Meeting Notes

Subject: Suncoast Corridor Task Force Meeting #7 (Virtual Meeting)
Date: Thursday, August 27, 2020
Locations: Plantation on Crystal River
Sable Room
9301 West Fort Island Trail
Crystal River, FL 34429
Dixie County Adult Education Center
School Board Meeting Room
823 SE 349 Hwy
Old Town, FL 32680

Attendees (check all in attendance)
☒ Greg Evans, FDOT
☒ Jason Peters, FDOT
☒ Chris Stahl, FDEP
☒ James Stansbury for Brian McManus, FDEO
☒ Mary Cross, FDOE
☐ Paul D. Myers, FDOH
☒ Chris Wynn, FWC
☒ Pegeen Hanrahan, FDACS
☒ Mark Futrell, FPSC
☒ Eric Anderson, Enterprise Florida
☒ Chris Lee, FDBPR
☐ Diane Head, CareerSource Florida
☐ Audrey Kidwell, Volunteer Florida
☒ Scott Carnahan, Citrus County
☒ Mark Hatch, Dixie County
☐ Todd Gray, Gilchrist County
☐ Betsy Barfield, Jefferson County
☐ Anthony Adams, Lafayette County
☐ Matt Brooks, Levy County
☐ Sherrilyn Pickles, Madison County
☒ Pam Feagle, Taylor County
☒ Kristin Dozier, Capital Region TPA
☒ Jeff Kinnard, Hernando/Citrus MPO
☒ Ronald E. Kitchen, Tampa Bay RPC
☒ Chris Rietow, Apalachee RPC
☒ Scott Koons, North Central Florida RPC
☒ Thomas Hawkins, 1000 Friends of Florida
☒ Charles Lee, Audubon Florida
☒ Kent Wimmer, Defenders of Wildlife
☒ Janet Bowman, The Nature Conservancy
☐ Lyle Seigler, Northwest Florida WMD
☐ Ashley Stefanik, Suwannee River WMD
☒ Michelle Hopkins, Southwest Florida WMD
☒ Christopher Emmanuel, FL Chamber of Commerce
☒ Ken Armstrong, Florida Trucking Association
☒ Randy Wilkerson, Florida Rural Water Association
☒ Chris Bailey, Florida Internet & Television Assoc
☒ Susan Ramsey, FEEDC
☒ Charles Shinn, Florida Farm Bureau Federation (afternoon)
☒ Dr. Lawrence Barrett, FGC
☒ John Grosskopf, NFCC

8:30 am
Sign in
Greg Vaughn, Facilitator

• Task Force members and subject matter experts were welcomed and sound checked after calling in to address any technical difficulties.

9:00 am
Welcome
Greg Evans, Task Force Chair

• Secretary Evans welcomed and thanked the Task Force and members of the public for their attendance and comments and provided an update on the comments received so far. He shared there will be a Community Open House at the Monticello Opera House on September 1st.
• Secretary Evans identified that there are two public viewing locations, Old Town and Crystal River, and then explained the comment period.
He discussed the agenda of the meeting and introduced today’s topics: High-Level Needs, Guiding Principles, and Instructions for Project Development.

Afterwards, Secretary Evans introduced the meeting facilitator, Greg Vaughn.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>9:05 am</th>
<th>Introductions, Updates, and Agenda Review</th>
<th>Greg Vaughn, Facilitator</th>
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<td>• Greg Vaughn addressed public comment period, noting the Task Force would receive public comments virtually then from the two physical viewing locations. Virtual participants were asked to sign up to provide comments by 4:00 pm. Additionally, Greg Vaughn:</td>
<td>• Provided instructions on the GoToWebinar format and interface.</td>
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<td>• Provided overview of agenda and worksheets delivered to Task Force members</td>
<td>• Provided a brief Sunshine Law overview and played video with instructions to contact Diane Guillemette with any questions</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:15 am</td>
<td>Roll Call</td>
<td>Greg Vaughn, Facilitator</td>
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<td>• Greg Vaughn provided a roll call of Task Force members in attendance.</td>
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<td>9:22 am</td>
<td>Moving from TASK FORCE Recommendations to Corridor Planning and Project Development</td>
<td>Will Watts, Chief Engineer, FDOT</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Greg Vaughn introduced Will Watts (FDOT Chief Engineer).</td>
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<td>• Will Watts introduced the Study Area Overview: Logical Termini, Provide Regional Connectivity to the Northern Turnpike Corridor, Avoid and Enhance, Connect to Attraction Areas, Consider Co-Location Opportunities, Determine Direction of Analysis, Coordination with Suncoast Parkway 2 &amp; Northern Turnpike. In his presentation, Will Watts discussed the following:</td>
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<td>• Study Area Considerations: Consider Logical Northern Termini (I-10), Consider Environmentally Sensitive Areas (Suwanee River).</td>
<td>• Use of guiding principles to refine illustrative paths/courses, bypass and co-location, then onto ACE to evaluate, develop evaluation methodology, and PD&amp;E and continued public engagement.</td>
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<td>• Northern Termini I-10: Existing Interchanges- I-10 at US 19, I-10 at US 221, I-10 at SR 14, and I-10 at N CR 53.</td>
<td>• Develop project-specific commitments</td>
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<td>• Environmentally Sensitive Areas (Suwanee River): Suwanee River Crossing (US 19/US 98), with consideration for Wildlife Management Areas, wildlife refuges, Florida Forever Acquired Lands, state parks, springs, social impacts, local communities, and Comprehensive Plan consistency.</td>
<td>• Addressed feasibility defined by Florida Statutes and potential funding sources</td>
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<td>• Attraction Areas: Opportunity Zones; city, industrial, and Commercial Future Land Use; Utility and powerline co-location.</td>
<td>• Feasibility components include Environmental Feasibility in PD&amp;E and Economic Feasibility during Design phase, cannot be determined before design phase.</td>
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<td>• Next Steps</td>
<td>• Economic Feasibility steps include:</td>
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<td>▪ Use of guiding principles to refine illustrative paths/courses, bypass and co-location, then onto ACE to evaluate, develop evaluation methodology, and PD&amp;E and continued public engagement.</td>
<td>▪ 1. Estimate net revenue,</td>
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<td>▪ Develop project-specific commitments</td>
<td>▪ 2. Determine Turnpike funding contribution.</td>
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<td>▪ Addressed feasibility defined by Florida Statutes and potential funding sources</td>
<td>▪ 3. Address funding shortfall</td>
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<td>• Questions:</td>
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Questions:
Meeting Notes

- Janet Bowman: Thanked the team. Asked a question on the southern connections alternatives impacts to the Suncoast Corridor. Second comment, on funding, the shortfall issue, the public anticipated that these would be paid with toll revenue and they aren’t. Therefore, project impacts work program around the state and wanted to voice that concern.

- Will Watts responded that coordination will have to be done with Turnpike, and the shortfall is one part of the funding process. It will have to be prioritized in the work program. It will be considered along with other priorities.

- Commissioner Betsy Barfield: Technical Difficulties / Resumed: On environmentally Sensitive areas. If the project should go through Jefferson, we have the Aucilla River and we want it to be considered as well. Expanding on funding, that raises a red flag by Jefferson because we are fiscally constrained. What will local funding look like?

- Commissioner Kristen Dozier: Wondering about the work plan. If there is a shortfall, the project would have to compete within the work plan. Is there a risk with tying those together and competing with projects that TPOs have that have been long slated? For those of us that sit on MPOs, the Trust Fund doesn’t have enough money from gas tax, and with the budget impact of COVID, this issue is becoming more critical. We have been struggling to maintain statewide and nationwide transportation funds.

- Will Watts: M-CORES is visionary. It allows us to have discussions in pre-planning about how to develop corridors the right way. Three ways: FL Transportation Trust Fund 2. Turnpike with Bonding Capacity 3. Federal dollars are 25% of budget. If toll revenue is less than 100%, we will need to use other sources, and we have funded 100 million dollars a year. But it will be no different when competing in the work plan.

- Thomas Hawkins: Considering logical termini, why are we not looking at rail termini? Can we further discuss modal choices?

- Will Watts: We will look at rail termini as well.

- Kent Wimmer commented on the US 27 alternatives map was not the same map distributed to the public and Task Force. If we are considering alternatives, why are we not considering I-21 and I-75 in Georgia? This would have an obvious advantage of reducing traffic on I-75 and hurricane evacuation planning.

- Will Watts responded we will investigate the discrepancies in the map. If the Task Force wants to steer towards other preferences, then it can be discussed during the meeting today.

- Randy Wilkerson: Going back to water and sewer enhancement. For these smaller communities, would it run ahead of the project or would it run laterally?

- Will Watts: Early phases can include broadband and utilities. Envision this coming in phases. We can commit that FDOT will be a partner in these utilities discussions.

- Charles Lee: Asked to pull up the Existing Interchanges graphic. Asked for consideration for Turnpike connectivity to surrounding states, I-75 still seems to be the main choice for transportation. A conversation needs to be had on traffic-oriented routes and how the toll road will be considered with these roads. He offered a comment on the Suwannee River Crossing and Opportunity Zones, stating a new road footprint will eliminate environmental impacts, the current roads do not support modern environmental standards. There are tremendous opportunities to include environmentally-focused improvements. The issue with a new road is that it will have negative economic impacts to the local communities that rely on transportation use.
Will Watts: The important point is the enhancement discussion, and we can do a lot to improve that road.

Chris Stahl: In terms of alternatives, because this corridor is very isolated, he would like to see an alternative, if the Northern Turnpike is built, how will this area be utilized.

Will Watts: When we finalize, we will do some traffic modeling and determine needs / usage.

Commissioner Pam Feagle:
- Has there been any consideration on enhancing roads from Gainesville? One is through Gilchrist and one through Lafayette, and both are very heavily traveled - has there been any discussion?
- To the funding issue, Taylor County relies heavily on the Small County Road Assistance Program (SCRAP).

Will Watts: There are studies out there we will look at and provide this information to Commissioner Feagle about road lanes. SCRAP funding has grown due to M-CORES legislation.

10:12 am
Update on Work Plan and Recommendations Framework

- Greg Vaughn introduced Huiwei Shen (FDOT Chief Planner).
- Huiwei Shen provided an overview of overarching process in identifying and evaluating needs:
  - Recognized importance on how we determine needs in the future planning and project development process.
  - Informed the Task Force how the guiding principles will be used in project development and clarified the distinction between guiding principles and instructions. Reaffirmed process of developing guiding principles.
  - Stated the changes to guiding principles since last meeting including removed qualifier language, revised cross-cutting principles, revised principles for environmental and community resources, and revised principles based on member discussion.
  - Stated how FDOT will continue to coordinate with agencies and the public by possibly creating a Corridor Advisory Group with a multitude of stakeholders who would advise FDOT.
  - Provided update on work plan including Task Force meetings and Community Open House and discussed Corridor Advisory Group members and roles.

- Commissioner Jeff Kinnard: Opposed to formation of advisory committee that would take action after Task Force completes its work. We have put in a lot of work already and once presented, our work should be done. A small advisory group would have too much say in the planning process.
- Huiwei Shen: We appreciate your trust in FDOT carrying out your work.
- Commissioner Ronald Kitchen: Agrees with Commissioner Kinnard, it is just a consideration of cost, and it just seems like a duplication of bureaucracy and spending and would be made up of the same components of people. There’s a time where we need to move forward.
- Kent Wimmer: Disagreed with the commissioners above and stated that the advisory body is to provide a voice to public. This Task Force is very generalized, and the advisory board should follow the example of Wekiva. Supports advisory group.
- Huiwei Shen: Stated that FDOT wants to exceed the minimum criteria for public involvement with this project.
• Charles Lee: Commented that a system of continuing contact and outreach and the ability of stakeholders to comment in the process moving forward is essential. Reiterated the Wekiva model as an example. Wants to encourage FDOT to keep the channel open for communication and access.

• Huwei Shen: Responded as we get into the guiding principles discussion, let’s make sure robust public engagement and local government communication is covered and there is consensus with the Task Force. There are different ways for further coordination. The Advisory Group is broader, but we can explore options of keeping everyone engaged.

• Commissioner Scott Carnahan: Stated that this is Suncoast is not Wekiva. This land is different. We need to focus on our task.

• Huwei Shen: Thanked Commissioner Carnahan for his comment and offered up information about Wekiva including that Wekiva is a lot smaller, and the transportation need is well-defined. Further, their guiding principles are smaller and broader, and we have been getting more detailed.

• Greg Vaughn: Stated that as the project moves forward, the public, stakeholders, and local government will continuously have coordination in this project.

• Kent Wimmer: Responded that FDOT referenced the Wekiva project in the beginning of this planning process as an example and used it as a model.

• Huwei Shen: Stated the scope of this project is much broader than Wekiva, this project covers a lot more than the Wekiva report.

• Greg Vaughn: Wekiva and this project are similar in regards to the Task Force and its collaboration.

10:40 am Break

• Greg Vaughn paused the meeting for a short break, stated the meeting will reconvene at 10:50 am.

10:50 am Review and Refine Guiding Principles and Instructions

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<td>Huiwei Shen</td>
<td>Chief Planner, FDOT</td>
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<td>Don Lewis</td>
<td>Emergency Evacuation SME</td>
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<td>Greg Garrett and Greg Vaughn</td>
<td>Facilitators</td>
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<td>Ryan Asmus</td>
<td>Production Lead, FDOT</td>
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• Greg Vaughn (Facilitator) introduced Greg Garret (Facilitator), Will Watts (Chief Engineer), Huiwei Shen (Chief Planner), and stated that several Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) are also present at the meeting and are available to address any questions or comments.

• Greg Garrett introduced the guiding principles and instructions for project development and beyond, stated that any Task Force members who have editorial comments can send their edits to Ryan Asmus, FDOT Production Lead.

• Greg Garrett gave an overview of guiding principles by topic. Introduced the agenda process for today’s meeting. First, we will discuss the topics that were not discussed at the last meeting (Emergency Management, Highway Safety, and Economic Development, Broadband and Other Utilities, Agricultural Land Uses). After these are reviewed, the discussion will move into the new updates made based on the last meeting.

11:00 am M-CORES and Emergency Considerations

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<td>Don Lewis</td>
<td>Emergency Evacuation SME</td>
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• Don Lewis detailed his expertise and highlighted that he has worked in the areas covered by the Suncoast Corridor. He stated he has been a leader for the Hurricane Evacuation Committee. He thanked Secretary Evans for the thoughts and prayers for those in Louisiana. Don Lewis presented the following:
  o Informed the Task Force that there are four phases of Emergency Management: Mitigation, Preparedness, Response, and Recovery. Stated that M-CORES will be involved with all of these.
  o Informed the Task Force of the state, regional, and local roles in Florida emergency management.
  o Clarified what is needed in Florida for traffic capacity. Used Hurricane Irma as an example that more north-south capacity is needed for evacuation and re-entry. Stated that if the track would have been 25 miles to the west, nearer to Tampa, the evacuation needs would have been an order of magnitude greater. Stronger events = more out-of-county evacuation.
  o Stated that public sheltering is always in flux and has a variety of different issues especially with COVID right now. Louisiana did not open a lot of shelters due to the pandemic. Stated the need to recognize that sheltering is critical for disadvantaged populations but less than 10% of evacuating population would go to a public shelter. Pre-COVID shelter capacities also could only handle a small portion of the evacuating population.
  o Informed the Task Force that the Suncoast Corridor will have very large clearance times, and therefore, we need to make decisions before we even know where the storm will be. Evacuees from Tampa may be clogging roadways when counties with the Suncoast Corridor study area need to evacuate. Informed the Task Force that local shelters need to be preserved for locals. M-CORES can be helpful for staging sheltering capacity as you are driving through the corridor.
  o Stated that the utility of the M-CORES project is scenario-specific, depending upon track and intensity, public participation, in-county vs out-county destinations, traffic control and messaging, and tourist populations. Stated emphatically that the Task Force needs to recognize that emergency managers need evacuations to be complete before arrival of pre-landfall hazards such as flooding and wind. Flooding is a secondary issue with wind speeds being a first. We want to cut long evacuation times. Stated that southwest Florida and Tampa Bay is consistently among the top three areas nationally that are the most difficult to evacuate.

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<td>Ryan Asmus, Production Lead, FDOT</td>
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<td>Task Force Members</td>
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• Greg Garrett thanked Don Lewis for presenting and reminded the Task Force that this is the “How” stage, meaning that guiding principles are still broad and short statements supported by technical notes to come, and opened the floor to discussion regarding Guiding Principle 12 – Emergency Management.
**Guiding Principle #12 – Emergency Management**

- **Commissioner Kristen Dozier:** Thanked Don Lewis for his presentation and appreciated the focus on regional studies. She stated that the hurricane study has not been updated since Hurricane Michael. Will the hurricane study inform how we implement evacuation? She also asked a question centered on how quickly the clearance times for the roads, limited access roads, toll roads, and interstates might offer evacuation control, stating that this does not dictate we have to have a toll road to meet evacuation goals.

- **Don Lewis:** Regarding the hurricane study, there are several ways it will inform our analysis for alternatives during PD&E:
  - There will be a significant behavioral effort to gauge attitudes and plans based on category of storms. They will also update demographic data so we know the population and can therefore determine evacuating populations.
  - To the second point, in terms of evacuation time requirements, when looking at a four-lane divided highway, traffic engineers can get 1,800 to 2,000 vehicles per hour through. An interstate though is 2,800 to 3,000 vehicles per hour. We translate that to additional people and reduced evacuation clearance times.
  - Commissioner Dozier agreed that behavioral and demographic components will be critical. Made an editorial comment that if a limited access/toll road for the west coast of the state for evacuation is the primary focus, then we need to have a discussion if we can ever evacuate this area fully and need to look at mitigation further. Access control roads are not the only potential method.

- **Huiwei Shen:** Thanked Commissioner Dozier for bringing up the study. During yesterday’s Southwest-Central Florida Corridor meeting, a Task Force member brought that up and desired an instruction to consider those studies. Responded about the Regional Council Hurricane Planning Study updates, **draft instructions are a potential consideration for this Task Force.**

- **Charles Lee:** Stated that we need to look back at emergency hurricane preparedness regarding Hurricane Irma. The reality is the primary focus on evacuation was very limited. There is a need to focus on evacuating small areas and isolated communities in storm surge areas and providing education on hurricane building standards as opposed to evacuating as a first precaution. **There are more options for hurricane preparedness than just general evacuations.**

- **Don Lewis:** Responded that this is not a singularly Florida issue but wanted to reiterate that the protocol in Florida within the emergency management plans is to get the public out of storm surge, a defined set of evacuation zones, and substandard structures. Even with updated building codes, it is not in the best interest to be riding out a Category 4 or 5 hurricane.

- **Chris Rietow:** Commented on the Regional Planning Comprehensive Study update: **one of the most important things is the behavioral study of hurricane preparedness/evacuation. A problem is trying to evacuate people in a timely manner who truly need to evacuate critical zones. An update is currently underway for the study, and it is tentatively planned to be completed in a little over a year.**

- **Janet Bowman:** Stated that this gets to the guiding principles: what’s critical is that the updated data from Regional Planning Councils (RPCs) be used to evaluate evacuation need as relevant to M-CORES. Beyond RPC update, she would like to hear from the Department of Emergency Management on hurricane preparedness and evacuation plans and the best hurricane evacuation option. **We need to strengthen the language in this guiding principle to include the regional evacuation data when it is available.**

- **Don Lewis:** Acknowledged Janet Bowman’s concerns and commented that the evacuation should be completed before flooding.
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- Chris Emmanuel: In narrowing our focus, how would you recommend this Task Force use the guiding principles to help with hurricane evacuation?
- Don Lewis: Stated that the guiding principles should move towards measurable things, in terms of evaluating alignments such as, if the roadway saves X-hour clearance times, what is the savings? Evaluate what county commissioners need and bring in the newest data.
- Commissioner Scott Carnahan: Thanked Don Lewis for his presentation and work and stated that when local governments are having meetings with State Emergency Management, the last thing he wants to do is say, “Stay in your home.”
- Commissioner Betsy Barfield: Great lesson, thanked Don Lewis, if the corridor does come from US 19, we are very vulnerable to Emergency Management access, and stated the desire to look at co-location near exits of emergency management stations, police, fire, shelter, etc. She further reiterated the need for improved communication technology.
- Don Lewis agreed with Commissioner Barfield’s comments.
- Charles Lee: Stated that the current guiding principle is good, but in the instructions, consider talking about location of fueling facilities and charging stations.
- Commissioner Kristin Dozier asked if we need to reference the updated evacuation plan in the instructions or if it is embedded in the document?
- Greg Garrett responded that in regards to interpreting the guiding principles, it is safe to assume that there is consensus to maintain the most up-to-date information.
- Chris Wynn: Thinking about response and recovery and an instruction focused on clearing debris post-hurricane. Key in on studies that showcase native plants being more resistant to storms. “While creating a natural look, create natural buffers using storm resistant vegetation.”

Guiding Principle #11 – Highway Safety
- Greg Garrett read and detailed the guiding principle and asked Ken Armstrong and Commissioner Ronald Kitchen to comment on it.
  - Ken Armstrong offered no specific comment regarding the guiding principle.
  - Commissioner Ronald Kitchen did not have any comments.
  - Greg Garrett opened the floor to Task Force members to discuss. There were no Task Force member comments.

Guiding Principle #9 – Economic Development
- Greg Garrett read the guiding principle and stated those who had made comments on it in previous meetings.
  - Chris Emmanuel: Stated that he likes this guiding principle. The reason we are having this discussion is to bring economic opportunity to the rural areas, and he thinks that the instructions are helpful for bringing local communities into the mix.
  - Sue Ramsey: Stated that the discussions on other categories have fit well, economic development such as freight and logistics and truck parking can be a way to target both economic development and highway safety. Also including park-and-rides and employment centers will be helpful. Identifying high employment or targeted areas can be a priority. Increasing economic diversity is important in rural communities as well as providing access to jobs and training and coordinating with education. Stated that it is important to identify targeted industries and then have discussion with economic development organizations at all levels of government. Reviewing local comprehensive plans, as well as Social and Economic Development Strategies (SEDS). We should enhance investments in opportunity zones and engage opportunity stakeholders for
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promotion of education facilities, tourism, and business retention and expansion programs.

- **Greg Garrett** stated we will work with Sue Ramsey to incorporate her ideas.
- **James Stansbury**: Made an editorial comment regarding the last two lines on instructions, stated that it should read “consistent with” rather than “preserves and maintains” and putting in language about the local comprehensive plans specifically.
- **Eric Anderson**: Agreed with Mr. Stansbury’s comment and stated, with those changes you really grasp economic development consistent with the ideals of the local community.
- **Commissioner Todd Gray**: Recommends working with the North Florida Economic Development Partnership (NFEDP) and coordinating recommendations, resources, and concerns.
- **Sue Ramsey**: Had a follow up comment that NFEDP is a resource but is not sure if all of our counties are included while the Florida Economic Development Council (FEDC) represents entire state.
- **Greg Garrett** responded that the FEDC and NFEDP is future clarification to be included.
- **Diane Head**: Noted that NFEDP did a study a year and a half ago and is out for consideration, not referenced specifically but there’s a lot of things that intersect there.
- **Ken Armstrong**:
  - Comments in the report about comprehensive plans, stated that we need to be very careful. Some counties want theirs to stay the same, some want it to change, make sure the language is carefully crafted.
  - Stated that we need to consider utilizing national experts on how to proceed with economic development in highway advancements.
- **Commissioner Kristen Dozier**: Acknowledged Sue Ramsey’s recommendations as a perfect example of how to proceed with preparing economic development. Asked who will carry on these instructions.
- **Huiwei Shen** responded that even if FDOT is not going to be the lead agency, we can take an active role in working with our partner agencies.
- **Chris Wynn**: Acknowledged Ms. Ramsey’s comment and referenced an economic analysis done by the Conservation Fund and asked to consider adding one more bullet instruction to include support/opportunities for recreational tourism funding.

Guiding Principle #13 – Broadband and Other Utilities

- **Greg Garret** introduced the guiding principle and asked for comments from Chris Bailey.
  - **Chris Bailey**: Stated that this guiding principle is acceptable. However, second bullet in instructions about providing broadband, federal program E-Rate Program by Federal Communications Commission (FCC), provides funds to schools and libraries for telecommunication and improved technology. Thinks bullet is a bit out of the scope and suggest that it be removed.
  - **Greg Garrett**: Agreed with Chris Bailey and asked if the Task Force had a response to this comment.
  - **Mark Futrell**: Stated that comparing this guiding principle with past Task Forces’ principles, this one does not recognize other utilities, and we should clarify the language.
  - **Thomas Hawkins**: Commented that broadband is an exciting venture and is an essential tool for these rural areas. Has a concern for how the guiding principle is set up, specifically the text “assist” and “guiding.” We need to focus on the statute to plan and
assist with broadband. The bar we are currently at with assistance is too low, the goal should not be narrowly tailored to FDOT’s expertise. Asked the Task Force members to provide feedback.

- Commissioner Betsy Barfield: Stated that in Jefferson County, this is the biggest issue. As we develop guiding principles, putting stations in community, encouraged to leave language in there and make it stronger. Rather than “assist,” say “ensure we provide.” Important that we pay attention to this broadband and other utilities and is the feature that we should highlight. We need to increase our efforts in this broadband endeavor. Commented FDOT could potentially make a Task Force focused on providing assistance with broadband and other utilities.

- Greg Garrett: Responded to comments and suggested editing language in the retained bullet instead of removing it.

- Chris Bailey: Agreed we need to expand broadband, but it may conflict with something that is already available. Discussed utilities resources logistics in rural communities and offered that we include clear and consistent text that identifies lowering the cost of broadband support (specifically pole attachments) in rural areas to ensure we can support everyone.

12:40 pm Break for Lunch

- Individual lunch break.

1:35 pm Review and Refine Guiding Principles (cont.)

- Secretary Evans reconvened meeting and introduced Greg Vaughn as the facilitator to continue the Task Force discussion on guiding principles.
- Greg Vaughn reminded attendees about public comment registration and turned the meeting back over to Greg Garrett to continue the discussion on Guiding Principle #13 - Broadband.
  - Commissioner Pam Feagle: Concurred with Commissioner Barfield about broadband.
  - Charles Shinn: Stated agriculture is becoming more dependent on broadband as new equipment is being manufactured, and broadband is more critical in the countryside for agriculture.

Guiding Principle #10 – Agricultural Land Use

  - Charles Shinn: Stated that we are moving in the right direction, there is a lot of agriculture that is not assumed in that terminology, including equine and aquaculture, and horticulture and nurseries. Wants to make sure we are encompassing all types of agriculture. Looking at the draft, we need to emphasize the connectivity between working farms and farm fields themselves. One issue is the equipment moving distances because whenever you get more traffic in any area, it becomes more dangerous to move that equipment around.
  - Pegeen Hanrahan: (Regarding the Broadband guiding principle) Stated, about urbanized areas and the proper role of government in respect to broadband. We
provided broadband in Gainesville because there was no private sector investment that profit motivated. We need to think about establishing a public-private partnership. One of these reasons we are having this discussion is that if it made fiscal sense from the private sector to provide broadband, they would have done it, which means there is a real need for internet and should be considered like water or wastewater. (On agriculture) The industry itself is the best at articulating their needs. It’ll be difficult to generalize.

Charles Lee: Stated that he had just sent Ryan and Greg a suggested bullet for the instructions. Prioritize options that do not traverse agricultural lands. The bullet points currently listed need to be more explicit and the language of the words “agriculture” and “working farms” in the guiding principle needs to be more explicit and list the various types of agriculture included to remove interpretation.

Janet Bowman: Submitted a bullet to staff regarding prescribed burning. Suggested that preserving the ability of all lands to do prescribed burning.

Charles Shinn: Agreed with Charles Lee and Janet Bowman

Commissioner Matt Brooks: Stated that this is very important to people in Levy County to clarify the text of “improve connectivity” to agricultural lands.

Greg Vaughn responded if there is an impact to farmlands, and if the farm owner is agreeable to work with the project advancing, then FDOT will work with the farmer to make sure they have access to their land and maintain connectivity.

Charles Shinn: Suggested this be clarified in an additional bullet.

Ken Armstrong: Asked if there is anything other than agricultural land along this route. It’s hard to envision, and if we try to steer away agricultural lands, it may pigeonhole us.

Charles Lee: Responded that there are other uses that can impact urban areas as well. Even though the land on either side may be agricultural, using a co-located route will diminish negative impacts. If it is limited access, then there’s less opportunity for poor suburban sprawl.

Commissioner Todd Gray: Commented that it would be difficult to bring co-location through smaller counties, keeping it closer to existing corridors would be helpful.

Kent Wimmer: Language provided to staff, a new instruction, minimize fragmentation of agriculture, forestry tracks and facilities.

Jason Watts: Responded that each guiding principle should be tied with all the guiding principles. They need to stay in their functional areas but need to be read in conjunction with all the principles in mind.

Guiding Principle #8 – Natural Environment

- Greg Garrett: Stated that this is the largest change in the guiding principles, and a few of the changes include: combining the other four guiding principles, removing ambiguous language and referencing how it may tie back to other things in the process. We have combined all the instructions, one specific new instruction based on agency comments include priority on Florida Ecological Greenways and Critical Lands and Waters Identification Project (CLIP) Lands. He opened up the floor to comments and questions.
  - Ashley Stefanik: Stated to make sure it fits within permitting guidelines and be able to improve water quality and storm water capacity wherever possible. Instruction is fine.
  - Michelle Hopkins: Stated the need to emphasize “avoidance” before “enhancing” in the draft instructions. Look at true, in-depth alternative options for avoidance, and then
look at mitigation efforts. Need to consider best management practices whenever possible. Consider partnerships with shared resources.

- **Thomas Hawkins**: Discussed the broad range of verbs listed with environmental resources discussed in the last meeting like “avoid, conserve, enhancement, protect.” We need to do more work to identify a standard for land and resource conservation we are doing in M-CORES for actions besides avoidance.

- **Jason Watts**: Responded that we need to work on this language. We are going to avoid if possible. The second step would then be enhance if avoidance isn’t possible. If we are co-locating a road, we have a lot of opportunities to enhance existing facilities before creating new ones.

- **Thomas Hawkins** reiterated that conservation not related to corridor development is its own process. We need to set a standard for conservation goals in M-CORES not related to construction activities.

- **Jason Watts**: Stated we need to have a conversation on conservation for conservation’s sake.

- **Thomas Hawkins**: Responded we have been talking about environmental conservation for a long time, but it is not reflected in the guiding principles.

- **Greg Garrett**: Responded that the actions are implicit in a whole to all the guiding principles.

- **Jason Watts**: Responded that all the actions under the M-CORES program further the whole M-CORES program. We will take your comment into consideration and revise the language further.

- **Thomas Hawkins**: Offered his support and guidance for this discussion if needed.

- **Janet Bowman**: Agreed with Thomas Hawkins in that, in the statute for the Suncoast and Northern Turnpike Corridors, there is specific language about conservation lands. In the Southwest-Central Florida Corridor, they focus on panther protection. This is above and beyond guiding principles and is a statutory requirement. In Wekiva, specific parcels of land were slated for purchase, but it’s that kind of intent and is above and beyond the terms of mitigation. Secondly stated that she had submitted specific language including conservation easements by land trusts.

- **Jason Watts**: We are not saying that only conservation lands purchased will be for mitigation. As part of corridor development, we will partner on how to enhance as well through corridor development.

- **Charles Lee**: Thanked the team for the organization of the current guiding principles being discussed. He has concerns in avoidance language process steps not being fully discussed and another concern with the statute that the duties of FDOT is not fully clarified. He will send revised text/additional bullet point to address his concerns for a land acquisition plan. He has a concern with the language “leverage” of FDOT’s financial contribution.

- **Jason Watts**: Agreed with Charles Lee on the text changes for mitigation. We should talk about conservation in two areas. One is offsetting impacts with land purchases, the other option is that the statute encourages FDOT to deal with the parties where we can help identify and preserve additional land. We will take these comments into consideration and revise the text for clarity and further guidance.

- **Chris Stahl**: Stated that, in the revised language in Florida Forever properties, in No New Corridors Through, we need to include Conservation and Recreation Lands (CARL) and Preservation 2000 Lands and stated that we also need to look at Basin Management Action Plans (BMAPs).
Meeting Notes

- **Pegeen Hanrahan:** Stated that if we want to start looking at programs, suggest in a few appropriate places use, “publicly owned conservation lands.” There are databases on private easements, and we can deliver that data. If FDOT needed property under eminent domain, it could take public or private conservation land, the overall intent is to work cooperatively with public and private interests and desire to map that in the language as best as possible.

- **Jason Watts:** If we look at the No New Corridors Through and Task Force Requests, a lot of these are in your requested layers.

- **Chris Emmanuel:** Commented that there are a lot of principles in place for co-location and land acquisition for environmental impacts. If we preclude one, we are going to be precluding the other.

- **Jason Watts:** Responded that just because we co-locate doesn’t mean that we won’t necessarily have to buy conservation lands, and as Thomas Hawkins pointed out, we can go above and beyond and purchase additional land under that statutory requirements. When we talk about the environment, we are not only talking about guiding principle #8, we are also thinking of the social and cultural effects as well.

- **Kent Wimmer:** Stated that staff has done a good job on combining and streamlining. There are a few elements from Northern Turnpike Corridor that should be added here. Strongly supports that existing private and public conservation lands should not be impacted by this and should be in Will Not Impact. Supports the creation of a commitment to offset impacts. We shouldn’t have differing guidelines for Levy and Citrus, work with Northern Turnpike Corridor to develop strong and consistent language.

- **Commissioner Kristen Dozier:** Agreed that water management districts should be included in the language. If you are building a new road or expanding an existing road, should this point to local jurisdictions and FDOT to identify emerging technologies for identifying how to store and treat stormwater and wastewater?

- **Jason Watts:** Responded that we are working internally about how to treat wastewater earlier and look at emerging technologies. And **we will review and revise the current text and bring it back for discussion.**

- **Chris Wynn:** Stated that under ecosystem connectivity, “consider” wildlife crossing linkages. We need to strengthen that language and will send updated language and lastly, refer to opportunities to connect people and the environment moving forward.

- **Scott Koons:** Discussed the importance of natural resources and regionally significant lands identified by Regional Planning Councils and these should be minimized or mitigated if impacted.

**Guiding Principle #1 – Consistency with Statewide, Regional, and Local Plans and Visions**

- **Greg Garrett:** Introduced this guiding principle and opened the floor to comments and questions.

  - **Charles Lee:** With regard to the language in the guiding principle, the concern is the organization, and states that the language should start with local and work our way up rather than reverse.

  - **James Stansbury:** Desired to include “be consistent with” rather than “respect”.

  - **Thomas Hawkins:** Commented that with any interchange that is built, it will have impacts on adjacent land uses and offered revised language text that could be included that discusses policies and land use. Mentioned he forwarded revised language regarding this.
Greg Garrett: Commented we will review language and see how to include it in the text.

Guiding Principle #3 – Technology
- Kent Wimmer: Offered an instruction for electric vehicle charging stations, should use the language in the Northern Turnpike Corridor.
- Charles Lee: Offered there should be consideration for another bullet point that covers capabilities within the electronic polling system that allows for the differentiation of local traffic as opposed to traversing for traffic associated with the toll road and build segregated lanes.
- Ken Armstrong responded that Charles Lee’s comment should be expanded to variable pricing for traffic flow.

3:15 PM Break

- Secretary Evans paused the meeting for a short break, stated the meeting will reconvene at 3:30 pm.

3:30 pm Review and Refine Guiding Principles (cont.)

Guiding Principle #2 – Maximize Use of Existing Facilities
- Charles Lee: Stated, I think I’m good with the current guiding principle language. The only addition he suggested was co-locating with right of ways is not the only opportunity. Right of way size for co-location is undefined; there are a lot of existing roads that are remote, narrow roads. The type of road for co-location needs to be better defined, such as “a 200 foot four-lane right of way.”
- Kent Wimmer: Made a comment about considering things other than US 19/98, will we consider other alternatives? Would an alternative fall out for being outside the study area? Wants to expand study area.
- Jason Watts: We are going to take our PD&E manual and instructions and that’s how we will go about PD&E. We will look at all realistic alternatives. Through the process, many alternatives fall out due to being against guiding principles. They will present all of the alternatives and then explain why some fall out. To Kent Wimmers’s point, we will examine them, and they may fall out because of X, Y, Z. The project is contained in the study area.
- Commissioner Todd Gray: Stated that a route of 129 would devastate Gilchrist County and is a bad choice.
- Commissioner Kristen Dozier: Commented that while the guiding principles are being looked at as a whole, existing facilities might run into conflicts with interchanges or toll road use. This still needs to be addressed holistically.
- Jason Watts: Stated this is a good comment. PD&E always analyzes all the guiding principles, and they are going to try to satisfy them all. There will be instances where they can’t satisfy them all, in this circumstance, the goal is to satisfy the guiding principles to the best of their abilities. The goal is to always leave the area in a state better than what it was in before.
- Commissioner Kristen Dozier: Commented that Jason Watts’ point is exactly her point. If there is a conflict, which guiding principle would take priority? Believes this needs to be a continued discussion.
Meeting Notes

Guiding Principle #4 – Resilience

- Greg Garrett: Ambiguous language has been removed and two more specific instructions added.
  - Janet Bowman: Offered additional text to instructions bullet #2 regarding storm impact and planning. “Avoiding Category 1-3 storm surge zones in Big Bend area and increase in intensity of storms, we should also look at Category 4 and 5 storm surge zones.”
  - Kent Wimmer: Agreed with Janet Bowman’s comment. Alternatives should be considered to not build in storm surge zone areas.
  - Charles Lee: Stated he will send revised language for review that focused on vulnerability of building in these areas and will remedy current deficiencies related storm water and sea level rise.

Guiding Principle #5 – Transportation Modes

- Greg Garrett: Two instructions were added.
  - Thomas Hawkins: Referred to the statute for transportation modes that utilize the roadway. There are no guiding principles that address these other modes for transportation. Asked for discussion on how this will be dealt with.
  - Jason Watts: Responded that a technical purpose and need will be developed in the PD&E process. A modal evaluation will take place that discusses different modes for transportation.
  - Huiwei Shen: Responded that the Task Force report could include key points for other modes of transportation, offered additional language that covers future modal options. Should it be a guiding principle or an instruction?
  - Thomas Hawkins: Responded that different level of demand for different level of transportation modes may require a threshold to determine which modes will be needed.
  - Huiwei Shen: Said this is a task for further down the road in development but can set up a framework that does not exclude other forms of transportation from being considered. We will work on this language and make sure it is reflected.
  - Thomas Hawkins: Supports Huiwei Shen’s comment.
  - Kent Wimmer: Had a similar comment on purpose and need. There needs to be a general set of guidelines for the guiding principles that directs possible flexibility for western movement.
  - Charles Lee: Responded that prospective traffic should be considered during this project. Will people get off a free road to use a toll road?
  - Huiwei Shen: Responded that as we move forward, we will follow traditional FDOT standards but will use the guiding principles as framework for these future analyses.

Guiding Principle #6 – Community Identity and Character

- Greg Garrett: Added the word “rural” and clarified the text.
  - Commissioner Betsy Barfield: Commented on “future vitality” text to include terms “beauty” and “identity” to text. Had an additional comment on community character, with a preference to open roads, access roads, and the aesthetics of co-location. Branding is important to communities to entice people to stop and interact with communities along the road.
  - Chris Wynn: Commented on “aesthetic and landscaping” text to include the phrase “native.”
Meeting Notes

- Janet Bowman: Submitted revised language and recommended reviewing it and using terms related to quality of life and character.
- Charles Lee: Suggested we look at the language for instructions on billboard limitations along the project.
- Will Watts: Discussed providing outdoor advertising guidelines to the Task Force team.
- Kent Wimmer: Suggested looking at the Northern Turnpike Corridor language as example text for the guiding principle. It offers more pointed information.

Guiding Principle #7 – Historic and Cultural Resources
- Greg Garrett: Stated we had removed ambiguous language from the previous version.
  - Commissioner Betsy Barfield: One suggestion would be working with communities “and their stakeholders.”
  - Commissioner Kristen Dozier: Seeing the language of known X,Y,Z, but she could not help thinking of “known knowns” and “known unknowns.” We find new archaeological sites all the time. Not sure how to do this, “if new resources are discovered,” adding that language or adding [diverse] stakeholders. Restoring cultural resources and those downtowns can be a benefit economically, socially, and culturally.
- Jason Watts: This is something we do in the PD&E phase. There is an entire technical document that looks at sites with the potential for human remains / archaeological sites and has been broadened. We invite the community to talk about the places we may not know and are tied into the Socio-Cultural Effects Determinations.

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<th>4:30 pm</th>
<th>Review Draft Task Force Report Sections</th>
<th>Greg Garrett, Facilitator</th>
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<td>Charles Lee: Requested a copy of the document be sent to the Task Force team and a schedule deadline/process for providing comments and edits. Requested that the Task Force involvement word “framework” be included in the guiding principles and instructions text.</td>
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<td>Janet Bowman: Stated she provided written comments for review. Suggested a financial feasibility guiding principle be included. The word “need” requires specification and clarity.</td>
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<td>Commissioner Kristin Dozier: Agrees with Janet Bowman’s comments.</td>
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<td>Huiwei Shen: Responded that we need to go back and restructure/clarify the needs section. We will draft financial feasibility language for review.</td>
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<th>4:50 pm</th>
<th>Next Steps</th>
<th>Greg Evans, Task Force Chair</th>
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<td>Secretary Evans thanked personnel for their help. He mentioned the Community Open House in Monticello will be in a hybrid format and recapped next steps including that this meeting is recorded and will be available on the Florida M-CORES website. We will update a draft of the report and distribute before the next Task Force meeting. Send editorial comments to Ryan Asmus before September 3, 2020. We will be available to address any technical issues through the process. We are doing outreach to ensure you know what the next steps are. We will be in touch about the format of the meeting in September. Secretary Evans introduced Greg Vaughn to lead into the public comment period.</td>
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<td>4:53</td>
<td><strong>Greg Vaughn provided an overview of the structure of the Public Comment section.</strong></td>
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<td><strong>Lindsay Cross, Florida Conservation Voters:</strong> Asked Task Force members not to sign on to a consensus report unless it is no-build. Appreciated the concerns of wanting to protect water, natural, and cultural resources. M-CORES was conceived as a political pet project, funding sources and community burdens fiscally have been discussed, but not researched. FDOT has not demonstrated the need for up to 350 miles of new roads and has not provided the funding sources for the project. The public deserves answers. FDOT has not demonstrated that the roads are needed or that we can pay for them. Do not to sign on to a consensus report unless it is no-build.**</td>
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<td><strong>Jim Tatum, Our Santa Fe River Inc., Tampa, FL:</strong> This will negatively impact the wildlife, natural resources, and water resources. Give your no-build opinion, vote now.**</td>
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<td><strong>Kim Wheeler, Williston, FL:</strong> Levy County taxpayer farmer, environmentalist. These new roads will damage local business and lead to the loss of threatened or endangered species. Agrees with Lindsay Cross and people who have commented against these roads. Our environment is our economy, and we should not destroy it. I see no need for these roads and say no-build.**</td>
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<td><strong>Amy Datz, Professional Environmental Scientist, Tallahassee, FL:</strong> Discussed resources for natural, stormwater, utilities, renewable energy, and technology solutions for this project. Offered ideas related to carbon-neutral technologies, pollution run-off drainage, conservation lands should not be impacted by road developments, and renewable energy resources such as vehicle charging stations.**</td>
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<td><strong>Jenny Welch, Old Town, FL:</strong> What is really happening with our public comments? They are not being used for the guiding principles or for use in designing these roads. There has been little to no discussion on wildlife crossings and corridors. One reason people don’t leave in hurricane evacuations is because of pets. There needs to be more discussion on hurricane evacuation preparation.**</td>
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<td><strong>Michael McGrath, Sierra Club, Fort Myers, FL:</strong> There has been no thorough analysis about how this project will be financially, environmentally, and consciously feasible. Urged Task Force members to not sign any consensus report unless it is for no-build.**</td>
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<td><strong>Richard Grosseu:</strong> M-CORES Task Force team, you were asked to determine the need and impacts; you have not delivered this information. All you have done is write some verbiage in a PD&amp;E process that would have been done anyway. You have not identified impacts or addressed how you will deal with them.**</td>
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<td><strong>Ahrun Kendra, Monticello, FL:</strong> Asked why are we not considering the exit 217 for the northern connection of the corridor? It does not have to go through the small towns and highway 59. This connection should be considered. I am a small business owner on I-10, this could bring jobs to the area and I think our comments should be considered during this.**</td>
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<td><strong>Shirley McCall, Dunnellon, FL:</strong> Comment regarding pollution runoff. Mitigation is not the solution. All roads lead somewhere, but we the public do not know or understand what that means for our areas. This is a planned, very large, high-speed road with facility locations, the public has not been robustly informed at all. Otherwise you would have gotten a lot more no-roads comments, which I agree with.**</td>
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<td><strong>Herman Younger, Sierra Club, Gainesville, FL:</strong> Asked the Task Force members to represent the public during their decisions. Urged Task Force Members to request no-build on all M-CORES projects.**</td>
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• Vivian Young, 1,000 Friends of Florida, Tallahassee, FL: Commented on environmental and financial feasibility issues with this project such as sprawl and local business competition. Further language and information needs to be provided for these areas of concern.
• Adrian Young, Broward Sierra Club, Hollywood, FL: Technical difficulties. Please consider and think through improving on existing infrastructure instead of building this new road. Consider thinking through that most people on this call do not want to build new roads but improve on what we have.
• Neil Fleckenstein, Tallahassee FL: One area that is lacking in the guiding principles is a guiding principle focused on financial feasibility. The guiding principles on resilience needs to be beefed up. Need to evaluate locations based on avoiding areas that are flood areas and needs to evaluate vulnerable areas for Category 1-5 hurricanes. Offered suggestions for the Task Force to consider in the financial feasibility, natural environment impacts, and US 19 as a potential route option. Asked the Task Force to consider the need for this road.
• Jimmy Kerhour, Ocala, FL: Commented on rural farmlands and using available programs/funding that has not been allocated. Farmlands need better protection methods. There are still gaps that need to be filled and commented that he will provide more comments in writing.
• Kristen Ruben, High Springs, FL: Represents Santa Fe River in Fort White. Since the first Task Force meeting in Tampa, nothing has changed. Nothing has changed regarding what the citizens of Florida want – no-build, no sprawl, and no toll roads. Thousands are saying no-build. Use funds to improve existing roads and utilities. We don’t need more toll roads.
• Old Town viewing location:
  o Ginger Spinnard, Old Town, FL: Speaking for a number of members and neighbors who live in Dixie County who were not able to attend today’s meeting. They are opposed to the M-CORES toll road but know it will go through no matter what. Asked where the road will go through Dixie County. Commented on the logistical concerns of the placement of this road through the county. Said her father had land that was split because of I-75 and asked how FDOT is planning on compensating property owners for confiscated lands. Commented that M-CORES has stated economic development as a key focus for this project, but new jobs and businesses will not happen here. Drivers will sail by these small communities and use the service plazas rather than stop in rural counties. Why isn’t this a monetary expenditure being put to a vote by the citizens of Florida? Commented that she had only heard about this meeting a day prior via email and wants better representation for her community so people have the availability to attend these meetings and the resources to learn about this project.
  
• There were no live public comments from the Crystal River viewing location.

5:38 pm  Adjourn  Greg Vaughn, Facilitator

• Greg Vaughn provided an overview of how to submit comments in the future and thanked the Task Force members.

Text Format:
Regular – Agenda outline; Italic – Discussion notes; Bold – Action items

Notes Taken By:
Kaleb McClellan and Madelene Dailey, Atkins