

Meeting Summary Task Force Meeting #5

May 4, 2016, 1:00 PM The Palace Grand 275 Della Court Spring Hill, Florida 34606

Task Force Members or designees present (in alphabetical order by last name)

Task Force Member, Organization	Designee (if applicable)
☑ Tom Byron, Assistant Secretary for Intermodal Systems Development, Florida Department of Transportation (Chair)	☑ Carmen Monroy, FDOT alternate
☐ Jane Adams, Vice President for University Relations, University of Florida	
☑ The Honorable Scott Adams, Citrus County Commissioner	
☑ Rebecca Bays, Owner, Insurance Resources and Risk Management	
☑ Janet Bowman, Director of Legislative Policy & Strategies, The Nature Conservancy – Florida Chapter	
☑ The Honorable Garry Breeden, Sumter County Commissioner	
☑ The Honorable Charles Chestnut, Alachua County Commissioner	
☐ Gary Clark, Deputy Secretary for Land and Recreation, Florida Department of Environmental Protection	☑ Donald V. Forgione
☐ Hugh Harling, Executive Director, East Central Florida Regional Planning Council	
☑ Thomas Hawkins, Policy Director, 1000 Friends of Florida	
☑ Scott Koons, Executive Director, North Central Florida Regional Planning Council	
☑ Charles Lee, Director of Advocacy, Audubon Florida	
☑ The Honorable Stan McClain, Marion County Commissioner	
☐ The Honorable John Meeks, Levy County Commissioner	
☑ The Honorable Nick Nicholson, Hernando County Commissioner	
☐ Kevin T. Sheilley, President & CEO, Ocala/Marion County Chamber and Economic Partnership	☑ William Parsons
☑ Mike Sizemore, Citizen	
☑ Sean Sullivan, Executive Director, Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council	
☑ The Honorable Matt Surrency, Mayor, City of Hawthorne	
☐ Taylor Teepell, Director, Community Development, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity	
☐ Brian Teeple, Executive Director, Northeast Florida Regional Council	





Staff: FDOT Central Office, District 2, District 5, District 7, and Florida's Turnpike Enterprise Staff and Consultant teams

Number of Other Agency Representatives in Attendance: 9 (Refer to Attached Sign-In Sheets)

Number of Other Interested Individuals in Attendance: 30 (Refer to Attached Sign-In Sheets)





Meeting Highlights

Note: All Task Force Binder contents and meeting materials referenced (including presentations) are available for downloading at the I-75 Relief project website at www.i75relief.com.

Welcome and Introductions, Tom Byron, FDOT (Chair) – 1:00 PM

The Meeting Facilitator, Shelley Lauten, called the meeting to order.

Chairman of the I-75 Relief Task Force, Tom Byron, welcomed the Task Force members to the fifth meeting of the I-75 Relief Task Force. Chairman Byron announced that the meeting was being live-streamed by The Florida Channel and thanked them for their partnership. The Chairman then asked the Task Force members to introduce themselves and the organization or interest they represent.

Chairman Byron noted the abbreviated meeting format, and explained that, at this point in the Task Force process, the meeting agenda would consist of fewer presentations and instead focus on facilitating discussion and consensus among the members on their recommendations. He also explained that in addition to the public comment period noted at the end of the agenda, there would be time allotted for public comment at the beginning of the agenda, following the opening comments. The Chairman reviewed the primary goals for the day and then introduced Shelley Lauten to cover housekeeping items.

Overview of Meeting #6 and Prior Action Items - 1:05 PM

Review Meeting Agenda and Objectives, Shelley Lauten, triSect, LLC – 1:05 PM

Ms. Lauten reviewed the meeting objectives, the contents and structure of the Task Force Binders, and the meeting agenda (Task Force Binder, Tab 1), emphasizing the key goal for the day was to reach preliminary consensus on the framework for enhanced and new high speed, high capacity transportation corridor options.

Meeting Objectives

- Discuss evaluation approach and framework of enhanced and new high speed, high capacity transportation corridor options in the study area
- Reach preliminary consensus on framework of enhanced and new high speed, high capacity transportation corridor
 options to be studied further
- Review draft Task Force report outline
- Identify action items and next steps
- Obtain public input

Ms. Lauten reminded attendees to sign in at the registration desk and requested that the Task Force members fill out an evaluation form. She briefly addressed logistics about the facilities and asked members of the public to fill out an appearance card if they wished to speak during the comment period.

Ms. Lauten introduced Huiwei Shen, FDOT I-75 Relief Project Manager, to review the status of the action items from Task Force Meeting #4.





Review Key Action Items from Meeting #4, Huiwei Shen, FDOT – 1:10 PM

Huiwei Shen, FDOT Project Manager for the I-75 Relief Study, provided an update on the status of key action items, including refining maps on enhanced and new corridors and the land suitability map. Ms. Shen stated that the southern area of opportunity has been removed from the areas of opportunity maps based on consensus from the last Task Force meeting. Ms. Shen explained that other data requests received throughout the Task Force process have been documented and will be carried forward as appropriate into the subsequent evaluation phase for each option.

Status of Work Plan

Ms. Shen asked for the Task Force to turn to the Work Plan (Task Force Binder, Tab 1) and noted the change in the schedule for the upcoming Community Open Houses, now scheduled June 7 - 9, 2016, in order for the Task Force to receive feedback from the public on the draft recommendations with adequate time to make adjustments before putting together the final report.

Ms. Shen asked if there were any questions from the Task Force members.

No questions/comments were offered.

Approval of Meeting #4 Summary, Tom Byron, FDOT – 1:15 PM

Chairman Byron called for the approval of the Meeting #4 Summary (Task Force Binder, Tab 2). The Task Force Meeting #4 Summary was approved with no objections.

Citrus County Board of County Commissioners Resolution

The Chairman then invited Commissioner Scott Adams (Citrus County) to present the resolution recently passed by the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners.

Commissioner Adams read the resolution, which states that the board requests the support of legislative representatives of Citrus County and the transportation authorities in the State of Florida for the I-75 Reliever connection from State Road 44 to the Northeast Florida region and to support expediting the construction of the connector from State Road 44 to the northern terminus of Citrus County within the designated area of opportunity as established by the Florida Department of Transportation.

Commissioner Adams then showed a map of the originally planned route of the Suncoast Parkway 2 from S.R. 44, northwest to U.S. 19. at the city of Red Level. Commissioner Adams explained how this route was intended to help relieve truck traffic on U.S. 19 and bypass the City of Crystal River. He then presented the map of the proposed areas of opportunity previously discussed by the I-75 Relief Task Force. He noted that both of the areas of opportunity presented to the Task Force potentially traverse through residential communities of Citrus County. He expressed concern that any environmental concerns with the original route could not be compared to the impacts on quality of life for the residents in this area. He proposed that a connection between Tampa and Jacksonville could be maintained if the traffic traveled from the Suncoast Parkway extension to U.S. 19, and then northeast to Jacksonville through Columbia County, further stating that he believed this route has traffic projections that could support its funding. Commissioner Adams added that the cities of Crystal River and Inverness did not endorse the Citrus County Commission resolution. He encouraged the Task Force to re-evaluate the process and the solutions that it has discussed thus far. He concluded by stressing that the two areas of opportunity currently proposed by the Task Force could impact the communities of Black Diamond, Pine Ridge, Citrus Springs and Beverly Hills, which he noted are the most populated areas in Citrus County.





Jim Wood, FDOT State Transportation Planning Administrator, provided a background on the proposed Suncoast Parkway 2 segment from S.R. 44 to U.S. 19. Mr. Wood explained that during the 2013 Tampa to Northeast Florida Concept Study, there were numerous concerns noted by both local agencies and environmental organizations on the long-term impact to the Big Bend area that could be caused by growth from increased traffic along U.S. 19 due to the Suncoast Parkway 2 extension. Mr. Wood explained that it was through this outreach that the idea arose of an alternative route for the roadway extension from S.R. 44 to I-75 to provide relief to congestion experienced on I-75. Mr. Wood noted that at that time, the Suncoast Parkway 2 project was divided into two portions, with the segment to S.R. 44 proceeding to construction. He explained that he does not view the segment from S.R. 44 to U.S. 19 as meeting the purpose and need established by the Task Force to provide relief to I-75 or to connect Tampa Bay to Northeast Florida, nor does it fit within the resolution passed by the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners, which specifies a connection to Northeast Florida.

Ms. Lauten asked if there were any questions from the Task Force members.

The following questions/ comments were offered:

- Charles Lee (Audubon Florida) stated that Commissioner Adams' presentation seemed in opposition to the Commission's resolution for an I-75 Reliever to Northeast Florida, and that he instead seemed to be presenting a dissenting opinion of support for the Suncoast Parkway 2 to continue to U.S. 19. He then asked Commissioner Adams if he voted for or against the resolution during the commission meeting.
 - Commissioner Adams explained that he voted against the resolution based on the information he reviewed during the Task Force, the concerns of affected cities and residents, and the lack of consideration of an option to US 19 that already had approved PD&E. Commissioner Adams also noted that the cities of Crystal River and Inverness have not supported the County's resolution.
- Mayor Matthew Surrency (City of Hawthorne) stated that he did not understand how Commissioner Adams' suggestion would effectively relieve traffic from I-75, the purpose of the Task Force. Mayor Surrency stated his concern that what was presented by Commissioner Adams was different than the intent of the resolution passed by the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners.
- Commissioner John Meeks (Levy County) stated that as much as he is in support of ideas that bring people and
 infrastructure into Levy County, he is concerned about encouraging development along U.S. 19 due to its location
 within a storm surge area, citing specific events in the recent past where portions of U.S. 19 had been flooded,
 and secondary evacuation routes had been at a standstill.

Following the comments on Commissioner Adams' presentation, Mr. Wood provided clarification on funding allocations for transportation projects. He explained that statutory provisions dictate which funds can be used for different types of projects. Mr. Wood asked the Task Force to understand that funds cannot freely move from one type of project to another (e.g., toll funds to local projects, or certain categories of federal funds to state projects, etc). He recommended that the Task Force not look at the potential recommendations as interchangeable. All recommended options would have their own funding considerations and would undergo an analysis of financial feasibility within the FDOT work plan as each option moves forward into project development.

Commissioner Garry Breeden (Sumter County) commented on his recent experience with congestion on I-75
while traveling north into Georgia and suggested that the Task Force should prioritize its goals. Commissioner
Breeden suggested that the immediate need to relieve I-75 be prioritized over the goal of connectivity
between Tampa Bay and Jacksonville.





- Ms. Lauten explained that the priorities of the Task Force, and discussion of such, would be covered
 in Mr. Wood's presentation later on in the day's agenda, and noted that Commissioner Breeden's
 concerns would be addressed at that point.
- Mr. Lee commented on the Big Bend region and the suggestion of future development in that area. He explained that the Big Bend region is the largest natural area in Florida, larger than the Everglades, and called it the remaining coastal treasure of Florida. He said that a toll road at the southern end of this area could imply that a strategic decision has been made to open this area for development. Mr. Lee said he believes that that not only is connecting the Suncoast Parkway 2 to I-75 a more logical choice from an environmental standpoint, but also the toll revenue would be much higher along the Suncoast Parkway if it were to draw traffic from I-75 as opposed to U.S. 19.

Public Comment Period – 1:40 PM

Chairman Byron announced the first public comment period, with the reminder that another comment period would follow at the end of the agenda. Shelley Lauten reminded the speakers that there is a three minute time limit on comments.

- James Dick, Alachua County resident, stated that he wished to comment on projections. He stated that the whole problem regarding development and roads all over the country is due to bad projections and forced decisions based on these projections. Mr. Dick spoke specifically about the future vision of the Port of Jacksonville as a global port, stating his belief that this will never come to fruition. Instead, he believes the Port of Jacksonville will operate only as a regional port, based on the size and number of ships that have the capability of accessing the port. He explained that Jacksonville only has the capacity to support ships carrying 8,000 twenty-foot equivalent units (TEU), while the post-Panamax ships, for which the Panama Canal is being expanded, can support a load of 16,000 TEUs. Mr. Dick stated that if a post-Panamax ship can transport 16,000 TEUs from one location and unload at a single port, it saves 40 percent of shipping costs. Mr. Dick stated his belief that the only economically feasible port to accommodate these large shipments is Hampton Roads, which is central to the East Coast. He stated that the cities of Jacksonville and Tampa are not interested in doing business with each other. He concluded by stating that when looking at projections, the Task Force should understand they will never be realized because they just do not make sense.
- Judy Etzler, Micanopy resident, spoke of her interest and involvement in water issues, including sea level rise. She commented that she sees the Task Force work as planning for 50 years in the future. Ms. Etzler shared an excerpt of a report called *Risky Business: The Bottom Line on Climate Change Come Heat and High Water: Climate Risk in the Southeastern U.S. and Texas*, which she felt should be of interest to the Task Force, especially Task Force member Rebecca Bays, representative for Insurance Resources and Risk Management, based on Ms. Etzler's personal experience in business and insurance. She explained that Florida will start paying attention to sea level rise when insurance rates along the coast begin to increase due to increased risk of storm surge. The excerpt read, "Climate change has become a significant threat to the state, especially to its coastal property and infrastructure, which are crucial to Florida's world-renowned tourism industry and the state's overall economy. Sea level rise, with more than 8,400 miles of shoreline, Florida already faces serious risks from flooding and coastal storms. As the atmosphere warms due to the accumulation of heat-trapping greenhouse gases, the oceans also warm and expand. Melting ice caps also contribute to higher sea levels. Much of Florida's critical infrastructure—including roads, railways, ports, airports, and oil and gas facilities— sits at low elevations, and large portions of Miami are built on porous limestone (Ms. Etzler added that the whole state of Florida is built on porous limestone, and





explained the risk that poses for salt water intrusion into the aquifer – our drinking water) that allows seawater to inundate inland areas even in the presence of physical barriers. At Miami, mean sea level will likely rise 0.8 to 1.3 feet by 2050 and 2.0 to 3.6 feet by 2100." Ms. Etzler concluded by stating that while transportation plans can be made without taking it into account, sea level rise is already happening.

• Trisha Auffhammer, Citrus County, first commented on her disappointment that the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners would pass a resolution of support with no details behind the project or whom it would potentially impact. She also pointed out that the Citrus County Economic Development Board passed a resolution with matching language. Ms. Auffhammer stated her support of the cities of Inverness and Crystal River not passing a resolution before the Task Force has finished its work. Ms. Auffhammer stated that she believes the Task Force should stick with maximizing existing corridors. She explained that she feels that instead of providing relief to I-75, the Task Force is trying to cram development onto the west coast of Florida. Ms. Auffhammer listed the reasons for tourism in the state, emphasizing how all tourism drivers are related to water. She then noted air and water-related threats, giving many examples such as the Zika virus, West Nile virus, and amoebas, noting that these threats will only be escalated in the future due to rising sea level and temperatures, implying that a rise in tourism in Florida may not continue as projected. She asked the Task Force to focus on providing infrastructure to support the current population of Florida by maximizing existing corridors, and not to plan for a projected rise in the tourist population.

Chairman Byron thanked the speakers and reminded the public of the second comment period.

Evaluation and Framework – 2:00 PM

Chairman Byron introduced John Kaliski, Cambridge Systematics, to present the proposed evaluation approach.

Evaluation Approach, John Kaliski, Cambridge Systematics – 2:05 PM

Mr. Kaliski presented on the proposed evaluation approach the FDOT will use to evaluate the options for enhanced and new corridors recommended by the Task Force moving forward (Task Force Binder, Tab 3).

Ms. Lauten asked if there were any questions from the Task Force members.

The following questions/ comments were offered:

- Charles Lee (Audubon Florida) asked if one of the recommendations for the Task Force will be to maximize I-75 without a new connection to the Suncoast Parkway.
 - o Jim Wood explained that the ongoing I-75 North Vision Study is developing alternatives for the ultimate buildout of I-75. Mr. Wood provided I-4 Ultimate as an example of the types of recommendations that could come out of the study for the future of I-75. Mr. Wood explained that this option is further explained and highlighted in the upcoming framework for enhanced and new corridors presentation and document.

Framework for Enhanced and New High Speed, High Capacity Corridors, Jim Wood, FDOT - 2:18 PM

Mr. Wood presented the Framework for Enhanced and New High Speed, High Capacity Corridors (Task Force Binder, Tab 3). Mr. Wood explained that this is the same framework that was presented at the last meeting, with revisions based on the Task Force feedback received. Mr. Wood stated that this framework will be used to summarize the range of options the Task Force could recommend moving forward for further evaluation. The focus of Mr. Wood's presentation was on the framework and draft language of recommendations for enhancing the existing facilities of I-75, U.S. 41, U.S. 301, CSX





S line and other rail corridors, as well as areas of opportunity for I-75 reliever corridors. He explained that part of the process moving forward includes evaluating each of these options individually, but also in relationship to one another, in an attempt to solve complex, regional transportation needs in a comprehensive and interconnected manner. He concluded by emphasizing that these options are looked at systematically during future evaluation phases and explained that the areas of opportunity can include combinations of enhancements to existing facilities and new facilities.

Task Force Member Discussion and Preliminary Consensus on Framework – 2:37 PM

After Mr. Wood finished his presentation, he explained that today's objective is to reach consensus from the Task Force today on ideas in the framework to advance to the upcoming Community Open Houses for public review and comment. He explained that once feedback is received from the public and reviewed at the next Task Force meeting, the Task Force will work toward final consensus on the ideas to move forward into an evaluation phase.

Ms. Lauten facilitated discussion on the framework of options, first asking for feedback on the existing facilities as a group of options.

- Commissioner Garry Breeden (Sumter County) said he believes the presentation has "nailed it." He appreciated the package of how the recommendations were presented today, including the acknowledgement that the initial focus will be to enhance existing infrastructure, without ruling out the option for a new corridor. Commissioner Breeden said he believed it does make sense to study both of those options at the same time to determine what is most feasible and realistic. Commissioner Breeden thanked staff for getting to this point. Commissioner Breeden said that his next comment is that the northern (green) area of opportunity makes more sense to him as a way to meet the purpose of relieving I-75, while the central (purple) area of opportunity makes more sense in the effort to connect Tampa to Northeast Florida.
- Mr. Lee asked for clarification of some differences in the maps and presentation materials shown today—specifically, the map highlights S.R. 40, S.R. 44, and S.R. 200 as potential enhancements, in addition to U.S. 41, U.S. 301, and I-75 as listed.
 - o Mr. Wood suggested that the map could be revised to differentiate S.R. 40, S.R. 44 and S.R. 200 in a different color. He explained that those roads are listed in the framework as other corridors that could be looked at to support overall I-75 relief and provide additional east-west connectivity. However, the opportunities presented by those corridors are not as significant as the opportunities for U.S. 301, I-75, and U.S. 41 to provide relief.
 - Mr. Lee stated that he understands from this explanation that these roads (S.R. 40, S.R. 44, and S.R 200)
 play a secondary role in the framework and ought to be called out in a different column and color on the map, with supporting language explaining such a role.
- Scott Koons (North Central Florida Regional Planning Council) echoed Commissioner Breeden's earlier comments, noting that he believes staff have appropriately responded to the prior comments of both the Task Force and the public. Mr. Koons stated that he concurs with the approach in the framework for enhancing existing facilities. Mr. Koons said that he think this approach builds on his comments from a previous meeting suggesting that this is really a three-phase process of short-, medium, and long-term actions. He suggested that for the community meetings that the short-term improvements within the framework be highlighted to the public, providing the interchange improvements, Road Rangers, and dynamic message boards as examples to be highlighted of work that is ongoing to improve I-75. He suggested that the Community Open Houses show a timeframe of 5 to 10 years





on these type of improvements, and to explain that any major enhancement to an existing facility would have a timeframe of 10 to 20 years, while a future new corridor would be a long-term solution with a 20 to 50 year horizon.

- Commissioner Scott Adams (Citrus County) stated that he supports the framework for existing facilities as presented today. He acknowledged that his prior comments about S.R. 200 and S.R. 40 were included in the framework, and he believes the framework provides for improvements that support the region as a whole.
- Janet Bowman (The Nature Conservancy) echoed Mr. Koons' comments on the importance of highlighting timeframes at the Community Open Houses. Ms. Bowman stated that she believes it is important to communicate to the public that enhancing existing facilities will not be sufficient to meet the transportation needs for the region in the 50+ year timeframe as an explanation for why other alternatives are currently being looked at. Ms. Bowman stressed that it is critical to highlight the reality of these needs and the planning timeframe to the public.
- Mike Sizemore (Citizen Representative) expressed his satisfaction with the framework for enhancing existing facilities presented today, and its capture of prior Task Force comments. Mr. Sizemore expressed concern with regard to other rail corridors within the framework, explaining that he is not confident that rail corridors will be considered as part of enhancing existing facilities. Mr. Sizemore explained the potential future of the SunRail to extend from the I-4 corridor west into this region and possibly capture ridership from The Villages and/or the Tampa Bay region. He stated his desire for a specific alternative focused on future rail connectivity from the I-4 area be included in the framework.
 - o Mr. Wood responded that while the boundary for this Task Force focus area does not include the I-4 corridor, the Task Force should recognize that the rail industry is taking this bigger perspective. As an example, Mr. Wood noted that the Winter Haven Intermodal Logistics Center is outside of the study area, but impacts the transportation system within the study area. Mr. Wood stated that even though these facilities are outside of the study area, they are considered when evaluating feasibility and during future coordination with the rail industry.
 - O Mr. Kaliski added that several commuter rail proposals are located within the periphery of the study area, such as Orange Blossom Express from Orlando to Tavares and commuter rail from Tampa to Brooksville using a current CSX line. Mr. Kaliski noted that these will be documented in the report as potential future building blocks for a passenger rail system in the study area.
 - o Mr. Sizemore responded by elaborating on the need for proactive planning for commuter rail facilities, citing the need for large parking facilities, which are difficult to construct after development has built up.
- Thomas Hawkins (1000 Friends of Florida) asked for clarification about how the FDOT's context sensitive solutions policy would relate to capacity enhancements on existing facilities that are not currently limited access. He used U.S. 41 as an example, noting that it runs through existing communities with numerous intersections, including small-town downtowns. Mr. Hawkins also asked how significant those considerations would be in the evaluation criteria. He stated that he wants to underscore the idea that increasing capacity in an urban environment with right of way constraints can have significant negative impacts on surrounding communities.
 - o Mr. Wood responded that these community impacts would be considered in the Evaluation Stage. He explained that the FDOT recently adopted a Complete Streets Implementation Plan, and supporting FDOT processes and guidebooks will be adapted to support the concept of complete streets. Mr. Wood explained that the concept of complete streets looks at the relationships of road corridors within





communities and how they can enhance the community. He explained that context sensitive solutions is a component of that policy. Mr. Wood stated that during evaluation, options will be considered to minimize impacts to communities, providing the Starke bypass as an example of one type of option. Mr. Wood added that with the focus the Task Force has placed on maximizing existing facilities, it is important to realize that most options do not come without significant impacts.

- o Mr. Hawkins requested that specific language be drafted to include context sensitive solutions in the evaluation criteria, highlighting the quality of infrastructure in a community.
- o Mr. Wood agreed that these issues will be included in the Task Force report.
- Mr. Kaliski added that the last guiding principle for centers and communities addresses how a facility relates to the context, scale, and character of the surrounding community, adding that suggestions on how to translate these considerations into an evaluation criteria would be helpful.
- o Ms. Lauten commented that as staff begins to draft sections of the Task Force report for Task Force approval, comments such as Mr. Hawkins' are crucial.
- Commissioner Stan McClain (Marion County) stated his general agreement with the framework. Commissioner McClain also noted confusion regarding S.R. 200 and S.R. 40, explaining that he thought it had previously been discussed that those corridors do not provide an opportunity to add additional capacity. Commissioner McClain gave the example of the interchange of S.R. 200 and I-75 in Marion County, explaining that there is no right of way remaining, that the interchange is built to its maximum at eight lanes. He also explained that S.R. 40 in Marion County has development abutting the entire corridor. He said that he could see improvements to these corridors in Citrus or Levy counties. However, some of these improvements are already planned, and they will not directly connect to I-75.
 - o Mr. Wood acknowledged Commissioner McClain's concerns, explaining that the corridors that are highlighted on the map are those that have been part of prior Task Force discussions. Mr. Wood commented that the current map may suggest that S.R. 200 and S.R. 40 have more options to increase capacity than is reasonable or desirable, and offered a solution to not identify these options on the map and alternatively only mention them by name in the framework document. Mr. Wood stated that this idea further reflects Mr. Lee's earlier comments about these roads being secondary, and that staff does not anticipate full evaluation studies on these corridors to result from the Task Force recommendations, unlike U.S. 301, U.S. 41, and I-75. Mr. Wood added that he believed the Task Force had previously stated the importance of S.R. 44 due to its connection to the Suncoast Parkway 2.
 - o Commissioner McClain replied that he does not have a preference on the map, he just wanted clarification on the ideas of how to enhance those corridors.
 - O Mr. Kaliski clarified that this was an acknowledgement of the role the east-west connector roads play in I-75 relief and in the region, recognizing that the FDOT is to support and coordinate with local jurisdictions and Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) on the implementation of planned projects in these corridors.
 - Mr. Wood termed these corridors as "corridors to watch."
 - O Commission McClain discussed a Marion County project for a north-south corridor parallel to I-75 that would also serve as a reliever to I-75 within the county.





- Mr. Lee asked a question in regards to funding, proposing an option for I-75 to be enhanced with toll lanes by
 Florida's Turnpike Enterprise, given the policy of the FDOT for any additional capacity lanes to be tolled. Mr. Lee
 commented that he does not see the same possibility of tolling on U.S. 301 or U.S. 41. He continued to ask how
 expanding capacity on these roads would be viable in terms of funding.
 - Mr. Wood responded that improvements to U.S. 301 and U.S. 41 are not necessarily funded by a tolled option. He clarified that on limited access facilities, the feasibility of a tolled option is evaluated by the FDOT. Improvements to non-limited access facilities may receive funding from other sources.
 - Mr. Lee responded by asking where the funding for the improvements would come from, if not toll lanes.
 - o Mr. Wood suggested Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) funding and MPO funding as examples of funding opportunities for improvements to these roads. Mr. Wood explained that no major capacity improvements are currently outlined in any plans for these highways and the feasibility of these projects needs to be studied to be ready when the funding is available. Mr. Wood explained that in general, 25 percent of the FDOT's work program is federally funded and 75 percent is state funded.
- Mayor Matthew Surrency (City of Hawthorne) highlighted the importance of working with local communities, considering their needs to maintain the vitality of their communities when looking at enhancements to U.S. 41 and U.S. 301. Mayor Surrency also commented on exploring the opportunity of adding passenger rail service to the CSX S Line to connect Tampa, Brooksville, Ocala, and Gainesville up to Jacksonville, referring to Bob O'Malley's comment that the S Line offers additional capacity today. Mayor Surrency concluded with his desire to add text to the framework for the support of local unfunded projects on arterial roads that parallel and provide relief to I-75.
 - Mr. Wood asked Mayor Surrency to clarify whether his preference was for the text to recommend studies for those arterials or offer an acknowledgement to those ongoing projects.
 - Mayor Surrency offered the project in Gainesville as an example of a local project that could relieve I-75
 if funding were available. He stated that the projects do not need to be addressed individually, but could
 be acknowledged with text supporting local projects that provide relief to I-75.
 - Mr. Wood responded that the framework document already includes text that reflects this thought.
 - Mayor Surrency acknowledged this, but explained that these projects are not highlighted on the map as
 opportunities to enhance existing facilities.
 - o Mr. Wood clarified that the map only highlights the major components of the framework. He explained that acknowledging the role local roads have in I-75 relief is what the MPO panel presented at the previous Task Force meeting. Mr. Wood noted that staff will revisit the text to ensure it appropriately acknowledges these parallel corridors and the coordination with the MPOs and local governments. Mr. Wood explained that funding for those projects is determined at the MPO level and based on their local priorities of what they would like to see funded.
- Mr. Sizemore stated that for the map used at the Community Open Houses he recommends a different color and explanation for S.R. 200 and S.R. 40 based on the earlier comments by Commissioner McClain.
 - o Ms. Lauten acknowledged general agreement from the Task Force members on this comment.





- Commissioner John Meeks (Levy County) stated that in addition to S.R. 200 and S.R. 40, S.R. 121 is also a critical east-west connector in the initial focus area and he would like to see this added to the map.
 - o Mr. Wood acknowledged that S.R. 121 will be added to the framework narrative and that based on the discussion, S.R. 40 and S.R. 200 would be removed from the map but acknowledged in the framework.
 - o Ms. Lauten asked if there were any objections to removing the two corridors from the map.
 - o The Task Force agreed on removing S.R. 40 and S.R. 200 from the map.
- Commissioner McClain stated that if roads are being added to the framework, he would like to add C.R. 326 and C.R. 318 to the list of roads to be acknowledged in the framework as helping support relief to I-75.
 - Ms. Shen asked the Task Force to let staff revise the map to highlight U.S. 41, U.S. 301, and I-75 and then take a system-wide look at potential corridors to add to the narrative that would provide east-west connectivity between these corridors.
 - Mr. Wood suggested that this text merge with the text suggested by Mayor Surrency earlier, acknowledging and supporting the many local facilities that have the ability to help in the I-75 relief effort.
- Mr. Koons, referring to Mayor Surrency's earlier comments on local unfunded needs, suggested that the Task
 Force recommend legislative action in Chapter 339 for state funds to be used on county and city road projects
 that provide relief to the state highway system, just as the federal funds can be used on roads that are not on the
 federal network.
 - Chairman Byron responded that this suggestion is outside the scope of the Task Force recommendations, but could be something that is recommended at a local level.
 - Mr. Koons responded that he believed his suggestion is essential to the work of the Task Force, and that the Task Force is to look at creative solutions for the long-term.
 - Mayor Surrency agreed with Mr. Koons, stating that he believes a good recommendation of the Task Force is to ask the FDOT to look for opportunities to fund projects that help support the overall transportation system.
 - Ms. Lauten asked if there were suggestions from the Chairman on language that would be broad enough to address these issues without getting into the details of legislation.
 - Chairman Byron responded that he would not want the Task Force to get into legislative language analysis.
 The Chairman stated he is not opposed to include a broad recommendation on the importance of funding this element of the transportation system.
 - Mayor Surrency suggested a recommendation for the State to look at means for additional funding for local projects that relieve I-75, without the Task Force suggesting where those funds would come from.
 - o Rebecca Bays (Insurance Resources and Risk Management) suggested that this topic be approached from an MPO level and the district level, as it is not something that is appropriate for the Task Force to consider.
 - o Mr. Wood commented that what has been suggested is a fundamental policy question that has repercussions beyond the study area, offering language that outlines and acknowledges the limitations and challenges related to current funding policies and support for existing programs like the Transportation Regional Incentive Program that are intended for these kinds of projects.





- Mr. Koons asked that the staff come back with draft language on the topic, which would encourage the Department to use innovative approaches for partnering and funding projects on local roads that relieve congestion on the state highway system.
- Commissioner Nick Nicholson (Hernando County) stated that he did not believe changing state law should be part of the discussion for the Task Force. Commissioner Nicholson explained that from his experience serving on the MPO board, that it is an issue at a local level that should be brought to the legislature by the MPOs and the local governments. Commissioner Nicholson voiced his concerns over spending time talking about something that is not part of the Task Force charge.
- Donald Forgione (Florida Department of Environmental Protection) agreed with removing S.R. 200 and S.R. 40 from the map, further stating that if these roads were enhanced, it could encourage more congestion on I-75. Mr. Forgione asked staff to clarify the suggested changes to the map and further suggested that the highlight on U.S. 41 extend from S.R. 44 to I-10 to be comparable to the extent of U.S. 301 improvements.
 - o Chairman Byron responded that S.R. 200, S.R. 40, and S.R. 44 were to be removed from the map.
 - o Mr. Wood clarified that the extent would be changed for U.S. 41 to match U.S. 301 from S.R. 50 to I-10.
- Ms. Bowman advocated for extending U.S. 41 further south to get it close to I-75, in which capacity it could serve as a possible reliever to I-75 without connecting to the Suncoast Parkway 2.

Ms. Lauten asked for consensus on advancing these options to the Community Open Houses in June.

The Task Force agreed.

Ms. Lauten asked the Task Force for comments on the draft areas of opportunity, asking if the Task Force is comfortable with these options being presented at the Community Open Houses and with staff drafting language regarding these options for inclusion in the final report.

- Mayor Surrency commented that the northern area provides the best opportunity to relieve I-75, and suggested
 widening the northern area to include U.S. 41. Mayor Surrency's second suggestion was to remove the central
 swath, but add a small study area to connect I-75 to U.S. 301 in that same area to encompass smaller connections
 such as C.R. 326 that could help deal with the pinch point in Marion County.
- Mr. Lee asked about the ability of the central area to relieve congestion on I-75. Mr. Lee added that if the central area was extended in the direction of Jacksonville, it would enter very sensitive environmental areas in eastern Alachua County. He said that the northern area may be preferable both for relieving I-75 and connecting to Northeast Florida.
- Mr. Hawkins said he views these two options as a choice of having a limited access highway to the west side of Gainesville or to the east side of Gainesville, with neither option especially attractive. Mr. Hawkins added that the central area could provide the more direct route to Jacksonville along the U.S. 301 corridor, and he believes the viability of transforming U.S. 301 into a limited access facility is greater than developing a new corridor to the west of Gainesville. Mr. Hawkins added the starting point for both areas at the terminus of the Suncoast Parkway 2 makes a decision to develop a highway corridor, which seems inconsistent with the Task Force's charge to make mode agnostic recommendations. He stated that any time rail has been mentioned, it does not seem to be viewed at the long-term, high-level planning perspective, giving an example of rail rights of way being privately owned cited as a limitation. Mr. Hawkins commented that there is no reason in the long-term for there not to be publicly owned rail, and that concerns of the "stickiness" of freight movement between rail and truck is also a limited view.





Mr. Hawkins continued that if the Task Force were mode agnostic, one recommendation could be evaluating how to connect the rail lines between Brooksville and Crystal River or a new rail corridor that could connect Jacksonville with Tampa. He asked the Task Force if they want to continue to make mode agnostic decisions, or narrow its scope to extending the Suncoast Parkway north.

- O Mr. Wood responded that the current Suncoast Parkway, along with the Suncoast Parkway 2 extension to S.R. 44, is multi-modal because of the bicycle/ pedestrian trail. The corridor would continue to have this amenity if it were continued. Mr. Wood added that one consideration of the evaluation study would be the feasibility to acquire a right of way envelope that would include the capacity for a rail line in the long term. Mr. Wood also commented on the suggestion to drop the central area, noting the value of being able to compare the feasibility of multiple options.
- Mr. Sizemore commented that the traffic counts along I-75 peak around the same location where the central area intersects I-75.
 - o Mr. Wood said that whether the central area would provide relief to I-75 or cause further congestion would be evaluated in the next phase.
 - o Mr. Sizemore said that he believed it was important to keep this option.
- Commissioner Charles Chestnut (Alachua County) said he believes it is important to present both areas of opportunity at the Community Open Houses, explaining that we have heard from many of the residents in eastern Alachua County near U.S. 301, but we have not heard from many citizens of Newberry and Archer in western Alachua County on their opinions on a new corridor. Commissioner Chestnut also asked about the potential to widen S.R. 24 from Bronson to Archer Road, and indicated that he would like some community input on this option and potential role in the I-75 relief process.
 - o Mr. Wood acknowledged that S.R. 24 can be added to the framework narrative, but noted that like the other east-west corridors it would not be a focus of the evaluation studies.
- Commissioner Nicholson stated that he agrees with removing the central area, due to the traffic counts and accident counts on I-75 south of Gainesville. He added that if the northern area is not used, the Task Force will not be maximizing the potential to relieve congestion on I-75. He agreed with Mayor Surrency's suggestion of widening the northern swath to the west to include U.S. 41 and looking at improvements to the connectivity between I-75 and U.S. 301. Commissioner Nicholson said that studying the central area would not be a good use of time.
- Mr. Koons stated that recent comments bring up the conflicting mission of the Task Force. Mr. Koons reminded the Task Force of the two-pronged purpose to provide alternatives for relieving congestion to I-75 as well as increasing connectivity between Tampa Bay and Northeast Florida. Mr. Koons agreed with earlier comments that the northern area better addresses the first purpose, while the central area better addresses the second. Mr. Koons said the Task Force should not be recommending either-or, nor should it be recommending an alignment for where a future road should go. He stressed the need to not limit the number of alternative solutions for further evaluation.
- Jane Adams (University of Florida) agreed with Mr. Koons, and explained that the Task Force should not limit its options given the two purposes. Ms. Adams commented on the need for traffic data relating to different potential routes and the opportunity for relief given the areas of opportunity. She asked about how many people use I-75





to get from Tampa to Jacksonville, if the central area would take traffic off of I-75 if U.S. 301 is improved, and how much traffic would be diverted from I-75 if the northern area was developed.

- o Mr. Wood responded that those types of analyses would be conducted during the evaluation study.
- Ms. Lauten explained that Ms. Adams' questions would be documented as part of the Task Force report as recommendations to include in future evaluations.
- Commissioner Breeden stated that he sees I-75 relief as the primary objective of the Task Force and he believes the northern area serves that purpose.
- Taylor Teepell (Florida Department of Economic Opportunity) commented that if one area is chosen for the west side of I-75, this decision completely dictates what is going to happen on the east side of I-75. Mr. Teepell said it would be premature to eliminate an area now, and that he would like both of the areas to remain as options.
- Mr. Lee commented that if the central area has a strong potential to provide a beneficial connection to Jacksonville then the swath should extend east of I-75 at least to U.S. 301, and potentially follow the path of U.S. 301 and the CXS S-Line north to Jacksonville.
- Ms. Bays commented on the population of the study area and areas south. Ms. Bays stated that the idea to expand U.S. 41 is extremely environmentally impactful through Citrus County, as it runs through the chain of lakes. She said that the most environmentally sensitive solution would be to funnel development away from the coast and into the central part of Florida through a high speed, limited access facility. Ms. Bays stated that she would like the direction of the Task Force to re-focus on getting people and visitors into and out of the west side of the state as efficiently as possible. Ms. Bays concluded that she believes the northern area is the best option to address her concerns.
- Sean Sullivan (Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council) commented on the importance of keeping both areas of opportunity, noting as it relates to funding, it is wise to keep several alternatives open for evaluation before coming to a preferred alternative.
- Commissioner Adams asked for clarification on the Community Open Houses.
 - Ms. Lauten explained that there will be three Community Open Houses held prior to the next Task Force meeting, where the input from the public will be shared with the Task Force before the final recommendations on what options to advance to the final report.
 - Commissioner Adams said he would be comfortable advancing both options to the Open Houses, and coming back for further discussion at the next meeting.
- Mayor Surrency commented on the high traffic counts between Gainesville and Ocala, which is primarily local traffic. Mayor Surrency explained that he sees the northern option as a bypass for travelers from the north who want to get to an area south of Ocala and Wildwood and avoid the congested area. Mayor Surrency explained that he does not see the intent of the central swath ending at I-75 south of Gainesville, that a second Task Force would continue the path to the east of I-75. He explained that when connecting the two areas of opportunity to Jacksonville, the northern swath goes through much less environmentally sensitive areas, while the central area goes through several water resources.





- Mr. Teepell stated that he would like to make decisions based on data rather than opinions. Mr. Teepell asked for
 preliminary traffic data on congested areas and the potential impacts of these two options to be presented to
 help inform the discussion.
 - Mr. Wood clarified that traffic projections and level of service data were provided at previous meetings and is informing some of the discussion we hear today. Mr. Wood continued to say that the only way to get into a more detailed analysis of how traffic would change given various scenarios is to get into a more detailed evaluation study.
 - o Mr. Teepell said he is hesitant to go to the public with only one option.
- Mr. Sizemore agreed that the evaluation phase will narrow down any unreasonable options that do not meet the purpose and need. Mr. Sizemore also seconded Mr. Lee's comment on extending the central area to U.S. 301.
- Ms. Bowman commented on the need to evaluate the benefit of enhanced connectivity to Jacksonville provided by the northern area to I-10, stating that she thinks this may be as efficient of a route as the central area.
 - o Ms. Lauten noted that this would be documented moving forward into evaluation.
- Commissioner McClain stated his preference for the northern area to relieve I-75 and commented on the
 possibility of improving U.S. 301 and U.S. 41 as an alternative to a new corridor, explaining that at that point, the
 east-west connectors discussed earlier in the day will play a larger role in providing relief to I-75 and would need
 to be included in the evaluation studies.
- Chairman Byron asked for consensus on carrying both options forward to the Community Open Houses for public comment.
 - o Mr. Lee noted his concerns over the central area, but agreed it should be presented at the Open House.
 - o Mr. Hawkins commented on his concerns with expanding the northern area to the west as suggested in the discussion, due to environmentally sensitive areas just north of that area.
 - Ms. Shen replied that staff will look into the feasibility of extending the northern area with consideration of the identified avoidance areas.
 - Mayor Surrency clarified that he does not want to extend the area to the west, only to include
 U.S. 41, as he is familiar with the environmental sensitivity of that area as well.
 - Mr. Forgione added that the northern area currently ends at the San Felasco Hammock Preserve State Park and O'Leno State Park is to the west, so the best path is to go between them. Mr. Forgione also suggested that the northern area extend to the east of I-75 a little so that it visually points to Jacksonville.

Ms. Lauten asked for consensus on advancing these options to the Community Open Houses in June.

The Task Force agreed.

- Mr. Koons clarified that the recommendations going to the Community Open House would include the central
 area extended to U.S. 301 and the northern area following U.S. 41 and then turning east over I-75, "fanning out."
 - Mr. Kaliski clarified that staff will work on the best way to portray the adjustments to the northern area as discussed.





Report Outline, Huiwei Shen, FDOT - 4:00 PM

Huiwei Shen presented the draft report outline (Task Force Binder, Tab 4) and indicated which content had been discussed at prior meetings. Ms. Shen explained that staff will draft portions of the report for review at the next meeting.

Ms. Lauten asked if there were any questions from the Task Force members.

The following questions/ comments were offered:

- Charles Lee (Audubon Florida) expressed concern that the bullets under Task Force Recommendations do not include both enhanced and new transportation corridors, focusing only on new corridors. Mr. Lee requested that this bullet be broken out into two sub-bullets instead of including these recommendations as one section.
 - Ms. Shen explains that it was the intent of this bullet to include recommendations for both existing and new, and the language in this section will be based on the recommendations that came out of today's discussion and consensus items.

Summary of Next Steps, Huiwei Shen, FDOT – 4:07 PM

Huiwei Shen presented the summary of next steps (Task Force Binder, Tab 5).

Ms. Lauten asked if there were any questions from the Task Force members.

- Chairman Byron asked for clarification on the draft report sections that would be ready for the next meeting.
 - o Ms. Shen indicated that draft sections of text will be brought back for review at the next meeting.
- Mayor Matt Surrency (City of Hawthorne) asked for clarification on the date of the next Task Force meeting, June 24th.
 - o Ms. Shen indicated that this is the correct date noting that the time and location may change, and reminding the Task Force to check the website for the latest information.

Task Force Member Closing Remarks - 4:12 PM

Chairman Byron thanked the Task Force for the valuable discussions and asked for closing comments from each of the members.

- Thomas Hawkins (1000 Friends of Florida) stated that staff has done a fantastic job and appreciates the consensus model. He expressed his uneasiness that the Task Force may not be considering options as mode agnostic.
- Rebecca Bays (Insurance Resources and Risk Management) stated the Task Force purpose is to be proactive and long-term and to avoid problems that transportation solutions of the past have faced because they were not properly planned.
- Mike Sizemore (Citizen Representative) commented on how deeply he is affected, sitting on the Task Force, every time there are reports of a death on I-75. He added that he is looking forward to the results of the future evaluation studies.
- Commissioner John Meeks (Levy County) expressed his appreciation for everyone's patience on the Task Force, and for staff being responsive to the Task Force's comments and concerns. Commissioner Meeks commented on





the importance of this project not just for the counties represented here today, but for the future of the entire state, concluding on the thought of working together as a region.

- Janet Bowman (The Nature Conservancy) stated that she believes the Task Force has set up an excellent discussion for the public comment period. Speaking to the public, Ms. Bowman expressed her interest in hearing ideas from the public and her willingness to modify her recommendations based on that. She spoke of the importance of recognizing the two different goals the Task Force is faced with, noting that while they have overlap, they are different. She added that she believed the Task Force did a good job of identifying how those different goals relate to the choices on the table.
- Commissioner Charles Chestnut (Alachua County) thanked staff for the framework element, expressing his
 excitement that he has a document and a map that he can bring back to the Alachua County Board of County
 Commissioners to discuss how these options relate to the future of Alachua County. He stated that he is very
 interested in hearing the feedback from the Community Open Houses, especially the one in Gainesville.
- Hugh Harling (East Central Florida Regional Planning Council) stated that he would appreciate if the freight panel
 were able to get copies of the draft Task Force recommendations, and thereafter come back to speak to the Task
 Force again.
- Commissioner Scott Adams (Citrus County) thanked the staff for the framework on enhancing existing corridors, and recognizing the MPOs' roles as well. Commissioner Adams stated that the recommendations will be an ongoing discussion upon hearing the public input. He recognized that the purpose of the Task Force is to work together to come up with the best possible solutions.
- Donald Forgione (Florida Department of Environmental Protection) thanked the staff and commented that he is looking forward to hearing the public input.
- William Parsons (Ocala/Marion County Chamber and Economic Partnership) thanked everyone for the opportunity to be a representative today.
- Commissioner Nick Nicholson (Hernando County) stated he was honored to be part of the group and appreciated today's discussion.
- Commissioner Garry Breeden (Sumter County) stated that he is looking forward to the next meeting and is expecting to have a lot of great information to work with coming out of the Community Open Houses.
- Scott Koons (North Central Florida Regional Planning Council) thanked staff and the Task Force for the discussion today. He said he believed the Task Force had made significant progress during this meeting and has something meaningful to present to the public for comment. Mr. Koons wanted to stress the importance of providing context for the Task Force's work or defining the "why" both in the Task Force report and at the Community Open Houses. He commented on a prior study that concluded that for I-75 to meet an acceptable future level of service, 16 lanes would be needed, meaning that adding two lanes in each direction would help alleviate congestion, but would not fully address the problems. Therefore there is a need for a multifaceted approach.
- Taylor Teepell (Florida Department of Economic Opportunity) stated that he appreciated Mr. Hawkins' position
 on rail opportunities, but based on the charge of the Task Force to reduce congestion on I-75 and on discussions
 with the freight panel, he does not believe that increased rail capacity will relieve I-75 in the context of the Task
 Force charge. Mr. Teepell said he would like to have rail as part of the conversation, but the rail opportunity should
 not dictate where areas of opportunity should go.





- Charles Lee (Audubon Florida) stated that he appreciates the staff's work, and commented that he wished the state was planning roads like this 25 to 30 years ago. Mr. Lee concluded by stating that taking the Task Force recommendations to the public is a good next step.
- Mayor Matt Surrency (City of Hawthorne) thanked the staff and the citizens that attended the meeting, stating
 that he is glad that many people are engaged and stated his hopes for a good attendance at the Community Open
 Houses. Mayor Surrency requested a flow chart or timeline at the next meeting to help with the discussion of the
 implementation plan.
- Commissioner Stan McClain (Marion County) appreciated the robust conversation of the day and the work the staff has done, especially on the maps that were presented today.
- Sean Sullivan (Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council) thanked staff for the presentations and stated that he
 enjoyed participating, as well as listening and learning, which he commented is of equal importance to speaking.
 He concluded that the Task Force is well-positioned to take their preliminary consensus recommendations to the
 Public Open Houses to receive input.
- Jane Adams (University of Florida) thanked everyone for the discussions, commenting that today helped solidify her thinking.

Public Comment Period – 4:23 PM

Chairman Byron announced the second public comment period, for those that did not speak at the beginning of the meeting.

John Wade, Inverness resident, stated that he believed the Task Force is in a state of not knowing what its purpose is. He explained that at the first Task Force meeting, the Task Force was looking at a connector from Tampa Bay to Jacksonville. Mr. Wade stated that the presentations at the first Task Force meeting presented traffic flows on I-75 and U.S. 301 between these areas, asking the Task Force to note that very little traffic travels between Tampa Bay and Jacksonville using I-75 and U.S. 301. Mr. Wade explained that after the first Task Force meeting, the goal seemed to shift to relieving traffic on I-75, questioning this change in direction. Mr. Wade stated that the level of service (LOS) data available from the state shows only a small area of I-75 at the Turnpike operating at LOS D, however scheduled and funded improvements for this area will bring the LOS back up to a level of B or C. I-75 from I-275 to the Florida/Georgia line currently operates at a LOS of B or C. He asked the Task Force if they were presented with this LOS data along I-75 (publicly available data), as he had not seen this data in any presentation during any of the Task Force meetings to date. Mr. Wade went on to explain that in other parts of the state, such as Tampa and Miami, residents would be thrilled to have LOS C or B. Mr. Wade explained that it now seems the Task Force has changed direction to provide a means for the Suncoast Parkway to pay for itself as required by state law. Mr. Wade stated that if the Task Force's real purpose is to relieve congestion on I-75, he believes the Task Force should be provided with the following information before making any recommendations: total cost of improving I-75 including truck-only lanes and/or tolled express lanes; total cost of a reliever road that would connect to the Suncoast Parkway and include environmental costs; and the impact of roads on existing cities and residential communities and quality of life. He would like the Task Force to get the data and the facts first before making any decisions. He urged the Task Force not to decide on a project based on what a few want, and instead do what is best for the residents of the affected areas. Mr. Wade also commented that Inverness' and Crystal River's decisions to not support the Citrus County resolution at this time be included on the public record. He believes all information should be provided by the chair, not just information that is in support of a new road. He





concluded by stating that he believes the public comment period should be placed on the agenda after the presentations and prior to the Task Force closing comments, as it was in the first four Task Force meetings, so that the Task Force may consider public views.

- Karen Etsy, Inverness resident, explained that she wanted to clarify the Citrus County resolution and the 4 1 vote. She explained that most residents, along with the cities of Inverness and Crystal River, wanted the county to wait on adopting a resolution until after the Task Force had delivered its final recommendation so that the county could have all of the information before making a decision. Ms. Etsy said she thinks Commissioner Scott Adams was correct in voting no on the resolution until after the Task Force had made its final recommendations. Ms. Etsy discussed her experiences living in Miami as well as with land use policy. She stated that from this experience she has learned that roads are the can openers for development. She urged the Task Force to be careful when developing new roads in an area, and to be conscious of the comprehensive plans, letting those guide the development as opposed to allowing roads to cause uncontrolled, sprawled development. She gave such examples as the development of schools, infrastructure, DRIs, and wildlife corridors. Ms. Etsy said she is not opposed to The Villages (development), but stated that land use and transportation in that area should have been planned and coordinated a long time ago, because now The Villages creates problems for the I-75 corridor. Ms. Etsy voiced her concern for the environment and asked the Task Force to be very cognizant of what they are doing. She warned of potential long-term impacts to arterial roads on the transportation system if a new corridor is built.
- Loretta Whelpton, Gainesville resident, echoed the comments of those before her. She thanked the Task Force for untangling the two purposes of I-75 relief and Tampa to Jacksonville, which she believed was not made clear until this Task Force meeting. Ms. Whelpton stated that the central (purple) swath connects to Jacksonville, and the northern (green) swath provides relief to I-75, and that we need them both. She also emphasized the need for east-west connectors to get from the west coast to the east coast. Ms. Whelpton explained the non-direct routes she currently has to take to get to Canaveral National Seashore and Jacksonville from Homosassa. She then went on to discuss a response that former Task Force Chairman Biter provided to her at Task Force meeting #2, which was to not "worry about it," that funding is available for I-75 relief and for Tampa to Jacksonville. She explained that she believes him and doesn't worry about it. Ms. Whelpton said that public-private partnerships were a large discussion in the legislature and that they will be a part of the Task Force discussion. Ms. Whelpton perceives this partnership will be with rail, which she supports as a great way to move people and freight. She discussed the future modes of transportation and highlighted opportunities for being multi-modal. Ms. Whelpton suggested that not all transportation needs to be on asphalt or rails, expressing that she has written the Task Force about this before and requested staff feedback but has not seen any. She would like the Task Force to talk about something "new and great and that has yet to be discussed" as a means for future transportation. Ms. Whelpton concluded by saying that the Suncoast Parkway 2 is currently a road to nowhere and that she believes in addition to the swaths, the 2008 plan for the extension to U.S. 19 should be re-evaluated as it also has merits.
- Fred Busack, Safety Harbor resident, introduced himself as an attorney who has worked on a lot of infrastructure and transportation projects. He reflected on a previous study that was done in 1998 and the similarities between those discussions and those of today. He spoke about the revival of the Future Corridors initiative in 2006, as well as the announcement of the Panama Canal expansion. Mr. Busack explained that in 2011 the Future Corridors study areas were reduced to four and the problem of lack of intermodal connectivity in Florida was highlighted. Mr. Busack explained that this was important because the world economic structure is going to change. He said that in 2004 and 2005 he was told the Panama Canal expansion would never happen, yet it will open next month. Mr. Busack then addressed the misconceptions about the Panama Canal, citing comments about post-Panamax





vessels and the viability of putting them in every port. He expressed frustration with this misinformation and explained that transshipment ports built at either end of the Panama Canal allow for cheaper movement of goods than any other mode, meaning greater savings. Mr. Busack then spoke about short sea shipping, explaining that one fuel barge would remove 150 trucks off the road. Mr. Busack stated that he wished this Task Force was given the information that was provided on Future Corridors in 2006, which showed current and future congestions levels. He asked the Task Force for its recommendations on tolled express lanes, if data from other projects in Florida, where those were implemented, was shared with the Task Force relating to the improvement of LOS after they were implemented. Mr. Busack concluded by stating he has been involved in Future Corridors studies for 15 years, asking if there is room for 15 more years to study it further, given today's situation on I-75.

- Kayla Sosnow, Gainesville resident, stated her excitement that the staff has emphasized opportunities to maximize existing facilities, but cautioned the Task Force about recommending the draft areas of opportunity for new corridors as they would very likely result in new highways. She explained that despite it being included in the charge, the range of options does not need to include new corridors, adding that there are many other creative combinations of existing options that the Task Force has recommended. Ms. Sosnow encouraged the Task Force to be empowered to do what they think is best for the State of Florida. Ms. Sosnow then explained her concerns with language in the purpose and need, the basis for the framework of options, including the need to provide better connectivity between rural areas and employment centers. She questioned the entire need for a Tampa Bay to Jacksonville corridor, explaining that it has not been proven that this is where people want to go or if there is support for such a route. Ms. Sosnow requested the Task Force remove some bullet points and add different bullet points to both the Purpose and Need document and the Preliminary Framework for Enhanced and New Transportation Corridors document. She suggested the addition of a bullet point stating, "To preserve and enhance natural and pristine old north Florida." She explained that if this is not an evaluation criteria then that outcome won't be considered. Ms. Sosnow's also addressed the consensus framework used by the Task Force. She noted her excitement that the Task Force is interested in public comment and stated that if after hearing public input, the Task Force is inclined to not support new corridors, then they do not have to go along with what other people want to hear. Ms. Sosnow concluded by explaining her concerns with the Community Open Houses. The first concern was with the invitational flier that was distributed to advertise for the Community Open Houses, which does not include a map with the swaths that are under consideration. She stated that she believed as a citizen of this area, she has a right to know what areas might be impacted and that the flier is dishonest and malpractice and needs to be fixed. Her final concern with the Community Open Houses was the format, with a continuous video in one room and staff and maps in another room. Ms. Sosnow stated she believes these meetings should be held in the format of a community meeting where a presentation is made to the community with an opportunity to have their questions and comments answered in a format where everyone can hear each other's concerns. She explained that she believes this is the correct way to receive public input. She asked the Task Force, if they are not going to be at the public meeting, how they will hear the public input provided through verbal comments and discussions.
- Pat Wade, Inverness resident, stated that this has become way too complicated and she is on the side of "none of the above." Ms. Wade stated the FDOT should stop the Suncoast Parkway 2 extension, as the northern end of the existing Suncoast Parkway is a "bowling alley." Ms. Wade asked the Task Force to add lanes to I-75 and be done, explaining her belief that when construction is done we will have other methods of travel. She explained that I-75 from Tampa to I-10 and then I-10 to Jacksonville provides adequate connectivity between Tampa and Jacksonville. Ms. Wade asked the Task Force why we are reinventing the wheel. She stated that this approach preserves homes, businesses, sensitive areas, villages, and everything the Task Force has been paying lip service to, but ignoring.





She concluded by asking for the locals to continue their local plans and the state to widen I-75, and that in 50 years we will be traveling some other way.

Conclusion, Tom Byron, FDOT – 4:45 PM

Chairman Byron thanked the public for their comments.

- Charles Lee (Audubon Florida) asked if he may ask the staff a question based on something said during the public comment. He recalled Ms. Sosnow's question about how the public input from the Community Open Houses would be shared with the Task Force and stated that he was very interested in that. He noted that from past experience, he knows verbal statements can be given to FDOT staff and that there are also comment cards, but he would like to know the public's reaction to these specific proposals. He asked how qualitatively the input would be shared with the Task Force at the next meeting.
 - Ms. Shen clarified that the map on the flier is to illustrate the location of the meetings, and explained that the updated areas of opportunity map will be on the handout at the Community Open Houses and on the website. She explained that after the first round of Open Houses in March, staff summarized the verbal input they received and then this feedback, along with the comment forms, were summarized and presented to the Task Force at the next meeting. Ms. Shen explained that the first round of Open Houses entailed introducing and explaining the Task Force process to attendees, and explaining the concept of the areas of avoidance and minimization. She explained that because of the introductory nature of the Open Houses, there was not a lot of quantitative feedback to report back to the Task Force. Ms. Shen started to explain the format and substance of the next round of Community Open Houses.
 - o Mr. Lee asked that Ms. Shen clarify how the comments will be reported back to the Task Force in a summarized format, speaking to the comment cards and the recorded comments that the staff record.
 - o Ms. Shen responded that all comments received are included in the Task Force binder on a CD for their review, but acknowledged that this is a data dump. She added that she will work with staff on providing a summary of the feedback received, including the "temperature" of the responses, explaining that now that the Task Force has the framework of options, there will be a lot more input for her to report back.

Chairman Byron thanked everyone once again for a long and successful meeting. Ms. Lauten reminded the Task Force to complete the evaluation form before they leave.

Meeting Adjourned – 4:55 PM





Task Force Member Sign-In Sheet

I-75 Relief Task Force Meeting Wednesday, May 4, 2016 - 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Name (PLEASE PRINT)	Title / Organization	Email Address / Phone Number (PLEASE PRINT)	Mailing Address (PLEASE PRINT)
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Adams, Scott	County Commissioner 5 M	scott.adams@citrusbocc.com	110 N. Apopka Ave, Inverness, FL 34450
Arnold, Bradley	County Administrator	bradley.arnoid@sumtercountyfl.gov	7375 Powell Road, Wildwood, FL 34785
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Task Force Member Sign-In Sheet

I-75 Relief Task Force Meeting Wednesday, May 4, 2016 - 1:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

Name (PLEASE PRINT)	Title / Organization	Email Address / Phone Number (PLEASE PRINT)	Mailing Address (PLEASE PRINT)
Sheilley, Kevin T.	President & CEO, Ocala/Marion County Chamber and Economic Partnership	kevin@ocalacep.com	310 SE 3rd Street, Ocala, FL 34471
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WHAT MA DARY	(SUB FOR KEVIN SHEILLEY)		
ARSONS, WILLIAM	(SUB FOR KEVIN SHEILLEY)	WILLIAM QOCALA CEP. COM	310 S.E. 3PD ST, OCAHA 34411





I-75 Relief Task Force Meeting Wednesday, May 4, 2016 - 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

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I-75 Relief Task Force Meeting Wednesday, May 4, 2016 - 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

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I-75 Relief Task Force Meeting Wednesday, May 4, 2016 - 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

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Zobler, John	Ocala	cmo@ocalafl.org	





Public Sign-In Sheet

I-75 Relief Task Force Meeting Wednesday, May 4, 2016 - 1:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m.

How did you about this m	hear lecting?	Name (PLEASE PRINT)	Title / Organization	Email Address/Phone Number (PLEASE PRINT)	Mailing Address (PLEASE PRINT)
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Newspaper	Mailing	Zachery C. Hall		the spektrellegmail.com	1834 NW 42nd Ave Grinesville, FL 32605
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NewspaperWebsite	Other	KAYLA SOSHOW	RESIDENT	KAYLA ETREECHTYPROPERTIES. NET	528 NW 28Th AVE. GAINESVILLE, FL 32609
Newspaper	Mailing				
Website	Other				





Public Sign-In Sheet

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Newspaper Website	Mailing Other	Loretta Whelpton	Citrus Co Citizen	352 765 4070	15
Newspaper Website	Mailing Other	Stefanie Maueur	HIDR	Stefanie, mequeen@ndrinc.com	5426Bay Center Dr. Tanyon FL 33609
Newspaper Website	Mailing Other	Fred Busack	Bussel Law Firm	fred@ busceklaw.com	on lile
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Public Sign-In Sheet

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How did you about this me	hear eeting?	Name (PLEASE PRINT)	Title / Organization	Email Address/Phone Number (PLEASE PRINT)	Mailing Address (PLEASE PRINT)
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