

Subject: Southwest-Central Florida Corridor Task Force Meeting #7 (Virtual)

Date: Tuesday, August 25, 2020

Locations: **Public Viewing Location #1**
Charlotte Harbor Event and Conference Center
75 Taylor Street, Punta Gorda, FL 33950

Public Viewing Location #2
Bert Harris Agricultural Center Auditorium
4509 George Boulevard, Sebring, FL 33870

Attendees

In Attendance

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

Not in Attendance

Janet Taylor, FDACS
Colon Lambert, Heartland Regional TPO
Elton Langford, DeSoto County

Task Force Meeting

9:00 AM	Welcome	L.K. Nandam, Task Force Chair
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretary L.K. Nandam welcomed the Task Force and thanked them for their commitment. He discussed the ways people can watch and listen to the Task Force Meeting. He reviewed how to make public comment and the upcoming community open house. He reminded the Task Force that based on the comments from the previous meeting, this meeting will be longer. He noted that the graphics in this meeting are for the Task Force to review and make comments on. He reviewed a high-level agenda including refining guiding principles and providing direction on the draft report. He said the staff has planned two more meetings to develop the report (one meeting in September and one in October). He handed the meeting off to the facilitator, Karen Kiselewski. 		
9:05 AM	Introductions, Update, and Agenda Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Karen Kiselewski, Facilitator Marlon Bizerra, FDOT Production Lead
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ms. Kiselewski reviewed the agenda. She started with reviewing the public comment period and how to participate in public comment later in the day. She reminded everyone that the meeting is recorded and will be posted to the M-CORES website. She then reviewed how Task Force members can make comments and how the discussion will be guided. She did a full review of the agenda with time expectations. She presented the Sunshine Law Video and reminded members there is a legal representative to answer any questions. She then conducted a roll call. She introduced FDOT Chief Engineer, Will Watts. 		
9:15 AM	Moving from Task Force Recommendations to Corridor Planning and Project Development	Wills Watts, FDOT Chief Engineer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mr. Will Watts reminded the Task Force that they were given updated comments from the public. Mr. Will Watts provided the overview of his presentation. He refreshed everyone on the study area and the baseline avoidance areas. He added the attraction overlay to the study area as a reminder about where the potential growth areas are (opportunity zones and municipal areas). He then discussed the five key environmental areas in the study area (east portion, northern edge, center region, southwest region and southern region). He reviewed the intent to “maximize use of existing facilities” and the existing facilities with potential to fit this intention. He presented the new graphic on potential planning areas and focused in on northern and southern areas with potential for co-location. He noted the southern area is much more constrained. Mr. Will Watts then reviewed the Task Force Work Plan. He reminded the Task Force of the statute and how the statute guides funding opportunities. The feasibility of projects includes environmental feasibility and economic feasibility. The economic feasibility includes financial feasibility review. He handed it off to Ms. Kiselewski. Ms. Kiselewski called for questions. <i>Commissioner Chris Constance thanked Mr. Watts for the presentation and asked about the funding available. He suggested that the entire corridor might not be built within 10 years if funding isn't necessarily available.</i> <i>Mr. Will Watts said that is correct, but he expects to prioritize the segments based on the needs of the corridor and those will be substantially completed by 2030.</i> <i>Mr. Constance asked if the segments that aren't funded are put into the work program, are the respective MPOs expected to determine the prioritization of the projects?</i> <i>Mr. Will Watts confirmed this is true for those projects not funded by toll revenues.</i> <i>Ms. Kiselewski called for additional questions.</i> <i>Don Scott asked if the investment grade study is on all three corridors at the same time or separately.</i> 		

- *Mr. Will Watts suggested the whole corridor is usually best and makes the most sense from a traffic modeling standpoint. The exact timeframe is unclear, but the intention is to run them on about the same schedule depending on paths/courses.*
- *Shannon Estenoz asked about the financial feasibility of all three corridors together. She clarified that all three will be evaluated simultaneously for a total fiscal impact to the state.*
- *Mr. Will Watts said they plan on modeling the entire length of each corridor, but certain segments might see different treatments, so it makes sense to model the whole thing. PD&E and design will provide details needed to support the investment grade study.*
- *Ms. Estenoz asked if there is a preliminary financial feasibility study for the total.*
- *Mr. Will Watts said they need to have a more detailed corridor location and instructions for cost estimates. We can do preliminary cost estimate, but we need to know the look and feel of the corridor which is not yet known.*
- *Ms. Estenoz asked about the green line in the southern area slide.*
- *Mr. Will Watts said the green line illustrates additional potential paths/courses that may be developed to address opportunities.*
- *Ms. Estenoz asked if this is just a random line or if there is a reason why it is specifically at that location.*
- *Mr. Will Watts said this is just to show there is maybe potential for other opportunities.*
- *Jason Lauritsen said that, as the Task Force moves through the Work Plan, they may see places where they don't agree that the environmental or economic cost meet acceptability guidelines. He wondered what ability the Task Force will have for input if they don't think this is doing what it needs to after the Task Force is completed.*
- *Mr. Will Watts said the statute guides the funding aspect, so anything unfunded goes to the Work Programs to get prioritized. He reminded the Task Force that FDOT is looking into a corridor advisory group that would be able to stay engaged as the project moves forward.*
- *Commissioner Ken Doherty asked if there is a preference on the roadways in Polk County from the Task Force north of the Southwest-Central Florida Corridor.*
- *Mr. Will Watts said the intent in the northern area slide is an attempt to look beyond I-4 but there is no decision yet. He reminded the Task Force that Jason Watts can weigh in as well.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski handed off to FDOT Chief Planner, Huiwei Shen.*

9:45 AM	Update on Work Plan and Recommendations Framework	Huiwei Shen, FDOT Chief Planner
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Shen discussed the Needs Evaluation Process. She reminded the Task Force of the importance of developing high-level needs to provide guidance for post-Task Force work. She discussed the “maximum extent feasible” language and the focus on guiding principle and instruction development that reflects the Task Force’s desires as the process moves beyond the Task Force. • Ms. Shen reviewed the changes made to guiding principles and instructions based on discussion from the previous meeting. • She then reviewed the corridor advisory group that will advise FDOT after the Task Force process is complete to make sure the Task Force desires are met. • She reviewed the upcoming meetings, community open houses and public comment periods with a November 15, 2020 report deadline. She thanked everyone for their commitments and the extensive public input. She turned it back over to Ms. Kiselewski. • Ms. Kiselewski moved into the review of guiding principles. 		
10:05 AM	Review and Refine Guiding Principles and Instructions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marlon Bizerra, FDOT Production Lead • Beth Kigel, Task Force Support Team • Karen Kiselewski, Facilitator • Task Force Members

- Ms. Kiselewski reviewed the expectations of this section with the intent to get everyone’s perspectives shared. Guiding Principles by topic were reviewed and this meeting focused on the ones not yet touched on. She said they will be starting with emergency evacuation and handed it off to Don Lewis, emergency evacuation subject matter expert.
- Mr. Lewis presented on emergency planning and considerations for the Task Force to keep in mind as they enter into the emergency evacuation guiding principle. He discussed his experience in the field. He reviewed the four phases of emergency management (mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery). He suggested more north-south capacity is needed for evacuation purposes to relieve I-75 and to help with resource and emergency service transportation during recovery. He noted that less than 10% of evacuating people go to public shelters. He also stated the public must decide if they need to evacuate before the tropical storm force winds and flooding occur. He indicated that Southwest Florida is one of the top three areas in the country where hurricane evacuation is most difficult.
- Ms. Kiselewski showed the draft guiding principle and instructions.
- *Elizabeth Fleming wanted to ask a question from the previous presentation and decided to wait to discuss later during the applicable guiding principle discussion.*
- *Gary Ritter discussed his emergency management experience and noted the small percentage of people actually using shelters. He wonders **if there should be more money spent on strategic areas (particularly rural areas) that have little shelter availability** for people to go to. He thought that if there were more shelters people would be able to go there. He asked if more money should be spent there.*
- *Mr. Lewis said that based on behavior and shelter capacity, the people aren’t deciding not to go because there isn’t room, they are deciding not to go because of behavior. He thinks messaging can get the numbers up, but major events will still see people trying to leave in huge volumes.*
- *Ms. Estenoz thanked Mr. Lewis for being here and is excited to get an opportunity to talk about emergency management. She asked for a clarification on Mr. Lewis’ experience.*
- *Mr. Lewis discussed his experience and his focus on public safety. Most of his work was for FEMA and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. He is focused on public safety.*
- *Ms. Estenoz suggested that they **remove the word “Support” and add the word “Strengthen” to the draft guiding principle**. They should be looking to help the local communities cope with the threats. She also wished they could have devoted a panel to this to get perspective of evacuation in such a linear state with so many people. She is suggesting the behavioral response is not acceptable, and that **M-CORES should focus on funding public shelters and messaging**; what she called a more modern approach. She is going to add draft instruction language with autonomous vehicles and the concept of increased capacity through decreased vehicle clearance.*
- *Pat Steed discussed her role in emergency management on a regular basis. She mentioned the Statewide Regional Evacuation Study that hasn’t had a full update in a decade. She said the behavioral aspect is the most important. **She thinks that M-CORES should closely tie the development of M-CORES work to the Statewide Regional Evacuation Study**. She thought this can go in guiding principles or, more likely, instructions.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski thanked Ms. Steed and asked Task Force members to comment on the “strengthen” language.*
- *Ms. Steed agreed.*
- *Pam Johnson agreed as well (her original comment was already addressed about a metric for evacuation which she understood can be found in the evacuation study document).*
- *Donna Doubleday recalled from earlier meetings the conversation to minimize congestion in the smaller rural communities. **Local residences get impacted heavily during evacuations which can hinder their ability to access stores and other necessities.***

- David Murphy commented that, in the southwest counties, **the I-75 corridor gets quite congested during evacuations, so removing that congestion by adding another corridor is good, but that corridor can also be used as a regular use corridor to relieve every day I-75 traffic.**
- Dave Rawicz asked to **add a draft instruction to leverage public and private partnerships in relation to the recovery aspect of emergency preparedness.**
- Mr. Lauritsen commented that he would **like to see language to address the need to study shoulder and reversible lanes to leverage additional capacity to the maximum extent through those kinds of strategic approaches.**
- Mr. Lewis said the shoulder was used during Irma, so that is a great idea.
- Ms. Kiselewski asked for any concern in adding “strengthen” language, and there was no concern.
- Beth Kigel said the discussion will be taken into the instructions and guiding principles and thanked the Task Force.
- Ms. Kiselewski reminded everyone they can provide written comments to Marlon Bizerra.

10:45 AM

Stretch Break

- Mr. Nandam thanked everyone for their discussion and called for a 10-minute break.

10:55 AM

Review and Refine Guiding Principles and Instructions (continued)

- Marlon Bizerra, FDOT Production Lead
- Beth Kigel, Task Force Support Team
- Karen Kiselewski, Facilitator
- Task Force Members

- Mr. Nandam welcomed Task Force members back and handed off to Ms. Kiselewski.
- Ms. Kiselewski brought up guiding principle number five (Agricultural Land Uses).
- Ms. Kigel discussed the changes from last meeting. She noted the specific changes to the guiding principle and the draft instructions.
- Ms. Kiselewski noted the last meeting comments were addressed and called for any concerns.
- Mr. Ritter wanted to call Ray Royce, a subject matter expert on the line, to get his take on this subject.
- Ray Royce introduced himself and noted his approval of the changes to the guiding principle. He recommended the Task Force **add “and their market destinations” language** to the guiding principle to encompass the supply chain aspect.
- Ms. Fleming wondered about **adding “and connectivity” to the end of the high-level need to recognize large blocks of connected lands are fewer and fewer and they are important. She mentioned for the guiding principles to address connectivity for the environmental aspect. She mentioned that in instructions they are missing environmental connectivity as well, specifically fragmentation.**
- Ms. Kigel noted that fragmentation is in the second bullet.
- Ms. Fleming felt this did not speak to the environmental purposes, but rather for some other economic and cultural purpose. She wanted to see **an importance on maintaining wildlife corridors and ecological connectivity.**
- Ms. Kiselewski clarified that Ms. Fleming’s comments are focused on environmental connectivity.
- Dr. Paul Gray asked what a Century Farm was and why that is specifically mentioned and not others.
- Ms. Kigel noted some members mentioned them in previous meetings.
- Mr. Royce mentioned that Century Farm is an honorary designation for farms held by the same family for over 100 years. He also noted that the agricultural community is more focused on the agricultural land use and raising products and getting them to market, and that there are other guiding principles that address environmental connectivity.
- Mr. Ritter noted there are 23 Century Farms in this corridor study area. They are not historical but if there is a corridor near or through a Century Farm there needs to be communication with those

landowners. He also agreed that environmental issues are addressed in the environmental high-level needs branch. **He expressed support for how it is worded now.**

- Ms. Kigel noted the Task Force would be looking at the environmental guiding principles later too.
- Dr. Gray is pleased with the answers and respects that as a designation.
- Mr. Lauritsen **agreed with the spirit of Ms. Fleming's request to acknowledge the environmental aspects of agriculture and the large contiguous plots** for both agriculture itself and environmental concerns. He stated it could be addressed here or in the environmental or wildlife guiding principles.
- Ms. Estenoz wanted to support the spirit of Ms. Fleming's request as well and carry through from the purpose of "protect the environment and natural resources" into the other levels down to instructions. **A commonly understood concept is the connection between agriculture and environmental protection, so this can be done in one of the environmental or wildlife guiding principles as well.**
- Ms. Kigel noted that they would be looking at three environmental guiding principles in a package and can address where this instruction would go in those.
- Commissioner Penny Taylor agreed with Ms. Estenoz and Ms. Fleming. She also mentioned the freshwater aspect of environmental protection. She believed it is critical to weave these together in everything the Task Force does.
- Ms. Kiselewski asked if it is acceptable to add these environmental suggestions in the environmental sections rather than here in the agriculture.
- Ms. Fleming agreed that it should be included in the environmental section, but she doesn't want to see it siloed just to that group of principles because it is important in agriculture too.
- Ms. Kigel **asked to add environmental connectivity to draft guiding principle for now** to move the conversation along.
- Commissioner Bill McDaniel believed that the Task Force is all in agreement that there is environmental importance of agricultural lands. He thought adding the agriculture to the environmental section would be more appropriate and to leave this section alone.
- Mr. Nandam discussed the fact that these are privately owned lands and that instructions can discuss how to work with property owners to encourage them to improve environmental connectivity.
- Mr. Ritter reminded everyone that the reason the Task Force parsed out agriculture on its own was because it was getting too lumped in with conservation lands. He agreed that there is a partnership with the property owner.
- Commissioner John Ahern agreed with Mr. Ritter that **things should stay where they are in this section and add the agriculture to the other section if needed.**
- Ms. Kigel noted guiding principle number seven might include agricultural lands and that the note will be left for now in guiding principle so it can be addressed later.
- Dr. Gray noted that fragmentation is an issue with environmental lands, but also for the agricultural land use. There are potential conflicts between agricultural lands and urban lands. A number of agricultural lands have already experienced this with urban encroachment. He believed it is covered here though.
- Ms. Kigel addressed guiding principles six (Conservation Lands), seven (Wildlife and Plant Habitats), and eight (Water Resources) as a single unit for now because they are associated with the same issues just nuanced. She reviewed the three guiding principles.
- Ms. Kiselewski noted the comments on priority ranking from earlier meetings.
- Ms. Estenoz had draft language she wanted addressed. She said the way draft guiding principle number two is prioritized is good, so when reflecting on conservation lands, the **first language suggestion is "for existing and proposed conservation lands."** The second edit was that the first priority should be to **reverse the negative impacts of existing corridors.** She gave some examples of where this is true and important in the study area. **She noted that the priority after that should be "avoid," so she is in the**

group that wanted to switch them. Then the one after that would be connect and enhance. Then the final one should add “lands that are identified for acquisition need to be acquired prior to the construction of the M-CORES projects.”

- Ms. Kiselewski asked for clarification on reversing environmental issues if the corridor is along that roadway.
- Ms. Estenoz responded yes, within the proposed corridor. If the facility is being altered by M-CORES can any damage be reversed that the facility is causing.
- Mr. Jason Watts agreed with Ms. Estenoz that avoid should be first, **since FDOT’s first goal is to avoid negative impacts to the environment. He understood that rectifying negative environmental impacts should be in there but would prefer to see avoid first. He mentioned that the first objective should be to select corridors where impacts to environmental lands can be avoided, but if they can’t then rectify any past problems and enhance current conditions. He suggested having reverse and enhance in the same bullet. He expressed the difficulty of adding “and proposed” language because there are so many proposed lands in this area and suggested adding language that leverages the full M-CORES statute power to purchase and enhance any proposed lands.**
- Ms. Estenoz said she is open to the proposed priority order, but just wants **her big point to be reversing existing harm when co-locating. She mentioned that there are recommended detailed instructions out there, like from 1000 Friends of Florida, that discuss specific areas to conserve. She requested to reference those lists that have undergone a rigorous process to produce lists of proposed conservation lands.**
- Mr. Jason Watts likes the idea of the order being avoid first. He mentioned that in the second bullet about purchasing conservation lands to be utilized, if the word proposed is added avoid then looking at the graphic that becomes very difficult.
- Ms. Estenoz said she is comfortable addressing her concerns wherever they make the most sense, but she would like to see a list of existing and proposed lands that this prioritization scheme will apply to.
- Mr. Jason Watts believed her point was coming across very clear and staff would try to address her concerns in the guiding principle or instructions.
- Ms. Estenoz reiterated that it is important to protect conservation land before construction, and that can be folded into financial feasibility in a later discussion.
- Mr. Jason Watts clarified that **any commitment to acquire conservations lands will be rolled into the PD&E and other documents before construction and won’t be an afterthought. The Task Forces’ guiding principles will be the guide for those documents.**
- Ms. Estenoz would like to see it in the guiding principles if it’s going to get done anyway.
- Ms. Kiselewski asked for clarification.
- Ms. Estenoz proposed that if her original edit does not work then include in the draft instruction that says FDOT should use lands and parcels that are on the following lists, and have a list of the lands (not just the ones already existing but also planned) because the state has already identified these lands.
- Ms. Kiselewski wanted to give an opportunity to bifurcate the two issues and discuss the priority and called on Matt Caldwell.
- Matt Caldwell wanted to talk about the “proposed” language. He reminded the Task Force of his acquisitions experience and noted the practical vs theoretical application of acquisitions. He **wanted to see a limitation on acquisition for the corridor** since that process can take a lot of time and the land use prices change over time. He didn’t want to see them setting aside all the possible lands.
- Ms. Kigel clarified that wording about ecological and greenways wasn’t meant to be exclusive, it was meant to be “including” as an example.
- Mr. Caldwell said he thinks the Task Force needs to be thoughtful about how wide they cast the net and make sure everyone is on the same page. He believed **there needs to be resolution on what “proposed” means** and what the Task Force intends it to mean.

- Ms. Kigel asked if staff can take this back and come up with recommendations.
- Mr. Jason Watts said he did think staff can and wanted to remind the Task Force that if “proposed” is added then there is still a priority hierarchy attached to “proposed lands” as well. He also mentioned that there is a very long list, so instead of just a list that could miss certain lands, he proposed it be open-ended language to provide flexibility to acquire lands for conservation and embolden the statute language.
- Ms. Kigel said **staff will take the notes and incorporate it into the draft guiding principle and instructions**. She asked about looking into the prioritization as it relates to the framework of the other two guiding principles in this section.
- Tom Graef wanted to make sure this commentary was also for guiding principles number seven and eight, not just for number six. He would like it to cover all three.
- Mr. Nandam wanted to see some discussion about what the Task Force wants the staff to do, specifically in instructions. He asked what types of enhancements they would like to see and encouraged county and MPO representatives to speak on the topic.
- Mr. McDaniel wanted the Task Force to consider what Mr. Jason Watts said. He noted that it is everyone’s effort to avoid first, then enhance and minimize, but is **concerned with the language “reverse” because it bears the question “to what extent.” He was also concerned with the language “proposed” because it opens the door to everything and all things.**
- Mr. Doherty agreed with Mr. Jason Watts and **wanted to see the word “proposed” not included in the guiding principle** because it does open the door to all lands essentially, it is fine the way it is. He also agrees the priority order should be “avoid” first.
- Ms. Kigel confirmed Mr. Doherty was referring to all three of the guiding principles.
- Mr. Doherty stated that is correct.
- Ms. Kiselewski reminded the Task Force that they are talking about the priority order and “proposed” language.
- Wendy Mathews agreed with Ms. Estenoz about **“avoid” as top priority**. She offered **language for “proposed” lands that would include proposed lands from agency work plans** within the instructions. This wouldn’t include all lands, just a subset of near term proposed lands. The third bullet on draft instructions places a high priority on adverse impacts on recreation and conservation lands. **The first bullet and third bullet were in conflict, she wanted to see language that included all DEP lands and said she would come up with some language.**
- Ms. Kiselewski asked for the Task Force members to send in specific language changes in writing within the next week.
- Mr. Lauritsen agreed with the reordering. **He wanted to make sure the smaller connecting land blocks are included because they are very important for genetic health between the wild and urban interfaces** and aren’t included in a lot of the documents and aren’t the highest-ranking land acquisition priorities.
- Mr. Nandam said the statute specifically mentions wildlife corridors and the need for acquisition of land for that, so these suggestions are helpful.
- Ms. Fleming agreed with the intention of Ms. Estenoz and isn’t worried about the prioritization order so long as this is all represented. She believed **the concept of “proposed” is important because it is needed for good planning**. She also noted that the list of lands that are presented as important for conservation and recreation are not just all encompassing of all lands, they are thought out and could be included without automatically ruling out everything. **She said the term “managed” is important to maintain and was a deliberate word**. She believed the concept of “reversing damage” is inextricably linked with “enhance” so the language exists in this MCORES document and it is very important. She didn’t want to see this language in these concepts lost. She said she is in support so long as it is in the document.

- Andrew Dickman believed that the highest priority needs to be the **acquisition of conservation lands for preservation**, not just avoiding and enhancing.
- Ms. Estenoz said she is fine with staff going back and incorporating “proposed” in a way that makes sense. She reminded them that the only way to read the statute is that the **program needs to have conservation lands, otherwise it can’t be done**. She also believes it needs to be in the guiding principles or instructions the idea of correcting the damage done by old roads when modifying them. She suggested this needs to be explicit. **If identifying lands is going to be done in the PD&E, then she believed it needs to be included in the guiding principles or draft instructions to elevate that action.**
- Dr. Gray agreed with the reordering of the priorities. He noted **that hydrological changes are always the case with roadways, so an opportunity to correct that kind of thing should be addressed**. He also noted that he doesn’t see many specific land types that are intended to be avoided. He believes there are inconsistencies and there should be discussion on how to list these things.
- Mr. Nandam asked Mr. Jason Watts to summarize since he is the subject matter expert. He also thanked Ms. Mathews for her comment since it began this robust conversation.
- Mr. Jason Watts summarized that the **first proposition is to make “avoid” the first priority for all three guiding principles. The second priority he tried to aggregate the comments and came up with the phrase “connect and enhance while continuing to minimize impacts” with the last priority still including minimize and the other terminology**. This doesn’t include the specific “fixing the damages from old facilities” because, when saying “enhance” it means “to the current standards” which are considerably better than 50 years ago. **He mentioned he liked the proactive approach Ms. Estenoz talked about and will need to find where that fits either in the guiding principle or the instructions.** The next proposition regarding “proposed” language he noted that staff can go to the different groups and owners of mitigation lands and cooperating with them and acquire where possible. He noted the two schools of thought being one: “a list of places” and his concern with that was there may be some smaller lands missed...**so the way he suggested they craft that second bullet in an all-encompassing way to include these smaller areas.**
- Ms. Kigel reiterated what Mr. Jason Watts said, noted this **applied to guiding principles six, seven and eight** and called for any questions.
- Councilman Michael McCabe suggested that the best way to do all these environmental concerns is to go with the no-build option. He thought this was missed and should be focused on more. Undeveloped areas are the natural state of Florida, so no-build would do that. He was concerned about water impacts to Naples. **He wanted to see a real no-build concept entertained today.**
- Ms. Shen clarified that there are a broad range of needs to consider, not just transportation, and this no-build option can be discussed in the afternoon when the Needs Evaluation discussion takes place. It can be done there or folded into the guiding principle discussion.
- Mr. Jason Watts wanted to clarify what happens after this process and noted that this Task Force provides guidance to the department so, when the PD&E is done, **no-build is considered among other alternatives. He closed by saying there are projects that we have no-built before, so this isn’t just lip service, this is a seriously considered alternative.**

12:30 PM	Break for Lunch	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mr. Nandam thanked everyone for the discussion. He asked that Task Force members keep this meeting open and called for a 60-minute lunch break. 		
1:30 PM	Review and Refine Guiding Principles and Instructions (continued)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marlon Bizerra, FDOT Production Lead • Beth Kigel, Task Force Support Team • Karen Kiselewski, Facilitator • Task Force Members

- Mr. Nandam welcomed everyone back and called on Ms. Kiselewski to continue the review.
- Ms. Kiselewski readdressed the public comment period and how to participate. She moved into the guiding principles and thanked everyone for their comments and discussion.
- Ms. Kigel went over the guiding principles that have been discussed thus far and reminded the Task Force that guiding principles will be revisited. She noted the next set of guiding principles is grouped into mobility and covers numbers nine (Freight Mobility and Safety), ten (Transportation Modes), and eleven (Connectivity of Regional and Local Transportation Network).
- *Mr. McDaniel noted a draft instruction specifies “no new corridor through airports” and **he wanted to see some more specificity to ensure there isn’t any prohibitive language to connect airports like the Immokalee bypass.***
- *Ms. Kigel said the second bullet addresses this, and that the first is to prevent taking right-of-way away from airports and their operations.*
- *Mr. McDaniel said he understands this, but doesn’t want to exclude airports that have plans to give some right-of-way for the connectivity of the airport*
- *Mr. Nandam suggested “**no new corridors that would impact airport operations.**”*
- *Mr. McDaniel said that is a fine suggestion.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski called for commentary on freight.*
- *Ms. Steed agreed with Mr. McDaniel that the first bullet is problematic and fully supports the second.*
- *Mr. Ritter wanted to consider adding agriculture to the freight mobility instructions but expressed concern that there may be too much repetition.*
- *Ms. Kigel didn’t see a problem with it being too repetitious.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski called for any concerns.*
- *Ms. Mathews wanted to comment on six through eight.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski stated that they will try to get back to it later to address other things first and add the comments and discussion to next meeting.*
- *Ms. Mathews thought we didn’t address seven and eight.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski clarified that six, seven, and eight were discussed all together.*
- *Ms. Mathews wanted to share some other feedback.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski stated that they would address this later on.*
- *Ms. Penny Taylor wanted to address whether six, seven and eight should each be addressed separately.*
- *Ms. Kigel responded that there was no feedback on that matter.*
- *Ms. Penny Taylor asked when the Task Force sees it next if it will be separate.*
- *Ms. Kigel responded that they would be kept separate.*
- *Ms. Penny Taylor agreed this was appropriate.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski called for comments on nine and no one raised an issue.*
- *Ms. Kigel addressed the tenth guiding principle and opened to comment.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski recommended people review instructions as they were updated with comments. She called for concerns and no one raised any.*
- *Ms. Kigel addressed the eleventh guiding principle.*
- *Mr. Murphy **recommended that state highways that intersect with the MCORES corridor be considered in the department’s normal programming.***
- *Ms. Kiselewski thanked Mr. Murphy.*
- *Mr. Constance wanted to **add the word “safe” to the tenth guiding principle.***
- *Ms. Kiselewski checked if there were any concerns with adding “safe” and didn’t receive any disagreement.*
- *Ms. Fleming understood the objective is to improve connection between communities, but it made her wonder about limiting damage from induced development. She mentioned using “limited access” as a*

tool to achieve water quality and other goals. She wondered where the appropriate place is for making sure communities are actually connected.

- Ms. Kiselewski said it can be added here but asked if Ms. Fleming had a specific addition.
- Ms. Fleming said she wanted some **wording to address unplanned sprawl** in these areas.
- Ms. Kiselewski said this might go back into six, seven and eight as it relates to that.
- Mr. Dickman noted that interchanges can dramatically change the character of towns, so he wanted instruction to say **anywhere there is an interchange there needs to be an effort to make sure lands are conserved environmentally and culturally**. He wanted to avoid big box stores coming in and harming these communities.
- Gerald Buhr noted that these **communities want to make their own decisions as to what kind of growth they want to see**. He thought the way it is written now allows for the communities to make these kinds of decisions.
- Ms. Kigel said currently all the comprehensive plans discourage sprawl.
- Mr. McDaniel said to Ms. Fleming that there was a conversation in earlier meetings that the rationale was not promote sprawl but to prioritize where the interchanges will go.
- Ms. Kiselewski clarified that the intent of the first instruction was for existing roads.
- Mr. Ahern thought it should be left up to the communities on where the interchanges should be.
- Clinton Howerton agreed that he wants to see it left up to the locals. It is impacted by where the road goes, this is micromanagement and should just be left alone.
- Ms. Estenoz stated that the statute requires that localities change their comprehensive plans to address interchange locations. She is concerned about which will be addressed first, the local vision or the corridor construction. She believed the major point is zoning, or whatever planning needs to be done before the road is built. She wondered if FDOT will acknowledge this and actually plan for the road to address this.
- Ms. Shen stated that FDOT is already working with the regional planning councils to make sure their visions are met. They are also providing the tools for interchange management best practices.
- Ms. Estenoz stated that roads can completely divert planning and change what's seen on the ground.
- Mr. Scott asked who is determining what are the regional roads.
- Mr. Nandam said that will be a conversation with MPOs and local agencies. The Task Force identified "regional roads" because of the focus on the north-south corridors.
- Mr. Scott stated that they would try to get theirs more consistent with their neighbors.
- Mr. Buhr said it would be unusual for the state to require they modify their plan to allow for sprawl when there exists statute discouraging urban sprawl. This isn't as much a concern.
- Mr. Dickman referred to the statutory purpose of revitalizing rural communities, but if there isn't a clear plan in advance for the existence of an interchange then things will change and change rapidly. **There needs to be a strong instruction about requiring a detailed plan at an interchange.**
- Mr. Lauritsen said that in Wekiva there is a similar approach, so this could inform how language is crafted for this document.
- Ms. Kigel drew attention to the third bullet which may address some of the comments already.
- Ms. Steed referred to the connection to regional roadways and mentioned that from county to county there may be issues, but there is a consistency within the region in relation to roadways.
- Ms. Penny Taylor agreed that communities should decide what they want to see, but this changes from election to election so she would like to see more direction especially in regard to instructions.
- Mr. Doherty believed that the **draft guiding principle is in a good spot for the specificity and the draft instructions should remain as they are.**
- Mr. Buhr agreed with Mr. Doherty.

- Ms. Kiselewski thanked everyone and checked with the Task Force that nothing needs to be changed with the guiding principle.
- Ms. Kigel presented on the twelfth guiding principle.
- Mr. Constance wanted to see the language say **“plan and coordinate community development and infrastructure asset creation and management that’s resilient, sustainable, and adaptable”** because development twice is an issue.
- Ms. Kiselewski called for agreement or disagreement.
- Ms. Estenoz wanted to see **“improve and maintain”** in the language to promote the “looking to the future” aspect of the statute.
- Ms. Kigel said the statement should be **“plan and coordinate community development and infrastructure asset creation and management that improves and maintains resiliency, sustainability, and adaptability.”**
- Ms. Kiselewski asked for any disagreement and received no comment on the changes. She returned to guiding principles seven and eight.
- Ms. Kigel clarified that this was a revisiting of the prioritization and called out that there were significant modifications based on feedback from Task Force members.
- Ms. Mathews made the point that the Southwest-Central Florida Corridor houses the only habitat for Florida panthers which are endangered and still considered one of the most endangered species in America. She stated that the impact to the panther hasn’t been discussed and that **the final document should specifically call out the panther and its habitat.**
- Ms. Estenoz supported Ms. Mathews and called for very specific language in the draft instructions. In the introduction she believed the phrase **“protect and enhance”** should be included and reiterated that the comments from six are also for seven.
- Mr. Dickman said he is being guided by the statute specifically and asked if there is a way to **reference the language from the bill** on these pages so that members can determine if this language and the law language match.
- Ms. Kigel noted to Ms. Estenoz that the coverage area for the Florida panther is vast and called subject matter expert Chris Dailey for comment.
- Mr. Dailey introduced himself and stated **we are looking at several enhancement opportunities.** He discussed that it is often later in the design phase when there is enough data to know how a crossing will be implemented, but this is the time now **to discuss the prioritization of the enhancement locations** and called for questions.
- Ms. Mathews appreciated the crossings discussion, but they don’t address the cumulative impacts of induced development and it hasn’t been addressed yet.
- Mr. Jason Watts **suggested the panther be a separate guiding principle** since it is a unique aspect for this corridor **and then prioritize connecting panther habitat.**
- Ms. Estenoz supports it being a unique guiding principle but **would like to see the “avoid” language because the panthers really do need those vast areas of habitat. If M-CORES can’t protect the panther, then it is a deal breaker.**
- Mr. Jason Watts said that we **need to layout that framework for how to approach this and the guiding principles should be an instruction manual on how to address tough decisions and come up with something that is doable.**
- Mr. Lauritsen noted that the roads highlighted on the GIS tool have varying traffic loads, and if nothing is done to address that, then panthers are going to be impacted anyway. He would like to **see roadways that are at capacity or heavily loaded so they can determine where panther is most at risk.**
- Mr. Jason Watts noted that the goal is always to avoid any sensitive area and, if it can’t be avoided, then enhance and improve and go from there.

- Brian Starford asked if two was moved to one in the priority order.
- Mr. Jason Watts said yes.
- Mr. Starford thanked the staff.
- Ms. Fleming said the whole area is really important because it is the largest contiguous area in the state and the panther will go extinct if we don't address keeping the large areas accessible and untouched. She suggests it is going to be very challenging to get anything done without negatively impacting the panther.
- Mr. Nandam **noted that since it will now be its own guiding principle, a lot of these concerns can and should be included in the instructions.**
- Ms. Kiselewski called on other subject matter experts.
- Mark Easley suggested that acquisition of land for the corridor would make it important to develop these connectivity corridors.
- Ms. Kiselewski asked for Mr. Easley to introduce himself.
- Mr. Easley introduced himself.
- Brent Setchell introduced himself. He thought the corridor can be done well and the tools are in place to ensure the corridor doesn't impact the panther.
- Mr. Jason Watts reiterated that it is possible to implement a corridor that could leave the panther in a better position than it is now if we have the draft instructions to do it.
- Ms. Fleming asked about the PD&E and reminded everyone that the **Florida Panther Recovery Team has a document that shows their most impacted locations which should be used.** She said there needs to be a commitment to protecting the panther and this might not be enough.
- Mr. Jason Watts said there is no intent to fast track the PD&E. He also mentioned that when doing any design, they work with stakeholders and regulatory agencies, and always take into consideration wildlife and specifically the panther, so they are committed to that.
- Ms. Kigel summarized that staff will be adding the Florida Panther Guiding Principle and asked to continue the conversation.
- Dr. Gray supports the panther as its own guiding principle. He said that in the draft instructions for guiding principle number seven, he would like to **combine the bullets at the bottom into just one saying "do not place the corridor through the conservation lands" identified in guiding principle number six.** He liked the lighting instruction. He wanted to **add "minimize proximity to smoke sheds corridors of the properties" mentioned in guiding principle number six.** This will address smoke management issues.
- Ms. Mathews asked why some conservation lands were missing from the avoidance area map and wanted to revisit that map and add some areas like the Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest.
- Mr. Will Watts said the avoidance map is intended to be a baseline, but more can be added.
- Ms. Mathews said she would send some to add.
- Mr. Will Watts said then those would be reflected in the guiding principles and this was just a graphic to get the discussion started.
- Ms. Kiselewski said they would bring it back in meeting number eight.
- Mr. McDaniel said there are no absolutes in this world, so it is too specific to say "no new corridor" then it limits the ability to make enhancements that improve wildlife and plant habitat.
- Mr. Jason Watts clarified that it is intended to mean no new roadway cleared through new right-of-way but leaves it up for enhancements to existing corridors.
- Ms. Kiselewski summarized things to expect going forward for next meeting.
- Mr. Jason Watts reminded everyone that they should send comments in the next seven days.
- Ms. Kigel thanked Mr. Jason Watts for including that.
- Ms. Estenoz recommended the guiding principle number eight include "surface and ground water" language. She also stated that we have not come to terms with the cost of the last generation of

infrastructure and now more is being built. She would also like to see **avoidance of increased strain on water supply**. She stated that she would submit that as a comment for instructions in the next seven days.

- Mr. Jason Watts stated that they consider surface water all the time and that her comment should address an instruction for that specifically.
- Ms. Estenoz disagreed with Mr. Jason Watts and stated that this is not a narrow construction of just a road and needs to address impacts of induced development. She **requested that surface and groundwater be included**.
- Mr. Jason Watts said he wasn't trying to argue a point just wanted to make a suggestion that can be addressed in the instructions.
- Mr. McDaniel suggested that they **reword the first bullet to say "Do not negatively impact..."**
- Mr. Nandam was going to suggest the same thing. It would be good for local governments and MPOs to weigh in as well.
- Ms. Steed agreed with Mr. Jason Watts and noted all local governments have water supply plans for balancing and the planning people do look at that issue.
- Ms. Kigel asked if Ms. Steed's thought was an instruction.
- Ms. Steed replied that it would go back to land use and planning discussion and belongs elsewhere.
- Ms. Taylor agreed that both surface and aquifer water should be included.
- Ms. Estenoz provided an example at the 836 Expressway Expansion that could impact groundwater resources and water recharge. These aren't local planning decisions because water is a shared resource. This is a highly controversial thing so the **Task Force should try to craft some draft instructions for ground water**.
- Mr. Jason Watts agreed with Ms. Estenoz and understands these are things that need to be weighed.
- Ms. Kiselewski called for concerns on staff taking this and developing it into the instructions. There were no concerns.

3:15 PM

Break

- Mr. Nandam called for a short 15-minute break.

3:30 PM

Review and Refine Guiding Principles and Instructions (continued)

- Marlon Bizerra, FDOT Production Lead
- Beth Kigel, Task Force Support Team
- Karen Kiselewski, Facilitator
- Task Force Members

- Mr. Nandam called the Task Force back to continue the conversation.
- Ms. Kiselewski reviewed the public comment process and handed it over to Ms. Kigel.
- Ms. Kigel pulled up the guiding principle list and began a review of the broadband and utilities guiding principle. She mentioned these have been reviewed before and this is just another look.
- Ms. Kiselewski called on Bill Ferry.
- Mr. Ferry said the draft guiding principle look good, and the second bullet in the instructions is really good. He wants to make sure the instruction is not too restrictive and provides **room for private entities to put their own utilities down**.
- Ms. Kigel thanked him for the comment.
- Mr. Buhr wanted to see the third bullet point include water and/or wastewater, particularly reclaimed water. So, he recommended **"utility" instead of "broadband."**
- Ms. Kiselewski called for concerns and no one raised issue.
- Ms. Kigel moved to the technology guiding principle and mentioned that it may be broader than they remembered and is not restricted to vehicles.

- Ms. Kiselewski called for comments and called on Task Force members.
- Ms. Fleming said the last draft instruction she agreed with in spirit, but she does not believe the wildlife collision technology used today is effective.
- Ms. Kigel mentioned that the intent isn't to use existing technology but just to keep the options open for those. A new draft instruction can be more inclusive.
- Ms. Fleming agreed with this.
- Mr. Ritter offered a suggestion on the last bullet to **“develop” or “evaluate” new technologies.**
- Ms. Kigel suggested **“explore” and “evaluate.”** We'll consider a new draft instruction.
- Mr. Graef wanted to make sure that comments needed to be submitted by September 1st.
- Ms. Kiselewski said yes for the guiding principles and instructions so they can be incorporated into materials for the next meeting.
- Ms. Fleming asked if staff will be getting the revisions back to the Task Force before the next meeting and earlier than for this meeting.
- Ms. Kiselewski responded in the affirmative.
- Ms. Fleming asked if the Task Force would be reviewing them again or if they were locked in.
- Ms. Kiselewski said we will definitely be reviewing in the next meeting. She called for any other comments and no hands were raised.
- Ms. Kigel reviewed guiding principle three (Social and Community Context).
- Ms. Kiselewski called for comments and no hands were raised.
- Ms. Kigel reviewed guiding principle four (Economic Development).
- Ms. Kiselewski called for comments.
- Ms. Doubleday wanted to **add something under instructions to also work with workforce development organizations for access to jobs and workforce training.**
- Ms. Pam Johnson echoed the workforce training comment.
- Mr. Constance asked to **add to draft instructions to coordinate with the Department of Economic Opportunity.**
- Ms. Kigel said it may be mentioned elsewhere but it can be included.
- Ms. Pam Johnson said she is fine with that.
- Ms. Kiselewski asked if there were any other comments and no hands were raised.
- Ms. Kigel reviewed the two cross-cutting guiding principles and started with guiding principle one (Consistency with Statewide, Regional and Local Plans and Visions).
- Ms. Estenoz asked to **add “regional water supply plans” and “regional, state and federal ecosystem restoration plans.”**
- Ms. Kiselewski asked for clarification.
- Ms. Estenoz asked for those items to be added to the draft instructions.
- Ms. Kigel reminded that there was an ask for this to be focused on statutory requirements.
- Ms. Estenoz said those are in the Florida Statutes.
- Ms. Steed agreed with Ms. Estenoz about regional water supply plans. She asked if there is a way to **include regional visions, so it doesn't infer that they are part of strategic regional policy plans.**
- Ms. Kiselewski asked if that was for the first bullet in the instructions.
- Ms. Steed said she would send something.
- Ms. Kigel added they would try something as well.
- Mr. Ritter asked if Ms. Estenoz was referring to a specific statute.
- Ms. Estenoz said that was an example, but there are many others. To the extent that they exist they should try to coordinate with them.
- Ms. Kiselewski asked for the Task Force any specific lists as part of their comments.
- Ms. Estenoz wasn't suggesting they should be enumerated, but just that they should be considered.

- Mr. Jason Watts said that it makes sense and there **should be an attempt to coordinate with those environmental plans**, especially the statutory ones, rather than be in conflict with that later. He suggested adding this to the draft instruction and it can be made broader as they are trying to be more inclusive.
- Ms. Estenoz said she will try to enumerate some and send them over.
- Mr. Ritter followed up on what Mr. Jason Watts said and said action plans impact and involve local communities so they should certainly be in coordination.
- Ms. Kiselewski called for any more concerns beyond what was discussed.
- Ms. Estenoz wondered if “federal” should be included for those agencies where authority is delegated.
- Ms. Kigel asked for a note to consider federal in the list.
- Mr. Dickman said he isn’t uncomfortable with “federal”, but just wants to make sure if it is important then include it there. He shared his support to make sure of that.
- Mr. Jason Watts said they always make sure they follow the statutes.
- Mr. Dickman said he wasn’t suggesting every law be written here, just **that there are documents that might be at the federal level that should be addressed**.
- Mr. Jason Watts said they are on the same page. He stated we will be consistent with the other plans and won’t negatively impact them. We **will take it and add to the guiding principle for review**.
- Ms. Kigel called for any other concerns and, seeing none, reviewed guiding principle two (Maximize Use of Existing Facilities).
- Ms. Fleming asked if co-location should be included both here and in the environmental sections.
- Ms. Kigel pointed to guiding principle priority one as including this.
- Ms. Kiselewski said that might not have been understood as co-location.
- Ms. Fleming said she was asking if it needs to be included here.
- Ms. Kigel pointed to third bullet instruction.
- Ms. Fleming asked to think about it more.
- Ms. Estenoz made a suggestion to add in the third bullet **evaluate opportunities for co-location of transportation facilities “and collocated facilities.”** To address something that isn’t transportation but supports the corridor needs, like hurricane shelters.
- Ms. Kiselewski asked Ms. Fleming if that addressed her concern.
- Ms. Fleming stated she would provide her comments after the meeting.
- Ms. Mathews said it seems like the second priority in the guiding principle should quantify the transportation facilities **“only where necessary” or “documented statewide”** and not leave it open ended.
- Mr. Nandam suggested **“develop transportation facilities while giving priority to existing rights-of-way.”**
- Ms. Kigel said it seems like Ms. Mathews is suggesting a tighter quantification.
- Ms. Mathews said that is correct since it seems so broad.
- Ms. Kigel noted that might be in the guiding principle intro and quantify it that way.
- Ms. Mathews said she sees it now and agreed that it’s good.
- Ms. Kiselewski called for any other comments and no hands were raised.
- Ms. Kigel reminded the Task Force to send their comments by September 1st and introduced the report section of the agenda.

4:30 PM	Review Draft Task Force Report Sections	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Marlon Bizerra, FDOT Production Lead • Beth Kigel, Task Force Support Team • Karen Kiselewski, Facilitator • Task Force Members
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- Ms. Kigel reviewed the expectations of this section and called for any “wordsmithing” issues or the like be sent in email so the focus going forward can be on the high-level needs and needs evaluation discussion.
- Ms. Kiselewski reminded everyone that this is the fruition of the prior Task Force meetings and this gives an idea of the report recommendations and how the structure will be moving forward.
- *Ms. Estenoz stated **the biggest hole in the report is related to financial feasibility**. She said she submitted things regarding financial feasibility and wanted to see a guiding principle on this. She believed the public deserves an explanation on how the Department is going to deal with financial feasibility. She also said the public should be presented with a preliminary cost estimate and determine what the revenue would need to meet the statutory requirement. She also mentioned that if segments are deemed not feasible then how do those sections get compensated for and how does this impact priority among other work planned.*
- *Ms. Kigel drew everyone’s attention to the needs evaluation process of the report and handed the conversation to Mr. Nandam.*
- *Mr. Nandam said that costs are highly variable depending on corridor location and materials/labor. The other factor he mentioned is leveraging existing corridors, which heavily weighs on the cost. He said it is important to get to a design level before making cost estimates.*
- *Mr. Will Watts said Mr. Nandam is spot on. He said that everyone thinks this is coming all together in one phase, but that is not necessarily the case. There is a systematic process the Department follows that will determine when projects are built and in what order and in the right way.*
- *Ms. Estenoz isn’t suggesting a cost estimate now, but the **report needs to discuss the process for determining financial feasibility and the calculations that will take place**. She expressed concern with the “wait for the PD&E” study, and the unfairness to the public.*
- *Mr. Will Watts expressed his apologies, but this is a wait and see kind of process for the financial feasibility.*
- *Ms. Estenoz wanted to make **sure a guiding principle is added to make sure all costs are considered including all commitments**.*
- *Mr. Nandam asked if this should be a guiding principle or if it should be in the final report as a process to explain the financial feasibility.*
- *Mr. Will Watts agreed with Ms. Estenoz’s statement.*
- *Ms. Kigel suggested that line 397 might be the location in the document to build this out a little more.*
- *Mr. Watts suggested building up to financial feasibility.*
- *Ms. Estenoz thinks it is important to be a guiding principle to reference the Task Force’s recommendations in the report.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski said staff will take that back and address that.*
- *Mr. McDaniel agreed with Ms. Estenoz, that we explain **to the public the process for determining the cost and what the total project cost calculations and variables will look like**. He also spoke about other things need to be reviewed. He was questioning page five and the BEBR numbers for the projections and wondered what projection was used.*
- *Ms. Kigel said she believes it was the medium value.*
- *Mr. McDaniel would like that **mentioned in the text**. He would **also like to see SR 29 on page six line 195**.*
- *Ms. Kiselewski reminded everyone they can provide comments in the next week.*
- *Mr. Dickman said he understands it is really challenging to get a cost and a value, but he believes it is important that there is **something documented about how the costs are calculated and how this is going to be paid for**. He was concerned that there was not enough effort in evaluation of need for this. He also wanted to see a high-level project cost.*

- Mr. Nandam thanked him for the comment.
- Mr. McCabe supported Ms. Estenoz’s idea for the guiding principle for financial feasibility. He pushed back on not being able to do a feasibility study because two other projects were scrapped earlier than this project based on financial feasibility. He said there should be a gate and the gate should be now, not down the road. He felt the public deserves more transparency on this project and thinks no-build needs to be talked about.
- Dr. Gray asked **for a better definition of “no-build”** because there is a distinction between no new corridors and doing work on existing roads. He thinks people would be in favor of improving existing corridors.
- Mr. Nandam stated that is why the guiding principle has been developed which talks about improvements to existing facilities. He wanted to emphasize that this is our Task Force report and we have developed the guiding principles and instructions together.
- Mr. Doherty recommended to staff that there be a **section in the report that identifies the methodology utilized by the Department at different stages for the financial feasibility of the project**. This can be in narrative form and let us know when we will see numbers.
- Ms. Kigel noted there would be additional narrative written now and encouraged the Task Force to provide their comments in the next week.

4:55 PM

Next Steps

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

- Ms. Shen thanked everyone for the robust conversation today. She reviewed the next steps. She said staff will add the comments and discussion into the guiding principles and instructions and update the draft report format. We will use the discussion points from today in the report text.
- Mr. Nandam reminded everyone to submit their comments in the next week and said everything will be put together for their review before the next meeting.

5:00 PM

Public Comment

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

- Ms. Kiselewski reviewed the public comment period guidelines and called for the first commenter.
- *Lindsay Cross: Good afternoon, this is Lindsay Cross with Florida Conservation Voters. Task force members - today I am asking you to not sign on to a consensus report unless it includes no build. Many decisions will be riding on this document. If DOT and legislative leaders do respect its findings, it will shape the future of our state. If it is just a rubber-stamping exercise, then it will support the idea that this whole process has been a sham. I appreciate how direct some of you have been in your concerns about this process and its underlying assumptions. You've raised important considerations about the investments that need to be made to protect our water, wildlife, and our identity as a state. Those are things that Floridians care deeply about. Commissioner McCabe, thank you for so clearly articulating the need for no-build because sometimes it really is that simple. Will Watts stated this morning that the Task Force report is the foundation for this project. Yet the very foundation for this project is not solid. M-CORES was developed as a political pet project. The legislation is so expertly crafted that the funding cannot be undone without essentially an act of God or future legislation. It plays upon our emotions by highlighting fears like hurricanes or scarcity in our rural communities. We've heard today that a piecemeal approach may be taken if we can't afford to build all the roads. But if we can't afford the roads, how likely is it that local communities would get broadband or sewer. Despite lip service about letting locals maintain power, the statute, as Shannon Estenoz points out, requires local communities to change their comp plans to be consistent with this, not the other way around. DOT has been quite forthright that M-CORES does not follow its typical planning process. It has an aggressive timeline and goes beyond what they are generally tasked to do. DOT has still not demonstrated the need and you have been actively encouraged not to ask too many questions about it. It is always pushed off to the*

PD&E phase. DOT has not demonstrated that this project is financially viable, and we know from multiple reports, including Florida Tax Watch Report for the Suncoast Corridor, that the total project cost could be between 20 to 30 billion dollars That's a whole lot of money. Pat Steed noted that a statewide regional hurricane evacuation study has not been conducted for more than 10 years. It would be foolish to invest in new roads until there is the data to support the need. A prudent person looks first for a strong and secure foundation upon which to build a house. This process is attempting to slap together a McMansion on a sinkhole. DOT has not demonstrated that the roads are needed nor that we can pay for them. Floridians overwhelmingly are against the roads to ruin. Do not sign a consensus report unless it includes no build. Thank you.

- *Amy Datz: I have been a professional environmental scientist for over 40 years. I am an activist, not a lobbyist or consultant. My comments will address the guiding principles. Social, and community context - This project must be crafted to make it an innovative smart growth development showcase that will pave the way for more environmentally successful projects in the future, creating truly visionary green communities. All buildings and designs should be up to LEED standards with exemplary 21st century development. Multi-modalism - neighborhoods must be developed with interconnected open spaces so kids and adults can walk or ride their bicycles to visit their friends, commute to school, or work. Although narrower streets are preferable to reduce speed and preserve neighborhood character, where transit is anticipated the lanes must be 11-feet wide at a minimum. Water resources - Storm water treatment ponds can become highly polluted with trash and toxic pathogens. Under those conditions, they must not be considered environmental amenities or for open space credit unless the water going into them is treated first to remove pollutants and have demonstrable ecological value. Frequent inspections and maintenance should be incorporated as part of the condition for stormwater facility work plan and permitting. The stormwater control design must include runoff prevention. The use of pre-treatment methods would clean the runoff before it flows into off-site water bodies. There will be developments associated with this project. It's critical there be open space areas and very compact development closer to the central towns which will help to maintain rural character. This would include forest buffers between the rural and environmentally preserved areas and urban densities. Compact divisions generate fewer vehicle miles therefore less air pollution than sprawling conventional subdivisions. Wildlife and plant habitats - There must be no net loss of trees. Whenever possible design around strands of old growth trees instead of just plowing through them. If removing trees, fund an aggressive native tree replacement and maintenance program. It's an important component of reaching our carbon neutrality goal. Conservation lands - Areas of this project have been or will be legally recorded conservation easements. No connector roads should be allowed to go through those easement areas, disturbing their conservation value. Underpasses must be included if land is. All development requires utility services. I strongly recommend that no natural gas hookups be provided. Natural gas is a dying industry and will be obsolete as an energy source by the time this project is operational. It requires pipelines that may leak and many millions of dollars per mile to install and uninstall. Requiring renewable green electric energy sources is the path to plan for the future. Technology - Make vehicle charging stations solar powered and portable to accommodate future needs.*
- *Michael McGraef: Good evening, my name is Mike McGraef, organizer for the Sierra Club. We are now approaching the anniversary of this Task Force process with little to show for it. There has been no thorough data driven analysis to determine whether this project is environmentally, economically, or fiscally feasible. FDOT has plainly disregarded the statutory obligations required by Senate Bill 7068. FDOT has wasted enormous amounts of taxpayer money. And, adding insult to injury, FDOT failed to track internal costs associated with M-CORES. Indeed, the public will never know just how much taxpayer money is misspent on the M-CORES project. Task Force members, you are running out of time. The public has spoken out vehemently against the sham of a process and has been overwhelmingly opposed to M-CORES. Don't be complicit in the sham. Do be disruptive and demand that the dissension*

on this Task Force be recommended, be represented. Please do not sign on to any consensus report unless it recommends the no-build option. Thank you.

- Matthew Shwartz: So good evening, this is Matthew Shwartz representing the South Florida Wildland Association. I guess, let me start out with the document I'm looking at right now. This was sent to me by you Brandi and it's the latest avoid and attract areas for Southwest Florida. As you look at this map, what I see is the Big Cypress National Preserve is off limits. The Florida Panther National Wildlife Refuge is off limits. Picayune Strand, Dinner Island, and pieces of the Oka Slough State Forest. So that's what's off limits in Southwest Florida. Everything else is fine. Everything else is fine. What this map tells me, is absolutely no consultation whatsoever. The many, many panther scientists in our state who have studied, and remember the panther is our state animal, probably the best studied animal, in their entire wildlife species within the state and they know where panthers are and we know where panthers are because we know where they're killed. And I can see that this map includes all those areas where both panthers are and where they're being killed by cars. I want to read, I have a few minutes, I can read two statements written by wildlife biologists on the panther and it talks about the habitat. So, this is from the latest one, Frank I said landscape analysis of the adult Florida panther written in 2015. It simply says because there is less panther habitat remaining than previously thought, we recommend that all remaining breeding habitat in South Florida should be maintained. Maintain. Not built up. Not broad sprawl too. The current panther range should be expanded into South Central Florida where M-CORES is going as well, I'll stop there. The other one counts at all, that's the famous article written in 2005 that actually determined and established the primary dispersal and secondary zones for the panther. It says those zones comprise essential components of a landscape scale conservation plan for the protection of a viable Florida panther population in South Florida. They made clear that panthers use a mosaic of habitats and, by the way that goes for black bear, that goes for the Florida fox squirrel, big cypress fox squirrel, and numerous other wildlife, listed wildlife in this area. They use a mosaic of habitats, not just the forested areas, not just the public lands, and you can sit on the telemetry. The FWC does telemetry of panthers, we know where they are. So you can't expect us to take your work seriously when you had no consultation, formal consultation with any wildlife biologists that would tell you that the recommended alternative is the no-build alternative if you want to maintain wildlife. And by the way, to Mr. Gray, people know what "no build" means it means "no build" the M-CORES. So, thank you very much.*
- Jessica Bibsa: Thank you for that. Hi this is Jessica Bibsa from National Wildlife Federation in St. Petersburg, Florida. With a long-standing presence here in Florida we are deeply committed to restoring habitats in the region. Our supports include not just gardeners and wildlife watchers but also sportsman, anglers, and hunters and I'm going to get back to that in a point, in a minute. I really appreciated today's discussion and the guiding principles. I still can't help but feel as though this roadway is a solution looking for a problem. Two major elements of the guiding principles that still are missing to me are that the road demonstrates that it's going to be addressing a documented transportation need and also a guiding principle that it needs to be the most fiscally responsible. It needs to be fiscally responsible. I was really glad to hear the conversation at the end of today's meeting about ensuring that the roads are financially feasible and solvent. I'm going to focus the remaining the remainder of my comments on guiding principles six, seven, and eight. I was very glad to see that the draft principles were reordered. I'd actually prefer to see that the first priority to be avoid, as you now have. But then have minimized, and then mitigate, and then connect and enhance because, as I've mentioned in previous meetings when I've given comment, I just don't see how roads can enhance wildlife or public lands or recreation or any of that. I support the proposal for guiding principal six that Shannon Estenez made about adding Florida Forever proposed conservation areas. As we know, Amendment One funds have not funded Florida Forever the way we thought and so there's a lot of really important conservation lands that are on the list. They haven't been acquired yet, but we really don't want the road to go through those areas. Also, in guiding principle six, the supporting CARL lands, I don't know*

why that wasn't included with the list of do not place corridor. Also, I noticed that wildlife management areas were not included in the list of do not place. Wildlife management areas are extremely important to our sportsman and they do need to be included in the list of areas to do not place corridors that was under guiding principal number seven. Similarly want to make sure that preserves and water management district conservation areas are also captured in the list of do not place under guiding principles six, seven, and eight. I know it's going to be tough to come up with an all-encompassing list of all the conservation lands but with a talented staff and the Task Force members and the public, I'm confident that everything will be captured.

- *Herman Younger: Hi my name is Herman Younger and I'm an organizer for the Sierra Club in Gainesville, Florida. Task Force members – FDOT has failed to show need or provide information required by SB 7068 and implement a decision-making process that is consistent with the Florida Constitution. To sign on to any consensus agreement is to validate and be complicit in the sham process. Remember, you are tasked to represent the public and the vast majority of Floridians who have commented publicly and are vehemently opposed to M-CORES. And what meaning do the guiding principles hold when FDOT has fabricated reasoning for this multibillion-dollar project. You should know that encouraging Floridians to try and outrun a hurricane is contrary to the state's emergency management guidelines. This is just one of many examples of how FDOT has continued to deceive you and the public with fallacies meant to protect the project curated by private interests. I believe your hearts are in the right place and you wish to perform your duties as Task Force members with your constituencies in mind, but the only ethical, financial, and environmentally sound thing to do is recommend no-build. I heard you. Please do not sign to any consensus agreement. Your stamp of approval on a disastrous and overwhelmingly unpopular multibillion-dollar toll road project will forever be written in history. Choose to be on the right side of history and reject any consensus agreement on M-CORES. Thank you.*
- *Edie Driest: Hi good afternoon. As a native Floridian born and raised in Miami but now living in Charlotte County, I have witnessed the destruction and pollution of our fragile state over the last 50 plus years and I'm deeply saddened that our governments continue to allow this. What is being proposed now will do nothing but drive that final nail into the state's coffin. As it is now, our state is suffering from polluted springs, canals, and coastlines, loss of wetlands due to development, a dried up dying Everglades, red tide issues, a dying lake Okeechobee, a dying Indian River lagoon, sewage and septic tank leaks, fertilizer runoff from residents and farms, reclaimed water runoff loaded with nitrogen that contributes to algae blooms, dying seagrass which normally helps clean water and provides fish habitat, climate change that is heating up our waters making them ripe for algae blooms, traffic congestion, endangered species running the risk of extinction. For one, I think the panther. They're getting killed on a regular basis due to vehicle collisions. Fourteen out of 17 fatalities reported this year have been caused by vehicle collisions. More roads equates to more fatalities. It's not rocket science that if these roads are allowed to come in more people will move here and more people will compound the problems we have already. Bringing in the roads will not alleviate traffic congestion as it has been touted, but instead will ultimately make it worse. Also, what's been touted is the roads will stimulate the economy. How can we have a healthy economy if we do not have a healthy environment. Will the tourists come here if we're polluted? Will people move here? Will property values go down equating to fewer tax revenues? And what about the expensive correcting our wrongs? How do they help the economy? Imagine the damage that has taken place over the last 50 years and then think what the damage will be during the next 50 years. Without caring for our environment, we are killing our economy. Some feel the roads will stimulate economic development but clearly, they will have the opposite effect. Keeping Florida's economy healthy means protecting the goose that lays the golden egg. I implore you to do the right thing and say no to these proposed toll roads. Thank you.*
- *Vivian Young: Thank you very much. I appreciate the opportunity to speak. My name is Vivian Young and I'm representing 1000 Friends of Florida. Last week we sent you a series of four PD&E recommendations*

and I do want to thank you. I saw at least one of them, number three, related to using comp plan population and economic growth projections to calculate demand has been included in the report and we do appreciate that. I did want to back up a little bit though. One of the fundamental issues with M-CORES, and I'm sure you're all very familiar with this, is the fact that it does not follow Florida's corridor planning process which was established under Governor Jeb Bush in the early 2000s and adopted by DOT and it's still on your website and it's a three-step process. The first of which is to do a preliminary determination of need and financial feasibility and I think this is what is so frustrating to people is that that preliminary level of evaluation was not conducted and you are relying on the PD&E process to take care of that. However, based on the assumption that if this project goes through, we want it to be as effective as possible. We did submit a series of four recommendations as I noted. Legally M-CORES sets a much higher standard for the Task Force than regular transportation projects. It specifically states in the statute that you'll protect natural resources, revitalize rural communities, and other things to that effect. So, recommendations to minimize impact or support revitalization fall short of the statutory requirement. Because of this, one of our major concerns as 1000 Friends is the possibility and impacts of sprawl in these rural areas. You're starting to get some good provisions in terms of protecting environmental resources but preventing sprawl or curtailing sprawl is a very important critical part of it. So, we have a series of recommendations. One to protect the environmental and natural resources in the corridor from the direct and indirect impact of M-CORES. We urge that the lands within 10 miles of each planned interchange shall be protected through acquisition, easement, or other legal instruments. These lands include CLIP one, two, or three priorities on Florida natural areas, identified for purchase by Florida Forever and other programs like that. Second of all, for revitalized communities, we recommend that businesses and to protect businesses and rural communities, we urge you to protect lands within a five-mile radius by conservation easement purchase development rights and other things like that. We only feel that through this acquisition of land at the beginning of the process will be stopped. Natural lands will be protected.

- *Harriet Jones: I'm having a little bit of trouble. This meeting started out on our local Florida Channel, but our local public radio station went out after an hour, but I managed to get back on. I'd like to state I'm from Levy County. You might be aware that our county commissioner sent a resolution to FDOT for no-build and they have not received any acknowledgment last time I heard about that. And Alachua County is also sending a resolution for no-build and I also have friends in Columbia County trying to get their county commissioners to support them to fight this. I, as a taxpayer, I've been trying to keep track of all of the roads and, once again, one of the situations are excuses they have for this road is the evacuation for hurricanes. I'd like to remind you that our hurricane planning has not been updated in 10 years and the last time I heard anything was when our former governor said everybody just get out. That's what the planning was. I think, once again, Senator Lee and his legislature buddies would not listen to the people. One of our school board members told me they went up for Tally Days last year and told our State Representative Stone and State Senator Bradley that they were against this project and they just ignored them. Miss Lily Rooks and our Levy County Commissioners once again I said sent that resolution and the online meetings have left most of us feeling that we're just out of the loop. I once again, I have a friend George Sibley, I sent a couple of documentaries to my county commissioners. He did a short documentary on the Suncoast Parkway and it interviewed the Commissioner of FDOT while he was much younger and a biologist and some out-of-state engineers that were consulted. The out-of-state engineer, his boss was consulted, and he reported on the video that he asked his boss if FDOT did any of the things you recommended he said no they just threw the papers away. They interviewed biologist of wildlife on wildlife overpasses and they said they just ignored them. They actually built one that opened up against a chain link fence and a rock quarry I think it was with trucks running up and down. So once again, us people upstate we are against this and we're working hard to stop it, thank you.*

- Adrian Farman: Thank you, thank you for allowing me to speak. I'm from the Broward Sierra Club and I am saying that please do not sign up for the consensus report regarding the M-CORES road to ruin. We have enough pavement in this state, and I don't know if you all notice how hot it's been this summer. We've had high into the hundreds on multiple days here in South Florida. I'm sure it was just as bad in Central Florida as well and upstate, so the less pavement the better. I do appreciate the Task Force members comments today. I've listened to most of the meeting as much as I could and I did hear some really great experts speak on their thoughts about the wildlife and water and areas to burn so I completely feel that having this road will just cause more issues on over using our resources. Our aquifer is already compromised. We cannot afford to lose any more wetlands. Carbon emissions are off the charts and we really need to start thinking about less carbon and going more with clean energy. This is not a time to be building a highway across our beautiful state. I really enjoyed hearing certain words spoken earlier today on the guiding principles about planning and coordinating community development, creation management, resiliency, sustainability, and adaptability. We need to protect Florida's resources. As you see, so many places in Florida are now under concern because of the water qualities like what happened here in Biscayne Bay and the springs are full of algae and less and less diverse species here in the state. We need to stop the building. We need to really try and save what is left. As it is in the Sierra Club, preserve and protect. I appreciate the recommendations regarding the panthers. We need to preserve our panthers. That's what we're all about. That's all in our state so thank you and thank you for doing this.*
- No members of the public requested to speak at either the two public viewing locations.
- Mr. Nandam thanked members of the public and the Task Force and concluded the meeting.

5:35 PM

Adjourn

Text Format:

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