areas within five miles of interchanges” to protect character, agriculture, or business in some of the rural communities.
- Commissioner Kathy Bryant reiterated a need to protect rural character especially for the City of Dunnellon and asked if the draft instructions about impacting Native American sites should include archeological sites. Billy Burke answered that in the PD&E process, those are things that must be evaluated and protected. Commissioner Bryant agreed.
- Kent Wimmer said another good instruction to include would be to work with communities on their preferences (and suggested borrowing language from Suncoast Corridor Task Force). Commissioner Jeff Kinnard responded that he would disagree with something that leaves out your local elected officials. He would also disagree in bringing language from other Task Forces. There are a lot of people in this Task Force that would not have had input on this language. Christine Kefauver commented that after the break, the Task Force will look at the overarching guiding principles to make sure we aren’t missing the importance of the local officials and plans.
- Charles Lee encouraged Commissioner Kinnard to look at the specific language that Kent Wimmer proposed. Hopefully, the staff will take a look at that and bring something back to us to use. Commissioner Scott Carnahan agreed with Commissioner Kinnard. He said local officials and residents have come out and provided input on what they want in their communities.
- Jason Watts reminded the Task Force that the PD&E doesn’t just deal with the environment, but also people and communities.
- Billy Burke read guiding principles #6 and the draft instructions. He also read a new guiding principle related to tourism, agritourism, ecotourism and outdoor recreation.
- Kent Wimmer said he had an issue that they are dictating to Task Force members. He wanted to add avoiding and minimizing adverse impacts to individual communities, businesses, and resources. These corridors should not wipe out existing businesses. Commissioner Jeff Kinnard responded that he thinks the language covers everything very well. Providing connection is one thing, but smaller communities may not be able to afford to expand development to appreciate the economic development. Christine Kefauver asked the Task Force to ensure the principles cover Task Force intent in other principles.
- Charles Lee commented that we need to develop infrastructure that strengthens existing local businesses. The largest controller is interchange location. If the new route will bypass existing routes, it may become the developmental center. Therefore, there is a need to add language to ensure new interchanges do not displace the existing community and its character.
- Commissioner Scott Carnahan added that FDOT needs to work with the local officials to determine where they want the interchanges and then local officials can talk to the community and determine what they want. He said local officials don’t need outsiders to tell them or their communities what they need to do.
- Secretary Perdue thanked everyone for the discussion and dismissed everyone for a short break.

3:15 pm	BREAK	
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3:30 pm	Review and Refine Guiding Principles (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jennifer Stults, FDOT Production Lead</li> <li>• Billy Burke, Task Force Support Team</li> <li>• Christine Kefauver, Facilitator</li> <li>• Task Force Members</li> </ul>
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- Christine Kefauver and Billy Burke read guiding principle #1 and draft instructions.
- *Jason Lauritsen said that everything looks good. Charles Lee agreed but he said the principle misplaces the emphasis. He suggested to change the order to lead with the comprehensive plans, the metropolitan plans, and lastly the state transportation plans.*
- *Sean Sullivan agreed with the guiding principle and liked the reference to specific policy plans.*
- Billy Burke read guiding principle #2 and the draft instructions.
- *Bradley Arnold said guiding principle #2 and instructions are appropriate as they tie into some existing studies in Sumter County. This language captures the idea that existing roadways are considered and studied first. This has the most positive impact for the communities in Marion and Sumter Counties because of the existing capacity issues. Commissioner Kathy Bryant concurred with Arnold Bradley's comments. Commissioner Jeff Kinnard supported the last three speakers' comments. Kent Wimmer said the Task Force got this principle right and is better than Suncoast's.*
- *Charles Lee added that the only question about the language in the guiding principles is the third point. In what circumstance besides a new road does this principle stand for? He suggests to either outline in more detail in the draft instructions or create a standalone sub-principle. Jason Watts responded that there are a few other circumstances. If by improving the existing right-of-way and there is damage to existing businesses or other rights-of-way, there is potential to hit this principle. If you can't satisfy the other guiding principles or comprehensive plans, then this principle would fit that. Billy Burke said that it makes a lot of sense. What if we went along with a hypothetical co-location with SR-44, if at some point you are going to have a limited access facility, then this may not be consistent with the local government comprehensive plan.*
- *Charles Lee agreed with that, but he said it doesn't address his original question. The way this is structured with the local comprehensive plan it doesn't really align with the plan's goals. He suggested clarification in the instructions. **Jason Watts responded that staff will take it back and clarify within the guiding principle or instructions.** Billy Burke added that the second draft instruction may begin to explain this and staff can start there. Bradley Arnold agreed with Billy. He gave examples of other PD&E studies in Sumter County where this was encountered.*
- Billy Burke read guiding principles #3 and #4 and the draft instructions.
- *Valerie Hanchar commented that Marion County just discussed future technology at their Board of County Commissioners meeting.*
- *Charles Lee agreed with guiding principles and instructions and suggested an additional instruction about tolling strategies that eliminates the need for through roads and separate lanes by using transponders that differentiate local and through vehicles. Billy Burke responded that things that are an unnecessary cost would be typically avoided in the FDOT process. If that technology can save hundreds of millions of dollars in construction, it will be implemented. Charles Lee responded that there was pretty strong acknowledgement in the past Task Force meeting with subject matter experts that the technology is there.*
- *Chris Wynn suggested to add technology that reduces roadkill or notifies drivers of smoke plumes around prescribed fire areas in the instructions. Christine Kefauver asked Chris Wynn if he would be available to discuss with Billy regarding this technology. Chris Wynn agreed to discuss with Billy.*

4:30 pm	Review Draft Task Force Report Sections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Jennifer Stults, FDOT Production Lead</li> <li>• Billy Burke, Task Force Support Team</li> <li>• Christine Kefauver, Facilitator</li> <li>• Task Force Members</li> </ul>
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- Jennifer Stults presented the outline of the Task Force Report. She read through draft language for all parts of the draft report.
- Christine Kefauver opened the floor for comments or questions.
- *Bradley Arnold said regarding lines 159-164 of the report, Sumter County recently received 2020 population estimates which indicates the county population is about 121,000 which is a significant change. He suggested to reference 2020 estimates in the report. He said there is a special needs shelter in Sumter County that is not accounted for in line 355. **Christine Kefauver acknowledged that FDOT had received comments.***
- *To keep consistent with the statute that calls out wildlife corridors, Jason Lauritsen suggested to add this language into a high-level need section (line 395 and 396). **Christine Kefauver acknowledged this request.***
- *Kent Wimmer asked where in the report is financial feasibility addressed. **Christine Kefauver acknowledged that there were conversation and comments previously. She added that in line 431, feasibility was highlighted.** Kent Wimmer responded that it has to meet a certain standard and test, so there is a little more to it.*
- *Charles Lee commented that the language in this report should be given to the Task Force in an editable format in a Word Document. Also, as to the determination of need, the statute from SB 7068 gives the Task Force a duty to give a recommendation on need. He believed at this point in time there has not been anything close to a determination of need. He does believe that there is need for improving transportation facilities. He said the Task Force has to get to a point where they can endorse something. The recommendations of the Task Force will be the only thing that comes out. All of this language [presented] is sort of a preamble. The Task Force needs to identify recommendations which are guiding principles and instructions. Jennifer Stults responded that some Task Force members have already sent comments in as the draft report language was sent out last week. Staff will make edits in the next round. The intent is to send the report back out to the Task Force with the next round of edits. Huiwei Shen said the guiding principles and instructions are the heart of the report, but have not been added to the draft yet. Before the next meeting, staff will format the guiding principles and instructions content into the report. Needs evaluation and financial feasibility will be discussed and FDOT is open to ideas on where these will be placed in the report. Charles Lee responded by requesting an editable document. **Huiwei Shen agreed to send the editable report.***
- *Jason Lauritsen asked what does the completion and communication of this report and recommendation mean? Does the outlined high-level needs mean that the Task Force believes this toll road is needed? Huiwei Shen responded that M-CORES offers very broad opportunities to address very high-level needs. It does not say that the Task Force believes that we need this toll road, rather it addresses the needs only. Jason Lauritsen agreed. Commissioner Jeff Kinnard commented that it isn't necessary to send out an editable version of this to every Task Force member. He suggested everyone send their specific changes and comments to the document so as not to draw out the process.*
- *Bradley Arnold agreed with Jason Lauritsen and Huiwei Shen that it's not Task Force charge to issue this as a no build option because the PD&E process will consider the no-build alternative and these guiding principles will guide that process.*
- *Charles Lee assured Commissioner Kinnard that it's not time to rehash all of what the Task Force has built consensus on. The other lines of text will be a preamble to what he would like to see and make recommendations for. The issue of need goes to the bold question of 330 miles of new turnpikes. The guiding principles lead to the appropriate value of what will be determined to be needed.*

<b>4:55 pm</b>	<b>Next Steps</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Jared Perdue, Task Force Chair</b></li> <li>• <b>Christine Kefauver, Facilitator</b></li> </ul>
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- Secretary Perdue recapped the next steps.
  - Meeting presentation and the recording will be posted on the Florida M-CORES website.
  - Staff will revise the guiding principles and instructions discussed today and provide updated draft for circulation.
  - Task Force should send comments to Jennifer Stults by Wednesday, September 2.
  - FDOT will provide an updated draft for circulation in advance of the next meeting.
- Christine Kefauver explained the public comment period and instructions.

<b>5:00 pm</b>	<b>Public Comments</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Jared Perdue, Task Force Chair</b></li> <li>• <b>Christine Kefauver, Facilitator</b></li> <li>• <b>Production Staff</b></li> </ul>
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- Lindsey Cross – St. Petersburg, Florida - Florida Conservation Voters
  - Today asking to not sign on to a consensus report unless it includes no build
  - The state of the future will be shaped by the document
  - Appreciate the concerns of environmental protection
  - The task force report is the foundation of the project and the foundation is not solid
  - The M-CORES funding is nearly impossible to undo
  - A piecemeal approach may be taken if it cannot all be built at once
  - Local communities who will be destroyed will have to foot part of the bill
  - As we watch hurricanes approach, remember Florida has not done an evacuation plan in ten years
  - FDOT has been forthright that M-CORES does not follow the typical planning process
  - FDOT has not demonstrated need and financial viability for this project
  - These fundamental questions continue to be pushed off until the PD&E phase even though millions have already been spent
  - FDOT has not demonstrated the need
  - No build
- Amy Datz – Tallahassee, Florida
  - Professional environmental scientist for 40 years
  - All building designs should be up to standards
  - Narrower streets are preferable
  - Water resources and storm water ponds should not be considered
  - Storm water control should include runoff prevention
  - Development associated with this project
  - Forest buffers between rural areas
  - Wildlife and plant habitats – no net loss of trees
  - Maintenance program for trees
  - No connector roads should be run through conservation areas
  - No natural gas
  - New electrical energy sources
  - Please don't dump traffic on to I-75
- Michael McGrath – Ft. Meyers, Florida – Sierra Club
  - With Sierra Club
  - There has been no thorough data driven analysis to see if corridor is feasible
  - Wasted enormous amount of taxpayer money

- The public will never know how many millions of dollars have already been spent
- The public has spoken and is overwhelmingly opposed to the project
- Do not sign on to any consensus report unless it recommends no build
- Shirley McCullough – Dunnellon, Florida
  - The first speaker covered a lot of my points
  - Thank you Marion County representatives for speaking up
  - Areas in Marion County are off the table
  - If you bring the road up US-41, my home will be plowed down
  - We don't need it up 41, 40, or 484
  - Broadband is paid for by the companies, stated in meeting #6
  - There is no money to pay for this and it's up to the companies
  - Each individual town will be responsible for putting in the storm drains
  - Dunnellon can't afford it
  - Inverness can't afford it
- Herman Younger – Gainesville, Florida – Sierra Club
  - Sierra Club
  - FDOT has failed to show need and implement a decision making process consistent with the Florida Constitution
  - Vast majority of public who has commented is opposed
  - Telling Floridians to evacuate during a hurricane is not required
  - The only ethical, financial and sound thing to do is to say no build
  - Choose to be on the right side of history and say no build
- Vivian Young – 1000 Friends of Florida
  - Urge you to formally address issues of sprawl
  - Interchanges can serve as
  - New shopping centers compete with existing local businesses
  - Additionally the MCORES statute holds the planning process to a higher standard
  - Paul Owns addressed the 1000 Friends of Florida recommendations
  - A fundamental problem is that it bypassed the three-phase process
  - Not until you get to the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase is the PD&E process
  - The first phase is determine if the project is financially feasible
  - Language determining of need has been added but with provisions to the draft report
- John Heimburg
  - Retired Pre-K teacher
  - World is heating up so fast that weather has become radical
  - Damage done to earth is so bad that insects are dying at alarming rates
  - This imbalance at the biomolecular level has viruses becoming increasingly deadly to humans
  - This plan to cover Florida's natural surface with pavement is a new way to think about this
  - Toll roads are also a regressive tax that hurt poor families the most
  - Commends the work of the MCORES task force members
  - The multi modal aspects of the project provide for rural deployment of high quality services
  - These services can be done using existing corridors
  - Public dollars will be used more efficiently and effectively without disturbing the quality of life
  - No build means no new highways
  - Guiding principles and instructions can be used for this
  - We can make Florida a better place to live if we don't build new roads

<b>5:20pm</b>	<b>Adjourn</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>Jared Perdue, Task Force Chair</b></li></ul>
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- Secretary Perdue thanked everyone for participating and providing the public comments.
- Meeting adjourned.

Notes Taken By: Mackenzie Bland & Levi Hannon. Compiled by: Victor Muchuruza