



# **ALTERNATIVE CORRIDOR EVALUATION REPORT**

Southport Connector Expressway  
(Poinciana Parkway to Canoe Creek Road)  
Project Development and Environment Study  
Osceola and Polk Counties, Florida

CFX Project Number: 599-233

January 2022

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### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Southport Connector Expressway is a proposed limited access east-west divided four-lane tolled expressway connecting Poinciana Parkway with Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (FTE) and Canoe Creek Road, a distance of approximately 15 miles. The community of Poinciana is an unincorporated 47,000-acre residential area of approximately 69,300 people (2020 Census Data) located in both Polk and Osceola counties. According to the Census Bureau, over 75% of Poinciana residents work outside their county of residence and have an average commute time of 49 minutes. More than 42% of residents have a commute time of 60 minutes or more with the majority of Poinciana residents commuting to the Greater Orlando area traversing on either Pleasant Hill Road, Poinciana Boulevard or Poinciana Parkway, all of which are connected by Cypress Parkway. A limited access facility connecting Cypress Parkway to FTE, as well as the existing Poinciana Parkway and planned Poinciana Parkway Extension, will provide an alternative route for commuters. The Southport Connector is identified in the Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX) 2040 Master Plan (see **Figure 1**).

CFX authorized an Alternative Corridor Evaluation (ACE) as part of the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study for the Southport Connector Expressway in June 2021. Although the full study area includes a segment of Cypress Parkway, the Cypress Parkway segment is common to all alternatives. Therefore, the purpose of the ACE is to document the analysis of each corridor alternative east of Reedy Creek and identify all feasible corridor alternatives that advance to the next phase of the PD&E study.

The proposed Southport Connector Expressway begins at Poinciana Parkway, an existing two-lane roadway that is currently being widened to a four-lane roadway which intersects with Cypress Parkway, an existing east-west suburban arterial roadway. The proposed facility would be co-located with existing Cypress Parkway for approximately 3.5 miles. Continuing east, the proposed expressway crosses the Reedy Creek ecosystem before traversing eastward to Canoe Creek Road. **Figure 2** shows the limit of the study area. The proposed limited access facility will provide additional traffic capacity and connect the community of Poinciana to interregional transportation systems such as FTE, Interstate 4 (I-4) and future planned expressways identified in the CFX 2040 Master Plan.

CFX conducted a Concept, Feasibility, and Mobility (CF&M) Study for the Southport Connector Expressway which was adopted in May 2018. During the study, the corridors recommended for further evaluation by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) in their 2015 ACER were evaluated and resulted in a total of six alternative corridors that were advanced to the PD&E Study phase. **Figure 3** shows the six corridors from the CF&M study that served as the baseline for the PD&E study to evaluate, refine, and develop corridor alternatives with the purpose of identifying a preferred alternative.

## Southport Connector Expressway PD&amp;E Study

**LEGEND**

- Existing CFX System
- Wekiva Parkway (CFX)
- Wekiva Parkway (FDOT)
- Existing Florida's Turnpike System
- Existing Osceola Parkway
- SunRail
- Widening Existing CFX System by 2040
- Potential SR 408 Eastern Extension
- Potential Lake/Orange Connector
- Potential SR 414 Direct Connector
- Future Bright Line (AAF)
- OIA Intermodal Transportation Center
- SunRail Stations

**East Central Florida Corridor Task Force Recommendations**

Corridor	Recommendation
Corridor D	Corridor D
Corridor F	Corridor F
Corridor H	Corridor H
Corridor I	Corridor I

**OCX Master Plan**

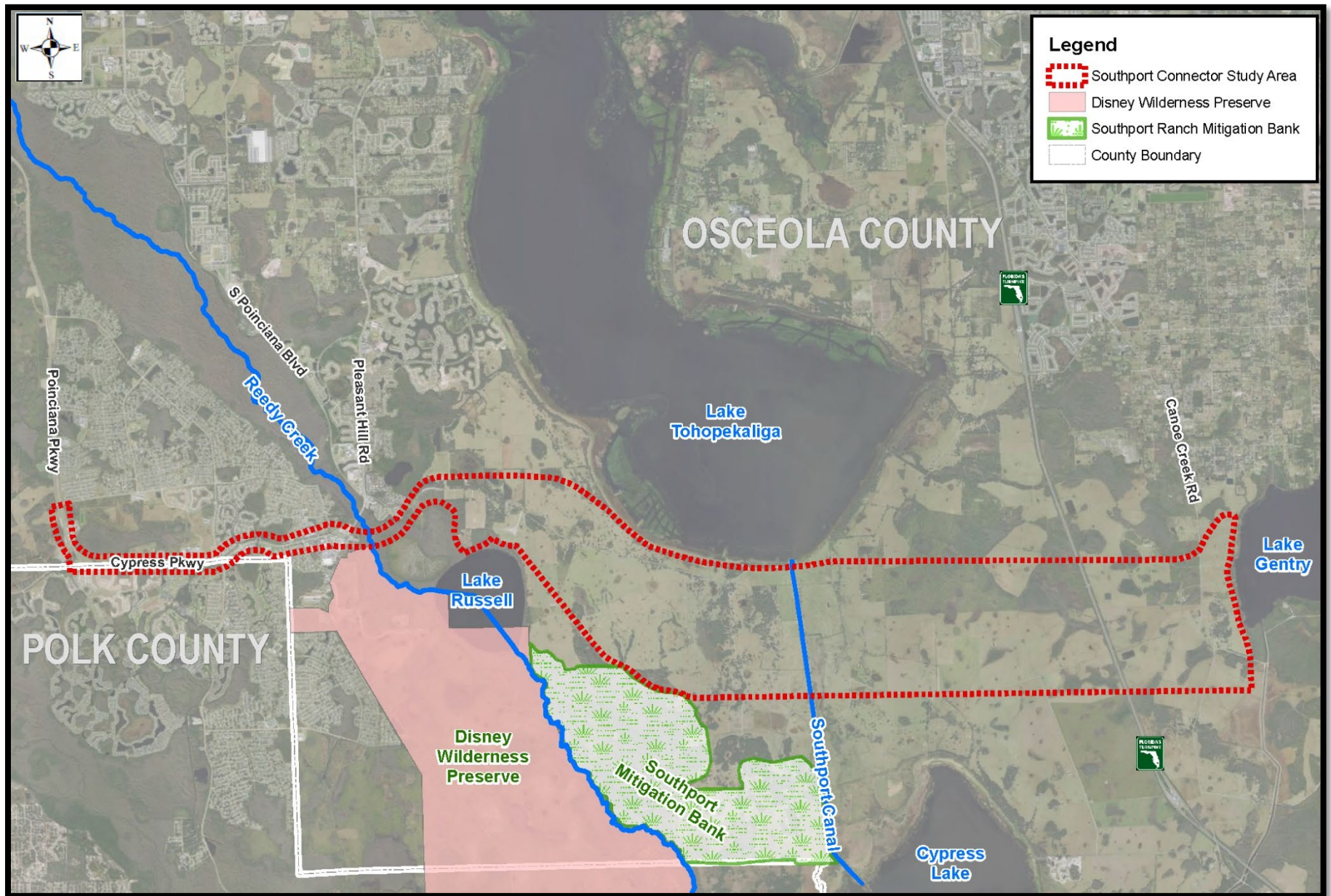
- Northwest Connector Expressway
- Osceola Parkway Extension
- Poinciana Parkway
- Southport Connector Expressway
- I-4 Connector
- Interchange Improvements



# Alternative Corridor Evaluation Report

Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study

Figure 2: Project Study Area

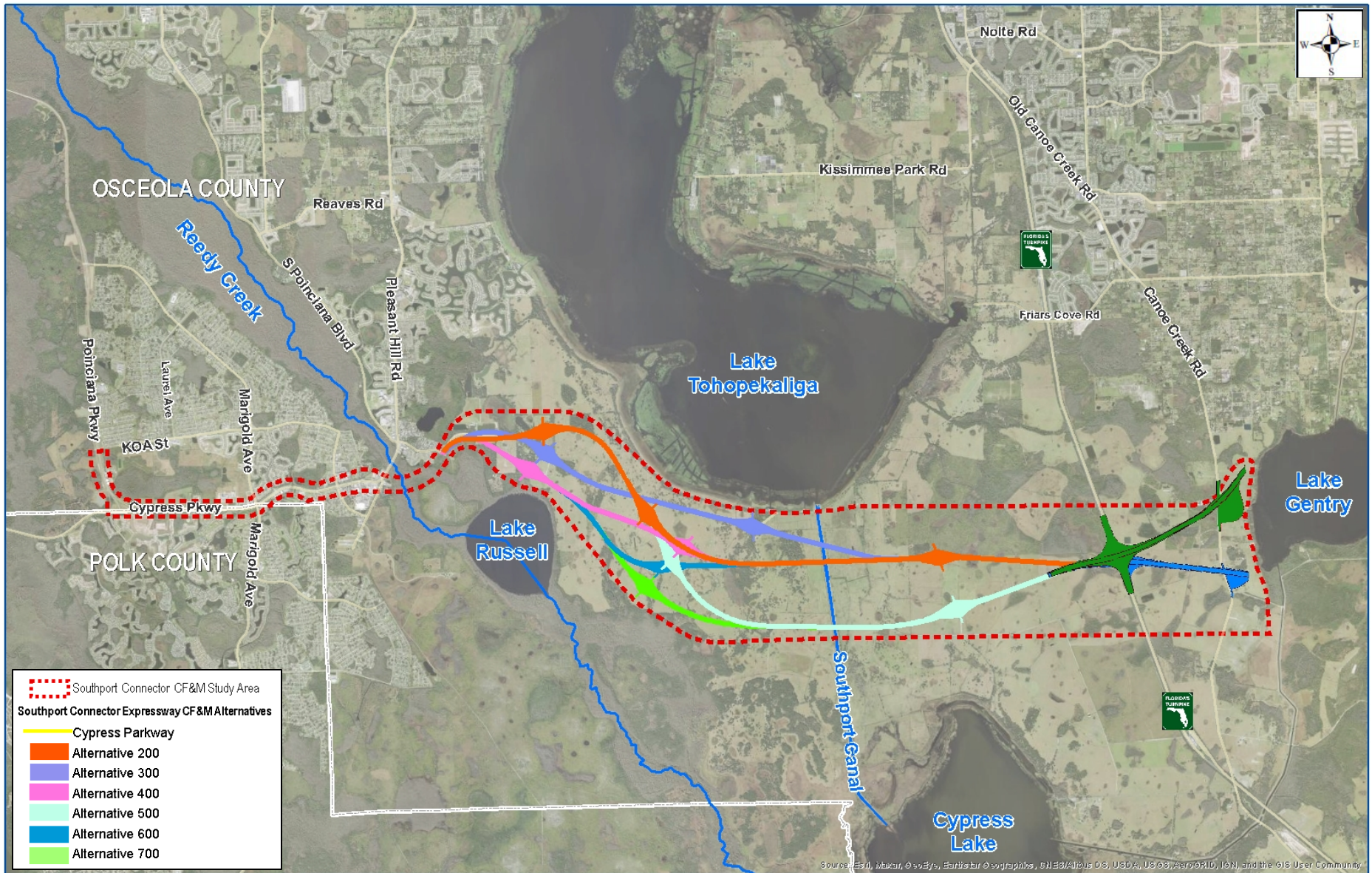




# Alternative Corridor Evaluation Report

Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study

Figure 3: CFX CF&M Alternative Corridors



As a result of the refinement performed during the PD&E study, three feasible alternatives south of Lake Tohopekaliga (Toho) were identified to move into a more detailed analysis. Following input from CFX's Environmental Stewardship Committee and the study's Environmental Advisory Group, the study area was expanded to allow for the addition of a fourth alternative crossing Lake Toho. **Figure 4** shows the expanded study area and **Figure 5** displays the four corridors being evaluated in this ACE report. The study area was expanded from the boundary used in the CF&M study to accommodate this fourth alternative.

A comparative analysis was used to evaluate each corridor alternative to determine which corridors should be carried forward for further evaluation. All corridors were evaluated for project purpose and need satisfaction and the potential for relatively high impacts to social, natural, cultural, and physical environmental features. Using these and other key criteria, the corridors were further evaluated by assigning a weighted value to sub-factors within each main criterion. A quantitative and qualitative assessment was then performed to compare and rank each alternative. The results of the comparative analysis shown in **Table 1** led to the recommendation that corridors 3000, 4000 and 7000 should be carried forward for further evaluation.

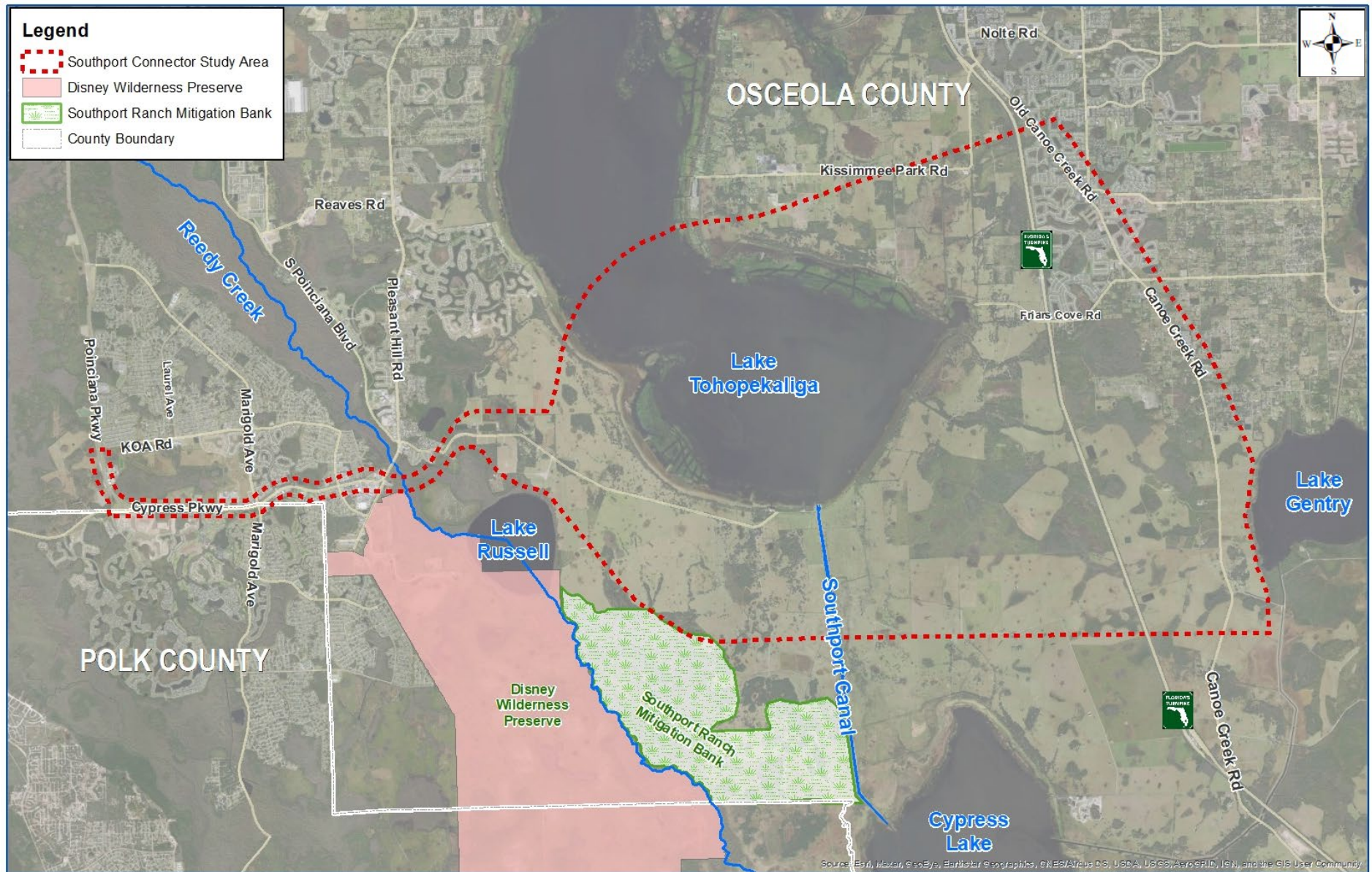
**Table 1: Comparative Analysis of Corridor Alternatives**

Southport Connector Expressway Corridor	Purpose and Need Satisfaction	Potential Relatively High Impacts	Corridor Evaluation Matrix Weighted Score	Estimated Cost <sup>1</sup> (in millions)	Recommendation for Further Consideration
2000	No	10	36.4	\$1,215	No
3000	Yes	1	58.0	\$871	Yes
4000	Yes	2	61.2	\$860	Yes
7000	Yes	2	61.4	\$863	Yes

<sup>1</sup> Includes construction and mitigation using 2019 costs provided by CFX

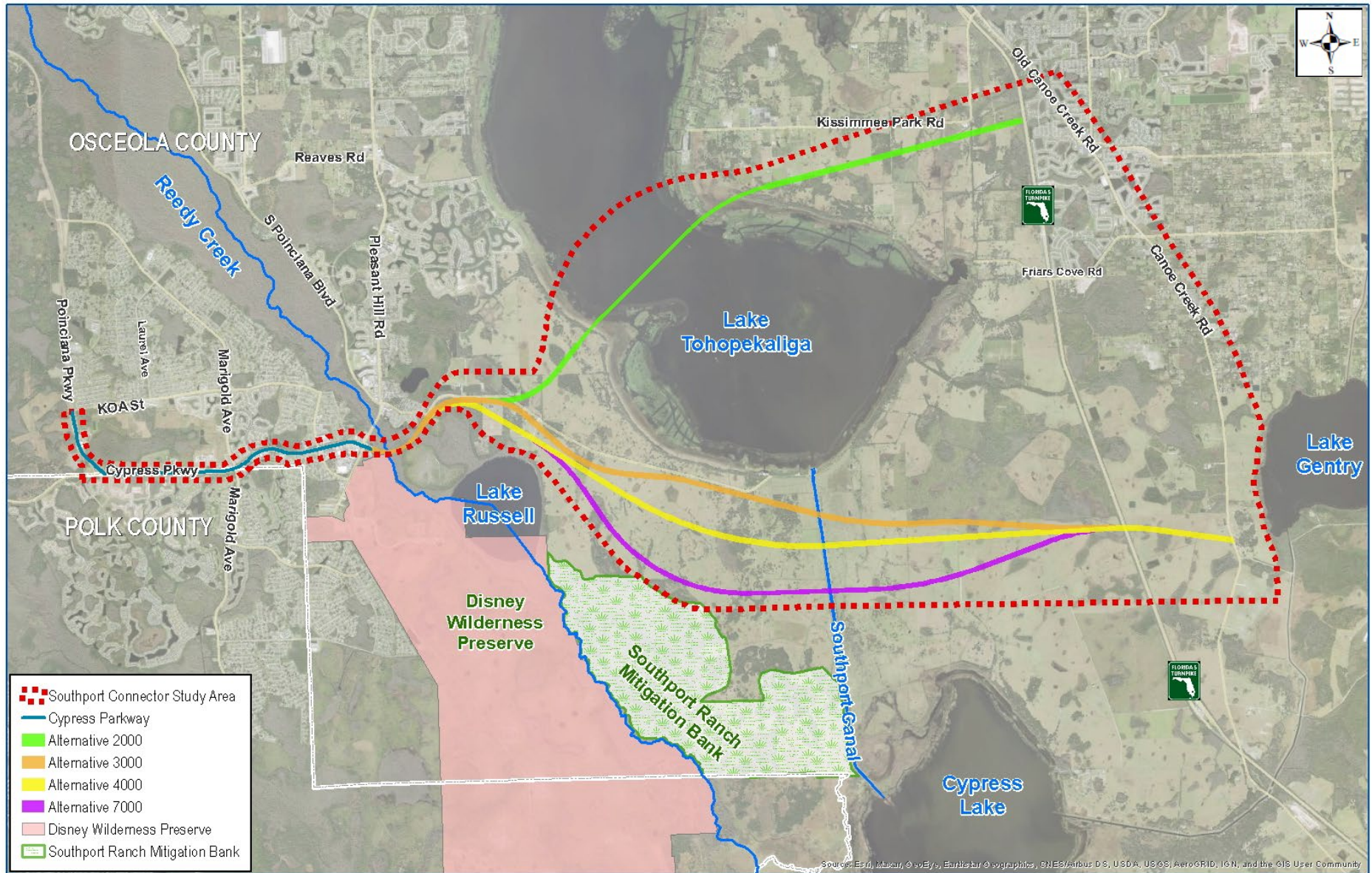


**Figure 4: Expanded Project Study Area**





**Figure 5: Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study Alternatives**



## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1. Purpose of the Alternative Corridor Evaluation

The Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX) initiated an Alternative Corridor Evaluation (ACE) as part of the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study for the Southport Connector Expressway in June 2021. The purpose of the ACE is to document the evaluation of each corridor alternative east of Reedy Creek and identify alternatives which should be eliminated due to not meeting established and approved evaluation criteria. This ACE Report (ACER) is intended to support subsequent phases of the PD&E study in determining a preferred alternative east of Reedy Creek.

### 1.2. Project History and Background

In 2010 Osceola County adopted the South Lake Toho Master Plan as part of its Long-Range Comprehensive Land Use Plan. This Master Plan serves as a blueprint to guide future land use, transportation, and environmental planning for that area of Osceola County. As part of the South Lake Toho Master Plan, a corridor alternatives study for the Southport Connector was conducted which identified the location of the proposed roadway along the southern boundary of the master plan study area. This corridor alternatives study and proposed location for the Southport Connector served as input into the Osceola County Expressway Master Plan Report adopted in 2013 and was also evaluated as part of FDOT's ACE completed in 2015.

In 2017, as part of the agreement to merge with the Osceola County Expressway Authority, CFX conducted a CF&M Study for the Southport Connector Expressway. During the study, the corridors recommended for further evaluation by FDOT in their 2015 ACER were evaluated and the results were documented in the CF&M Study final report that was adopted in May 2018. A total of six alternative corridors were developed in the CF&M Study and all were advanced to the PD&E Study phase.

In September 2020, CFX initiated the PD&E Study for the proposed Southport Connector Expressway. The proposed east-west divided four-lane tolled expressway would connect Poinciana Parkway with FTE as well as the planned Poinciana Parkway Extension. The proposed 15-mile-long expressway would extend from Poinciana Parkway on the west to FTE on the east with a possible extension to Canoe Creek Road. The six corridor alternatives that advanced from the CF&M Study serve as the foundation of the PD&E Study to evaluate, refine, and develop alternatives within the study area with the purpose of identifying a preferred alternative.

In March 2021, an alternative crossing Lake Toho was added following input from CFX's Environmental Stewardship Committee and the study's Environmental Advisory Group. The study area boundary was expanded to consider this additional alternative.

#### 1.2.1. Intent of the Study

For a PD&E Study to be approved by the CFX Board, certain conditions must be met. The ACE provides the following:

- Project background and history – the project sponsor, study team, previous studies, existing transportation network, other related projects, and consistency with adopted land use plans.
- Project purpose and need statement – evaluation to determine if the alternatives meet the project purpose and need.



- Description of affected environment – data sources collected, results of analyses, correspondence with environmental agencies.
- Identification of environmental constraints and opportunities for mitigation.
- Description of corridor alternatives and typical section(s) – alternatives that do not meet the purpose and need will not be considered reasonable alternatives.
- Explanation of the analyses and conclusions during the ACE process:
  - Reason(s) for eliminating alternative(s) including controversy, utility conflicts, access, cost, permitting complexity, right-of-way needs, easements, and/or public consensus.
  - Reason(s) for advancing all feasible alternative(s) to the next phase of the PD&E study.
- Documentation of public and agency involvement – key coordination with federal, tribal, state, and local agencies, environmental and project advisory groups; public and stakeholder coordination; corridor design; and next steps.

### 1.2.2. Status Update/Key Milestones

The results of the ACE have been documented in this report and can be appended to or referenced in future project documents. The results of the ACE led to the determination as to which corridor alternatives are considered unreasonable and should be eliminated.

Coordination with the Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC), Environmental Advisory Group (EAG) and Project Advisory Group (PAG) to provide input related to the project is ongoing throughout the PD&E study.

### 1.3. Project Description

The Southport Connector Expressway is a proposed limited access east-west divided four-lane tolled expressway connecting Poinciana Parkway with FTE and Canoe Creek Road, a distance of approximately 15 miles. On the west side of the project, the proposed facility begins at Poinciana Parkway, an existing two-lane roadway, that is currently being widened to a four-lane roadway which intersects with Cypress Parkway, an existing east-west suburban arterial roadway. The Southport Connector Expressway would be co-located with existing Cypress Parkway for approximately 3.5 miles. Continuing east, the proposed expressway crosses the Reedy Creek ecosystem before traversing eastward to Canoe Creek Road. Three alternative corridors which run south of Lake Toho, an area containing the proposed South Lake Toho Mixed Use District, and one alternative crossing Lake Toho are being considered.

#### 1.3.1. Logical Termini / Independent Utility

Logical termini are defined by FHWA as “rational end points for both a transportation improvement and a review of potential environmental impacts.” The alternative corridors to be evaluated in this report must be shown to meet the requirement of this definition to be considered reasonable. A project must also satisfy the requirements of “independent utility,” which means it must function as a stand-alone project even if no additional transportation improvements are made in the project area and be a reasonable expenditure. The Southport Connector Expressway meets these requirements based on the following:

To satisfy the purpose and need of this project, no additional improvements or additions are necessary beyond those included in this project.

The proposed project is included in the Polk County, Transportation Planning Organization 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the MetroPlan Orlando TIP 2021-2025 and the 2020 CFX Five-Year Work Plan (fiscal year 2022 – fiscal year 2026). Subsequent phases of project development, design, right-of-way acquisition and construction, are included in MetroPlan Orlando’s adopted 2045 Metropolitan Transportation Plan and is listed on Osceola County’s South Lake Toho Element Comprehensive Plan 2040.

CFX has included the Southport Connector Expressway in their 2040 Master Plan as a proposed system expansion; although no further phases are currently funded. The ultimate 60-mile outer beltway system is consistent with the East Central Florida Corridor Task Force Summary Report which identifies trends indicating a significant increase in demand for travel between Brevard, Osceola, and Orange counties during the next 50 years. The task force determined that, “Limited options for both east-west and north-south travel raise concerns about the region’s ability to achieve economic opportunities and to support the planned development of new population centers.”

### 1.4. Other Related Studies

**Figure 6** identifies the location of related transportation projects in the vicinity of the Southport Connector Expressway PD&E study area. These ongoing projects are discussed below.

#### **Poinciana Parkway Extension PD&E Study: CFX**

FTE is conducting a PD&E study for the Poinciana Parkway Extension, a new stretch of roadway extending approximately four miles from Osceola-Polk County Line Road/County Road (CR) 532 to State Road (SR) 429 in Osceola County, Florida.

The PD&E Study will evaluate a new limited access facility with four general use toll lanes (two lanes in each direction) expandable to eight lanes (four lanes in each direction) to match the adjacent CFX Design project, south of CR 532. The project will include modifying existing interchanges within the project limits and evaluating new interchange locations.

This Poinciana Parkway Extension will tie into the I-4 interchange including ramp connections to general use lanes. The Poinciana Parkway Extension will connect to the terminus of the Poinciana Parkway at CR 532 to the I-4/SR 429 interchange and will ultimately be part of a regional expressway system, connecting I-4 to the SR 417.

The Poinciana Parkway Extension PD&E Study began in January 2021. Key dates are the Public Kick-off Meeting Summer 2021, Public Alternatives Meeting Spring 2022, Public Hearing Spring 2023, and the PD&E Study is anticipated to be completed by Summer 2023.

#### **Poinciana Parkway (SR 538) Widening, CR 580/Cypress Parkway to Ronald Reagan Parkway: CFX**

The Central Florida Expressway Authority will be adding one lane in each direction on SR 538/Poinciana Parkway from CR 580/Cypress Parkway to Ronald Reagan Parkway. This seven-mile widening is expected to improve traffic flow and reduce congestion in the area. The project includes three proposed sound walls; building a second bridge over the Reedy Creek Mitigation Bank; and new ramps to and from southbound Poinciana Parkway/SR 538 at the existing interchange with Marigold Avenue.

Roadway construction began in February 2021 and is anticipated to be completed mid-2023.

### **Poinciana Boulevard Improvements Alternatives Study: Osceola County**

Osceola County's Poinciana Boulevard project extends from Pleasant Hill Road to Trafalgar Boulevard, a distance of approximately 5.7 miles. Improvements include the construction of a four lane divided roadway with multimodal accommodations, associated drainage improvements, modification of the signalized intersection at Pleasant Hill Road, upgrading the Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS), and street lighting and landscaping considerations.

Completion of the final design is expected in spring 2022, right-of-way acquisition is anticipated in fall 2021 and construction is expected to begin in spring 2023.

### **South Old Lake Wilson Road PD&E Study: Osceola County**

The South Old Lake Wilson Road PD&E study is for the widening of Old Lake Wilson Road (CR 545), from CR 532 (Osceola-Polk County Line Road) to Sinclair Road, a distance of 2.5 miles. The study includes planning and preliminary engineering analyses for Osceola County's Advanced Transportation Management System (ATMS) Phase 9 from US 192 to CR 532 (Osceola-Polk County Line Road). The project began in December 2020, an Alternatives Public Meeting is anticipated to occur late in 2021 and a Public Hearing is tentatively scheduled in Fall 2022. The project is anticipated to be completed in March 2023.

### **Lake Wilson Road Widening: Polk County**

The Lake Wilson Road Widening project is included in Polk County's 2021-2026 Transportation Improvement Plan adopted in June 2021. The project includes the design, permitting, right-of-way acquisition and construction of a widened roadway alignment along the Lake Wilson Road corridor from Ronald Reagan Parkway (CR 54) to Osceola-Polk Line Road (CR 532). The proposed one-mile-long expansion is anticipated to widen the current two-lane configuration to a four-lane divided roadway with bike lanes and sidewalks on both sides. The expansion is anticipated to relieve traffic congestion on Lake Wilson Road caused by daily traffic volume that exceeds the current roadway capacity.

### **Cypress Parkway Widening: Polk County**

The Cypress Parkway Widening project is included in Polk County's 2021-2026 Transportation Improvement Plan adopted in June 2021. The project consists of widening Cypress Parkway from west of Solivita Blvd to Marigold Avenue (approximately 1.9 miles) from a two-lane undivided roadway to a four-lane divided roadway. The improved roadway will include an open drainage (swale) system, five-foot-wide paved shoulders, a five-foot-wide concrete sidewalk and a 12-foot-wide multi-use trail. The addition of new travel lanes is anticipated to lessen congestion, reduce commuter delays and improve overall traffic conditions.

This project has been put on hold until the conclusion of the Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study.

### **Marigold Avenue Widening from CR 580 to Palmetto Road: Polk County**

The Marigold Avenue Widening project is included in Polk County's 2021-2026 Transportation Improvement Plan adopted in June 2021. The project along Marigold Avenue will expand the two-lane undivided roadway from south of Palmetto Street transitioning to a four-lane divided roadway approaching Cypress Parkway for a distance of approximately 2.2 miles. The recommended Typical Cross Section includes a four-lane divided roadway with a stormwater retention system, bike lanes, a six-foot-wide sidewalk and 12-foot-wide multi-use trail. The expansion is anticipated to improve safety issues and traffic conditions and is scheduled to begin in Polk County's fiscal year 2022.

#### **I-4 Auxiliary Lanes to/from State Road (SR) 429: FPID 444329-1: FDOT District 5**

The purpose of this project conducted by the FDOT is to add one auxiliary lane on both eastbound and westbound I-4 between CR 532 and SR 429. The westbound off-ramp to CR 532 will also be widened to two lanes to increase off-ramp flow and capacity. This project will also mill and resurface SR 429 between I-4 and Sinclair Road. Construction is anticipated to begin in fall 2021.

#### **I-4 at CR 532 Interchange Modification from South Goodman Road to Kemp Road: FPID 444187-1: FDOT District 5**

In conjunction with FDOT's I-4 Auxiliary Lanes to/from SR 429 project, this interchange improvement project modifies the existing I-4 interchange at CR 532 to a diverging diamond interchange. The project will add bike lanes and Americans with Disabilities (ADA) compliant sidewalks along CR 532 for improved bicycle and pedestrian connectivity and safety. Construction is anticipated to begin in Summer 2021 prior to the construction of the I-4 auxiliary lanes to/from SR 429.

#### **US 17/92 Widening PD&E Study: FPID 437200-1: FDOT District 5**

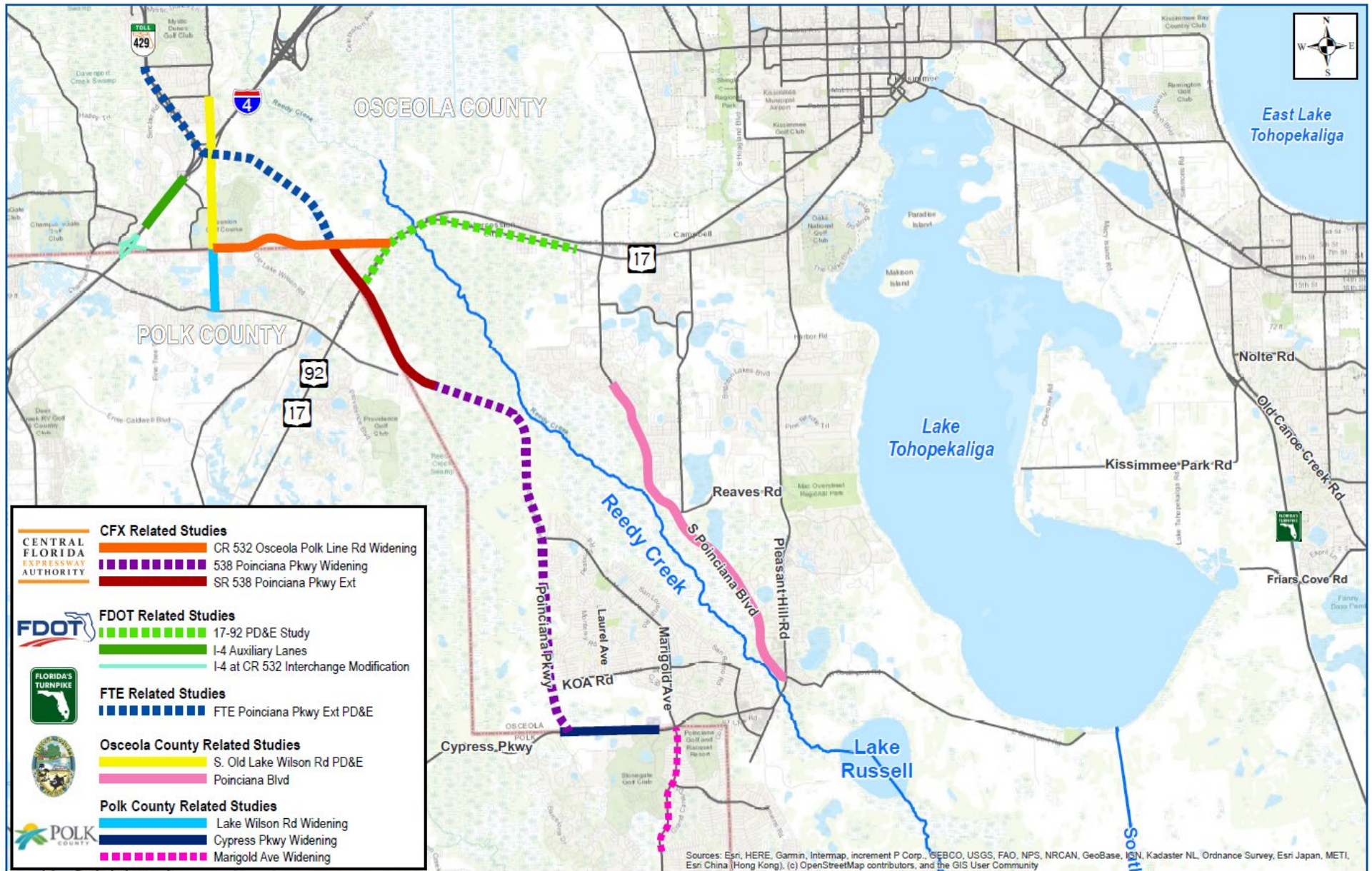
The FDOT began a PD&E study in the summer of 2020 for the widening of US 17/92 from Ivy Mist Lane to Avenue A in Osceola County. The study is evaluating alternatives to widen the existing two-lane roadway to four lanes and accommodating four lanes across Reedy Creek. The project is approximately 3.8 miles long and extends through Poinciana and Intercession City. The purpose of this project is to address current and future travel demand, improve safety and provide system linkage for this regionally significant arterial roadway. The PD&E study is anticipated to be completed in spring 2023 and design is funded for FDOT's fiscal year 2026.



# Alternative Corridor Evaluation Report

Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study

Figure 6: Related Studies in the Vicinity of the Project Area



## 2.0 PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose and need for a project provides the basis for developing, considering, evaluating, and eliminating alternatives while also shaping the alternatives and assisting with the identification of reasonable and feasible alternatives. The need aspect lays the foundation and basis of a proposed project while the purpose presents proposed solutions to the stated need.

### 2.1. Purpose

The purpose of this proposed project is to construct a limited access, high-speed tolled expressway that will provide additional traffic capacity and greater mobility within the community of Poinciana and create connectivity to interregional transportation systems such as FTE, I-4 and future planned expressways identified in the CFX 2040 Master Plan. This proposed project will also provide opportunities for new multimodal facilities, enhance evacuation and emergency efficiency, and support economic development within Osceola County's designated Urban Growth Boundary. The Greater Poinciana Area lacks major regional highways capable of relieving traffic congestion on the local roads by accommodating the separation of local and regional traffic demand.

### 2.2. Need

#### System Linkage

System linkage is defined as linking two or more existing transportation facilities or types of modal facilities between geographic areas or regional traffic generators.

Preceding the CFX 2040 Master Plan, the Osceola County Expressway Authority (OCX) Master Plan (adopted May 8, 2012) included the Southport Connector Expressway among the other proposed limited access expressways that make up the Orlando Outer Beltway. In December 2018, following the culmination of OCX, CFX included these projects into their 2040 Master Plan.

Connecting to I-4 at CR 532 near the communities of Champions Gate and Reunion on the southwest side of Orlando, the proposed beltway extends southeasterly through Poinciana, continues south of Lake Toho, connects to the FTE with a systems interchange, passes southeast of St. Cloud, and ultimately connects to SR 417 (Central Florida Greene Way)

The proposed continuous 60-mile Outer Beltway system is consistent with a December 1, 2014 report completed by the East Central Florida Corridor Task force commissioned by Governor Rick Scott. According to the East Central Florida Corridor Task Force Summary Report, the total population of Brevard, Osceola, and Orange counties is projected to nearly double from two to 3.8 million residents over the next 50 years. The CFX 2040 Master Plan includes this proposed limited access, high-speed toll facility for the purposes of serving Poinciana residents and the southern region of the Greater Orlando area.

**Figure 1** shows the potential new expressway projects listed in the CFX 2040 Master Plan to be developed over the next 25 years. The Southport Connector Expressway will connect to two existing tolled facilities: Poinciana Parkway and FTE. Poinciana Parkway is currently a two-lane tolled facility being expanded to four lanes and connects to I-4 by way of US 17-92 and CR 532. When constructed, the Southport Connector Expressway will give motorists a connection to I-4 (with local road support) and a limited access connection to FTE and Canoe Creek Road which is located to the east of the FTE with accommodation for further extension as the proposed Northeast Connector Expressway.

### Regional Connectivity & Mobility

The community of Poinciana is an unincorporated 47,000-acre residential area of approximately 69,300 people (2020 Census Data) located in both Polk and Osceola counties. Poinciana is located approximately 25 miles south of the City of Orlando. According to the Census Bureau, the average commute times for Poinciana residents is 49 minutes, compared to an average of 28 minutes for the state of Florida. According to a National Business Journal study by G. Scott Thomas entitled, “Altus, Oklahoma has the best small-town record for commuters,” Poinciana is ranked 226 out of 226 for small towns in Florida for commute time. The study analyzed the five-year 2009 American Community Survey data from the Census Bureau for cities, incorporated towns, and census designated places. These locations were awarded points for all commuters who drive less than 30 minutes to work but would lose points for commute times greater than 30 minutes. The study showed that Poinciana has the worst commute for any small town in Florida with more than 42% of Poinciana residents having a commute time of 60 minutes or more. A major element of the congested commute is the mix of both local and regional traffic on the overburdened local roadway network.

The majority of Poinciana residents commute to the Greater Orlando area for work, traversing on either Pleasant Hill Road, Poinciana Boulevard or Poinciana Parkway, all of which are connected by Cypress Parkway. The employment to population ratio (E/P) for Osceola County in 2019 was 35.3% compared to 75.6% in Orange County, thereby supporting the theory that the majority of Poinciana residents are leaving the county for work. An improved regional transportation network is needed to provide the Poinciana community with more reliable access to the greater Orlando area.

### Social and Economic Needs

The existing land use surrounding Cypress Parkway from Poinciana Parkway to Pleasant Hill Road is mostly residential with some retail / office land use, public / semi-public land use, and acreage not zoned for agriculture. East of Pleasant Hill Road, the land use is almost exclusively agricultural, scattered with public / semi-public land use and residential. Osceola County future land use maps indicate that Poinciana will continue to remain a mostly residential area but, the residential developments will become denser and spread further to the east within the Urban Growth Boundary.

According to a Socioeconomic Data Forecast Analysis, Osceola County represents the 6th fastest growing county in Florida from 2019 to 2020, with a population increase of 16,500 people in one year. The University of Florida’s Bureau of Economic and Business Research (BEBR) and the Socioeconomic Data Forecast Analysis population forecast for Osceola County anticipate the population will grow 41% from 2020 to 2045, from a population of nearly 385,500 to a population to approximately 650,000. Similarly, the employment in Osceola County is anticipated to double between 2015 and 2045 from 115,035 to 227,612.

A review of Osceola County’s conceptual land use plans and GIS data show there are currently 36 approved Developments of Regional Impact (DRI) in Osceola County. The data analysis for developments in the vicinity of the project area estimates there will be 106,000 residential units and 34.2 million square feet of commercial space with a buildout scenario of 45,000 acres. This information supports the trend of more residential and commercial development in Poinciana.

### Capacity Constraints

Existing and historical traffic data for Cypress Parkway was obtained from the FDOT Traffic Data Geographic Information System (GIS) shapefiles and the FDOT Florida Traffic Online (2019) website. The FDOT Transportation Data & Analytics office Traffic Data Shapefile for Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) in GIS, published March 27, 2021, was reviewed. A summary of the 2019 traffic data is provided in **Table 2**.



**Table 2: 2019 Existing Cypress Parkway Traffic Data**

Begin Limit	End Limit	AADT	K Factor	D Factor	T Factor
Poinciana Parkway	Marigold Avenue	11,300	9.0	56.0	5.7
Marigold Avenue	Pleasant Hill Road	38,000	9.0	53.2	6.3

The FDOT Transportation Data & Analytics office Traffic Data Shapefile for Historical AADT in GIS, published March 27, 2021, was reviewed. A summary of the 2019 traffic data is provided in **Table 3**.

**Table 3: 2019 Cypress Parkway Historical AADT Traffic Data**

Begin Limit	End Limit	Year	AADT	K Factor	D Factor	T Factor
Poinciana Parkway	Marigold Avenue	2015	10,200	9.0	55.7	4.8
		2016	10,800	9.0	53.3	4.8
		2017	11,400	9.0	54.5	7.5
		2018	12,300	9.0	54.5	6.1
		2019	11,300	9.0	56.0	5.7
Marigold Avenue	Pleasant Hill Road	2015	42,500	9.0	53.2	9.6
		2016	43,500	9.0	52.7	9.6
		2017	36,000	9.0	52.5	6.3
		2018	37,000	9.0	52.8	6.3
		2019	38,000	9.0	53.6	6.3

The FDOT 2020 Generalized Service Volume Tables were used to evaluate the level of service (LOS) along Cypress Parkway. **Table 4** details the LOS for each segment.

As shown in **Table 4**, the segment from Marigold Avenue to Pleasant Hill Road has an unacceptable LOS. A four-lane divided signalized arterial, with a posted speed of 40 mph or greater, can accommodate a maximum of 35,820 vehicles per day and function at LOS D. It is important to note that since Cypress Parkway is not a state road, a non-state roadway reduction of 10% was applied to LOS volumes provided in Table 1 of the FDOT 2020 Generalized Service Volume (**Appendix A**). Currently, Cypress Parkway from Marigold Avenue to Pleasant Hill Road handles 38,000 vehicles per day resulting in the failing LOS. By comparison, the segment west of Marigold Avenue has a significantly lower AADT and therefore functions at a LOS better than C. However, due to the construction of widening Poinciana Parkway to 4-lanes and continued residential development, the AADT for the segment west of Marigold Avenue may see a significant increase in traffic.

A segment of Cypress Parkway already operates at a failing LOS and with continued growth in Poinciana, the future traffic conditions are anticipated to significantly decline. A traffic characteristic that contributes to this service failure is there are no other available options, all traffic must use Cypress Parkway. The co-located expressway concept provides the opportunity to separate different types of trips, specifically local and regional. The expressway option allows for regional traffic to leave the local network which creates additional capacity and raises the level of service for both local and regional trips while allowing for new multi-modal options.



**Table 4: Cypress Parkway Operational Conditions**

Begin	End	No. of Lanes	Divided	2019 AADT	Area Type	LOS
Poinciana Pkwy	1,600 ft West of Solivita Blvd	2	No	11,300	Transitioning	Better than C
1,600 ft West of Solivita Blvd	Marigold Ave	4	Yes	11,300	Transitioning	Better than C
Marigold Ave	Pleasant Hill Road	4	Yes	38,000	Urbanized	F

### Consistency with Transportation Plans

Although the Southport Connector Expressway is located in both Polk and Osceola counties, the project will be funded by the CFX if the project is deemed financially feasible.

The proposed project is included in the Polk County, Transportation Planning Organization 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP), the MetroPlan Orlando TIP 2021-2025 and the 2020 CFX Five-Year Work Plan (fiscal year 2022 – fiscal year 2026). Subsequent phases of project development, design, right-of-way acquisition and construction, are included in the MetroPlan Orlando MPO 2040 LRTP in the Plan Development & Cost Feasible Projects, which were adopted in January 2016 and updated in December 2019. This project is also listed on Osceola County’s South Lake Toho Element Comprehensive Plan 2040. CFX has included this project in their 2040 Master Plan as a proposed system expansion; although no further phases are currently funded.

The Southport Connector Expressway and the ultimate 60-mile outer beltway system is consistent with the East Central Florida Corridor Task Force Summary Report which identifies trends indicating a significant increase in demand for travel between Brevard, Osceola, and Orange counties during the next 50 years. The task force determined that, “Limited options for both east-west and north-south travel raise concerns about the region’s ability to achieve economic opportunities and to support the planned development of new population centers”.

### Multimodal Opportunities

Policy objectives within the Osceola County Comprehensive Plan indicate a desire to accommodate and provide for multi-modal transportation options. These objectives establish a commitment to planning and supporting multimodal corridors, bicycle and pedestrian networks, and transit through highly connected, gridded street networks. Currently, the study area does not contain significant pedestrian accommodations or bicycle facilities. The Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority (LYNX) does operate within portions of the study area, but its service is concentrated at the Poinciana Walmart Center. There are no documented freight or intermodal logistics centers present within the study area. Alternatives for the proposed Southport Connector Expressway may be developed to accommodate pedestrian and bicycle facilities outside of the limits of the limited access right-of-way. In addition, mass transit accommodation will be evaluated as part of this study.

### Safety & Evacuation Support

Crash data for years 2014 to 2018 was obtained from GIS data compiled from the FDOT Safety and Security Office using the Crash Analysis Reporting (CAR) system.

Over the five-year period, a total of 764 crashes including 418 injury crashes and three fatal crashes were reported. Below is a summary of the crash statistics for the 3.5-mile section of Cypress Parkway:

- 3 fatalities;
- 418 injuries;
- 4 crashes involved drugs or alcohol;
- 9 crashes involved bicycles or pedestrians
- 37% of all crashes were intersection-related;
- 51% were rear-end crashes;
- 26% were angle crashes;
- 10% were sideswipe crashes;
- 717 crashes occurred in Osceola County; and
- 47 crashes occurred in Polk County.

The high proportion of rear-end crashes is indicative of a congested urban roadway with frequent stopping. The highest concentration of crashes located along Cypress Parkway are from Doverplum Avenue to Pleasant Hill Road totaling 526 crashes. From Marigold to Doverplum Avenue there were 187 crashes and from Poinciana Parkway to Marigold Avenue there were 51 crashes. The proposed Southport Connector Expressway will reduce congestion and should reduce the frequency of these types of crashes, particularly rear-end and intersection crashes.

Interregional limited access highways provide for high volumes of traffic to move out of harm's way during the course of emergency evacuations. At this time, nothing like this exists in the greater Poinciana area.

## **3.0 ALTERNATIVE CORRIDOR DEVELOPMENT**

### **3.1. Corridor Refinement**

The corridor analysis east of Reedy Creek began with a review of the six CF&M alternatives that were recommended to advance to the alternative corridor evaluation during the PD&E Study. The western segment of the new corridors that cross Reedy Creek makes use of a 300-foot-wide existing right of way dedicated by Osceola County for transportation purposes. This right of way was set aside when Reedy Creek and its associated flood plain was acquired by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) in the 1990's to allow for a future road extension envisioned to connect to the FTE. The dedicated 300-foot-wide right of way provides for a common alignment crossing of Reedy Creek for all six of the CF&M alternative corridors between Cypress Parkway/Old Pleasant Hill Road and a location along the south side of Southport Road in the vicinity of the old county land fill. From this location heading eastward, all six corridors begin independent locations that are defined and labeled as Alternatives 200, 300, 400, 500, 600 and 700 as shown in Figure 3.

A variety of physical constraints were identified within this study area such as existing residences, roads, the old land fill, and park land. The CF&M corridors were then refined geometrically to either avoid or reduce impacts, straighten curvature for driver safety and bring efficiency to locations where alternatives produced redundant service. This engineering exercise resulted in combining or joining multiple alternative corridors into a single option that achieves similar objectives related to each corridor location.

CF&M Alternatives 200 and 300 were combined to produce Alternative 3000. This refinement eliminated several reverse curves and the need for two grade separated crossings of Southport Road required for Alternative 200, as well as a total reconstruction of over four miles of Southport Road and impacts to Southport Park related to Alternative 300. Alternative 3000 now represents the most northerly located corridor to the south of Lake Toho.

CF&M Alternative 400 was refined to produce Alternative 4000. This refinement created a more direct path centered within the study area between the south shore of Lake Toho and the Urban Growth Boundary line created by Osceola County.

Components of CF&M Alternatives 400, 500, 600 and 700 were combined to produce Alternative 7000. This refinement created a single southerly corridor that parallels slightly north of the Urban Growth Boundary Line and most closely represents the anticipated expressway location depicted in Osceola County's South Lake Toho Masterplan.

The geometric refinements and combinations to reduce from six corridors to three corridors maintain consistency of the same connection points on the west end at Cypress Parkway/Old Pleasant Hill Road, the FTE and Canoe Creek Road with three separate corridor options for a northern, centered and southern alternative across the ranchlands south of Lake Toho (Figure 5).

### 3.2. Data Collection

Data used to evaluate social, cultural, natural, and physical environmental impacts for each potential corridor was derived from various GIS datasets within the Florida Geographical Data Library, the SFWMD, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), the Florida Natural Area Inventory (FNAI), the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and Osceola and Polk County. Field and literature reviews were performed to verify key project corridor constraints. **Table 5** lists GIS data layers used in the analyses of the project area.

**Table 5: GIS Data Information**

GIS Layer	Source	Year
AADT	FDOT	2019
Historic AADT	FDOT	2019
Crash Data	FDOT	2014 - 2018
Audubon's Crested Caracara Observations	USFWS	2014
Everglade Snail Kite Nest	USFWS	2014
Eagle Nesting	FWC	2020
Consultation Areas and Critical Habitat	USFWS	2020
Land Use	SFWMD	2017
National Wetlands Inventory	USFWS	2020
Tax Parcels	Osceola County	2021
Tax Parcels	Polk County	2021

### 3.3. Land Suitability Mapping (LSM)

Land Suitability Mapping is used to identify corridors within the study area that meet the criteria established in the project's purpose and need. GIS data was used to locate and map potential areas of concern within the project area including public lands, historic and archaeological sites, recreational areas, wetlands and federally and state-listed wildlife habitat. These maps were used to further refine corridor alternatives to avoid or minimize impacts on sensitive environmental and social resources. The LSM maps can be found on **Figure 7** and **Figure 8**.



Figure 7: Environmental Constraints

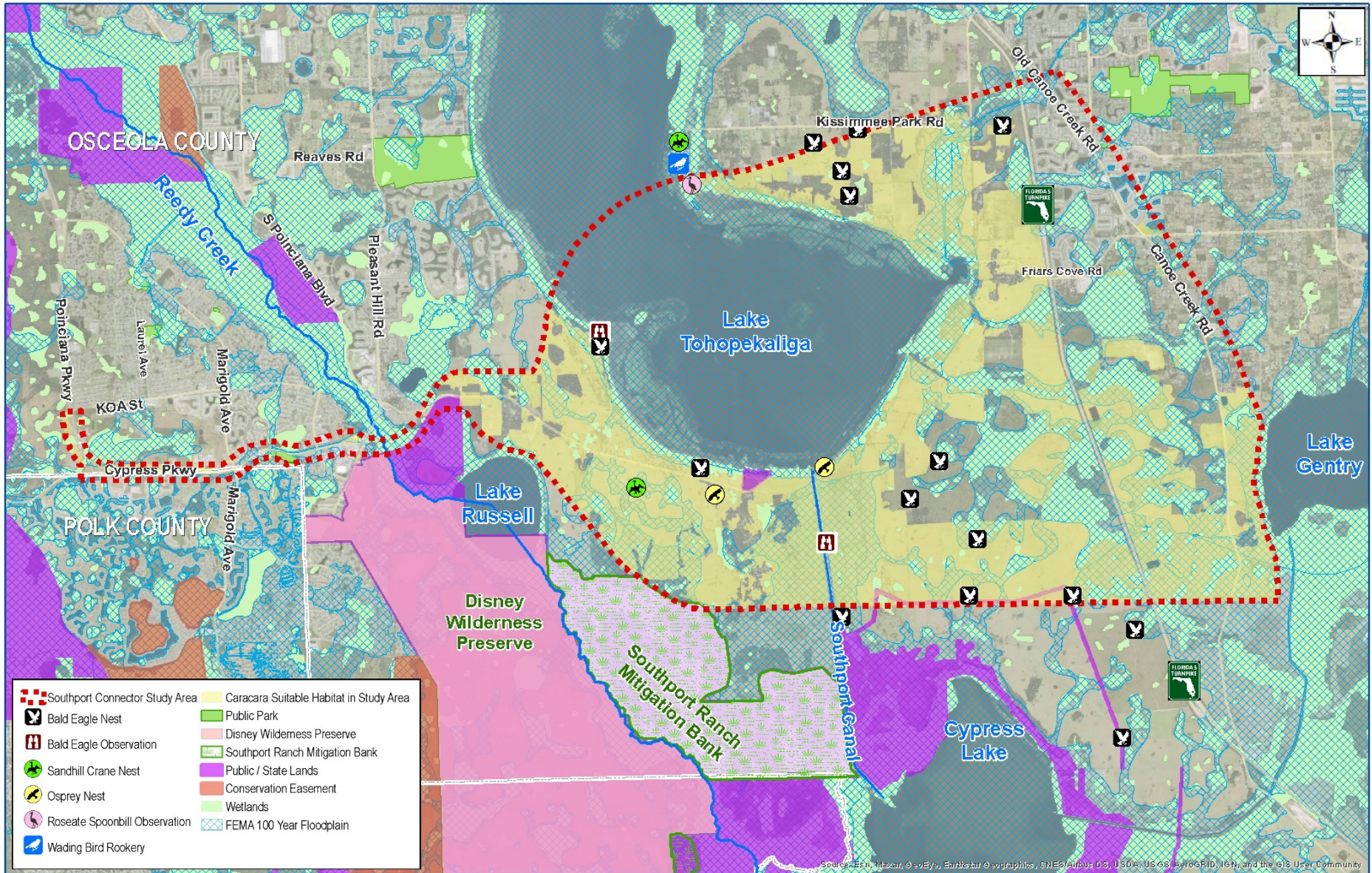
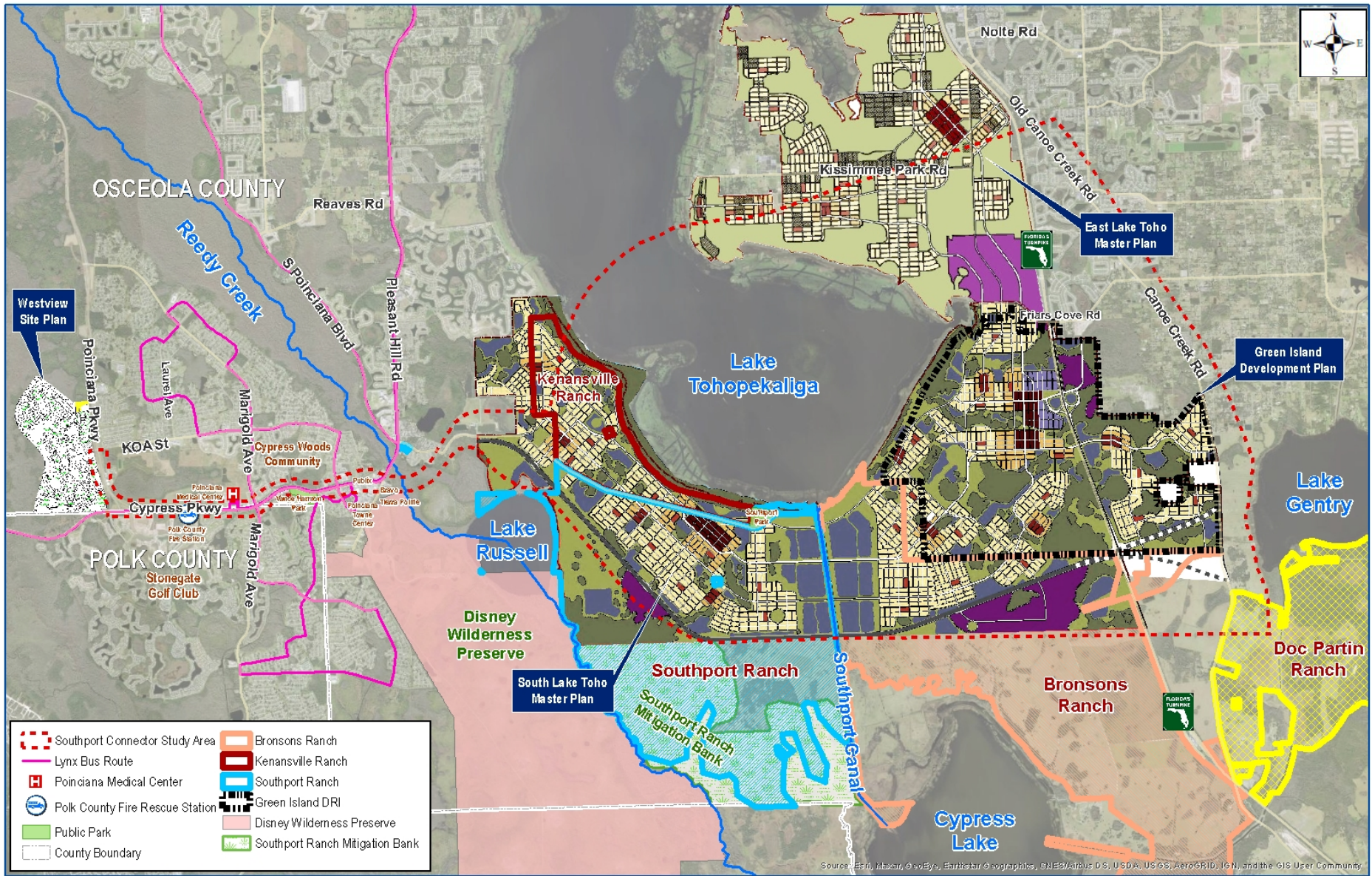




Figure 8: Social Constraints



### 3.4. Geometric Design

Following the LSM process, geometric constraints and criteria were used in the final refinement of the corridor alternatives to occur within the suitable area and generate the appropriate roadway connections. Design criteria listed in the CFX Design Guidelines (March 2021) was used in the development of the resulting feasible corridors and is shown in **Table 6**.

**Table 6: Geometric Design Criteria**

DESIGN ELEMENT	CRITERIA	SOURCE (1) (2)
Design Speed	70 mph	FDM Table 201.5.1
Functional Classification	Limited Access	FDM Section 200.2.1
Design Vehicle	WB-62FL	FDM Section 201.6
Design Year		
Design Year Highway Volume		
Access Management Class	Class 1	FDM Table 201.4
<b>Typical Section</b>		
Number of Lanes	4	
Lane Width	12 ft. FDM	Section 211.2
Shoulder Width – Median or Left	Total: 14 ft. Paved: 12 ft.	FDM Table 211.4.1
Shoulder Width – Outside or Right	Total: 14 ft. Paved: 12 ft.	FDM Table 211.4.1
Median Width	88 ft. FDM	Table 211.3.1
Cross Slope		
Inside Lane	0.02	FDM Figure 211.2.1
Outside Lane	0.02	
Shoulders – Median (or Left)	0.05	FDM Figure 211.4.1
Shoulders - Outside	0.06	
Border	94 ft. from edge of Traffic Lane	FDM Section 211.6
Roadside Slopes		
Front Slope	1:6 to edge of Clear Zone	FDM Table 215.2.3
	1:2 with Guardrail	
Back Slope	1:4 or 1:3	
Transverse Slope	1:10 or flatter	
Horizontal Clearance to Guardrail	12 ft. from edge of Travel Lanes	FDM Section 215.4.1
Recoverable Terrain	36 ft. from edge of Travel Lanes	FDM Table 215.2
<b>Horizontal Geometry</b>		
Maximum Superelevation	0.1	FDM Table 210.9.1
Minimum Superelevation Transition Length	100 ft.	FDM Table 210.9.3
Superelevation Transition Slope Rate	0.215277778	FDM Table 210.9.3
Superelevation Transition		



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**Table 6: Geometric Design Criteria (continued)**

DESIGN ELEMENT	CRITERIA	SOURCE (1) (2)
On Tangent	80%	FDM Section 210.9.1
Within Curve	20%	
<b>Minimum Full Superelevation Curve Length</b>	200 ft.	FDM Section 210.9
<b>Maximum Deflection (no curve)</b>	$\Delta^\circ > 5^\circ$	FDM Figure 215.2.13
<b>Minimum Stopping Sight Distance</b>	820 ft.	FDM Table 211.10
<b>Maximum Curvature</b>	3° 00'	FDM Table 210.9
<b>Maximum Curvature Using Normal Cross Slope</b>	0° 15'	FDM Table 210.9
<b>Length of Horizontal Curve</b>		
Desirable	30V (V=Design Speed) = 2100 ft.	FDM Table 211.7.1
Minimum	15V = 1050 ft.	
<b>Vertical Geometry</b>		
<b>Maximum Grade</b>	3%	FDM Table 210.10.1
<b>Maximum Change in Grade without Vertical Curve</b>	0.20%	FDM Table 210.10
<b>Minimum Crest Vertical Curve</b> (Applicable for Ramp Criteria)	K = 506	FDM Table 211.9.2
Minimum Length	1000 ft./1800 ft. (open highway/within interchange)	FDM Table 211.9.3
<b>Minimum Sag Vertical Curve</b> (Applicable for Ramp Criteria)	K = 206	FDM Table 211.9.2
Minimum Length	800 ft.	FDM Table 211.9.3
<b>Base Clearance Above Base Clearance Water Elevation</b>	3 ft.	FDM Section 210.10.3(2)
<b>Roadway Clearance and Offsets (unless shielded with roadside barrier)</b>		
<b>Vertical Clearance for Bridges</b>		
Roadway/Railroad over Roadway	16 ft. 6 in.	FDM Table 260.6.1
Roadway over Railroad	23 ft. 6 in.	
Pedestrian over Roadway	17 ft. 6 in.	
Pedestrian over Railroad	23 ft. 6 in.	
<b>Vertical Clearance for Overhead Sign Structures</b>	17 ft. 6 in.	FDM Section 210.10.3(1)
<b>Horizontal Clearances</b>		
Sign Clearance	40 ft. from travel lane (to edge of sign panel)	SP Index 100-101
Conventional Light Pole Clearance	Min. 20 ft. from travel lane	SP Table 215.2
Highmast Light Pole Clearance	Outside the Clear Zone	SP Table 215.2
Utility Clearance	Outside the Clear Zone	SP Table 215.2
Signal Pole Clearance	Outside the Clear Zone	SP Table 215.2
Trees Clearance	Outside the Clear Zone	SP Table 215.2
Bridge Piers and Abutments	Outside the Clear Zone	SP Table 215.2



**Table 6: Geometric Design Criteria (continued)**

DESIGN ELEMENT	CRITERIA	SOURCE (1) (2)
Clearance to Drop-off Canal Hazard Clearance Other Obstacles Clearance	Outside the Clear Zone 60 ft. from traveled way Outside the Clear Zone	SP Section 215.3.3 SP Section 215.3.2 SP Table 215.2.2
<b>Shared Use Path</b>		
<b>Design Speed</b> ≤4% Downgrade >4% Downgrade	18 mph 30 mph	FDM Section 224.9
<b>Width</b>	12 ft.	FDM Section 224.4
<b>Maximum Cross Slope</b>	2%	FDM Section 224.5
<b>Horizontal Clearance to Lateral Obstruction</b>	4 ft.	FDM Section 224.7
<b>Graded Area Width</b>	2 ft.	FDM Section 224.7
<b>Graded Area Slope</b>	1:6 max	FDM Section 224.7
<b>Vertical Clearance</b>	8 ft. 10 ft. underpasses	FDM Section 224.8
<b>Minimum Radii</b> 18 mph, 2% 18 mph, -2% 30 mph, 2% 30 mph, -2%	74 ft. 86 ft. 261 ft. 316 ft.	FDM Table 224.10.1
<b>Minimum Superelevation Transition Length</b>	75 ft.	FDM Section 224.5
<b>Minimum Stopping Sight Distance</b> 18 mph 30 mph	134 ft. 134 ft.	FDM Table 224.10.2
<b>Maximum Grade</b>	5%	FDM Section 224.6
<b>Minimum Length of Vertical Curve</b>		
S>L S<L	$L = 2S \cdot (900/A)$ $L = AS^2/900$	FDM Section 224.11
<b>NOTES:</b> (1) FDOT Design Manual, January 2021 (FDM)		
(2) FDOT Standard Plans, Fiscal Year 2021 – 2022 (SP)		

## 4.0 ALTERNATIVE CORRIDORS CONSIDERED

The corridors identified for evaluation are shown on **Figure 9**. The segment of the proposed Southport Connector Expressway that is co-located with Poinciana Parkway from KOA Street south to Cypress Parkway then continuing east along Cypress Parkway to Pleasant Hill Road is common to all alternatives. Due to Cypress Parkway having an existing 300-foot right-of-way width, this segment was evaluated using a 300-foot-wide typical section shown on **Figure 10**. Corridors east of Pleasant Hill Road were evaluated using the CFX standard new location 330-foot-wide typical section shown on **Figure 11** with consideration for a reduced 200-foot-wide typical section through environmentally sensitive areas like Reedy Creek (**Figure 12**).

**Figure 9: Proposed Corridor Alternatives**

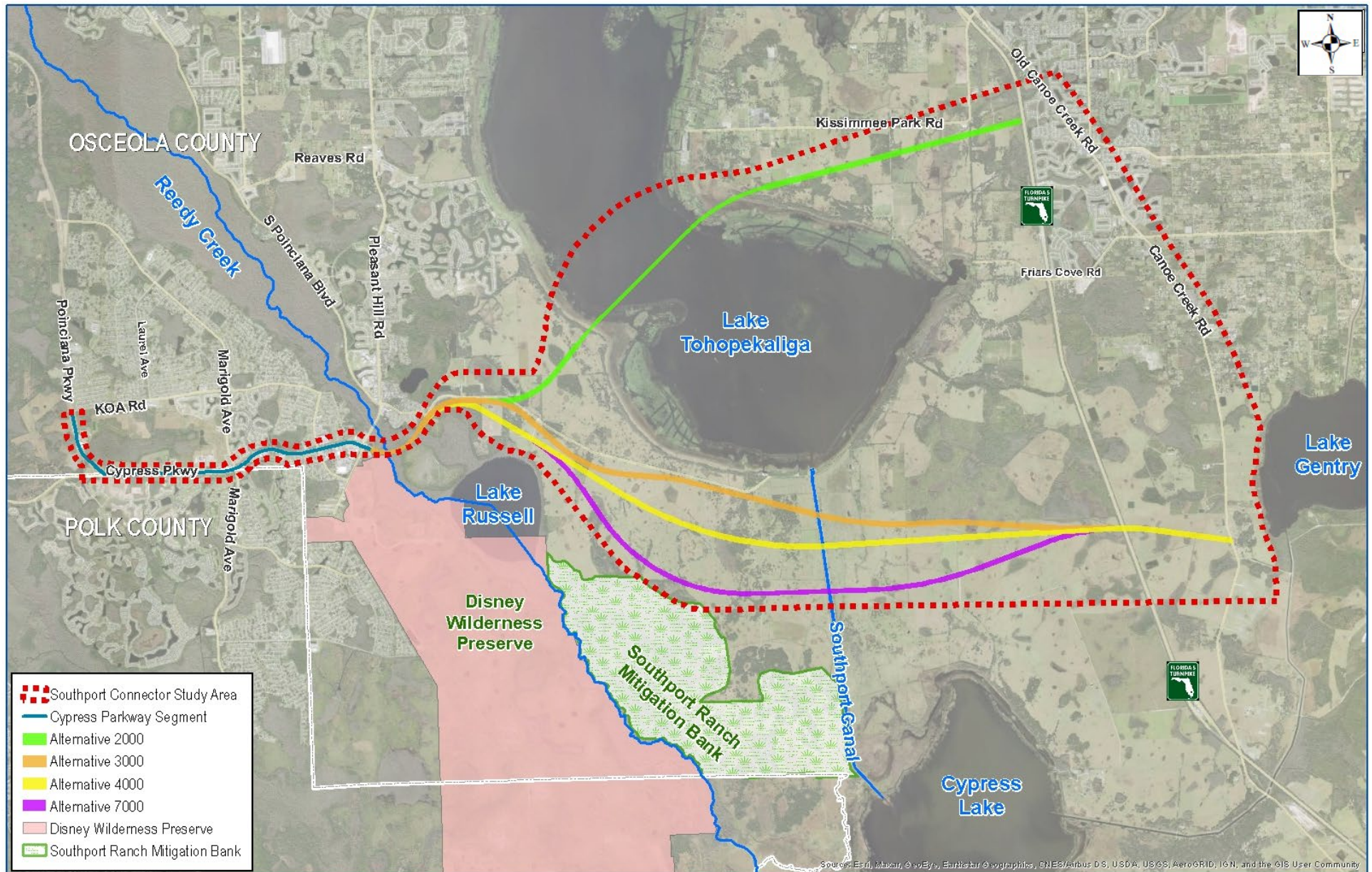




Figure 10: Cypress Parkway Segment Typical Section

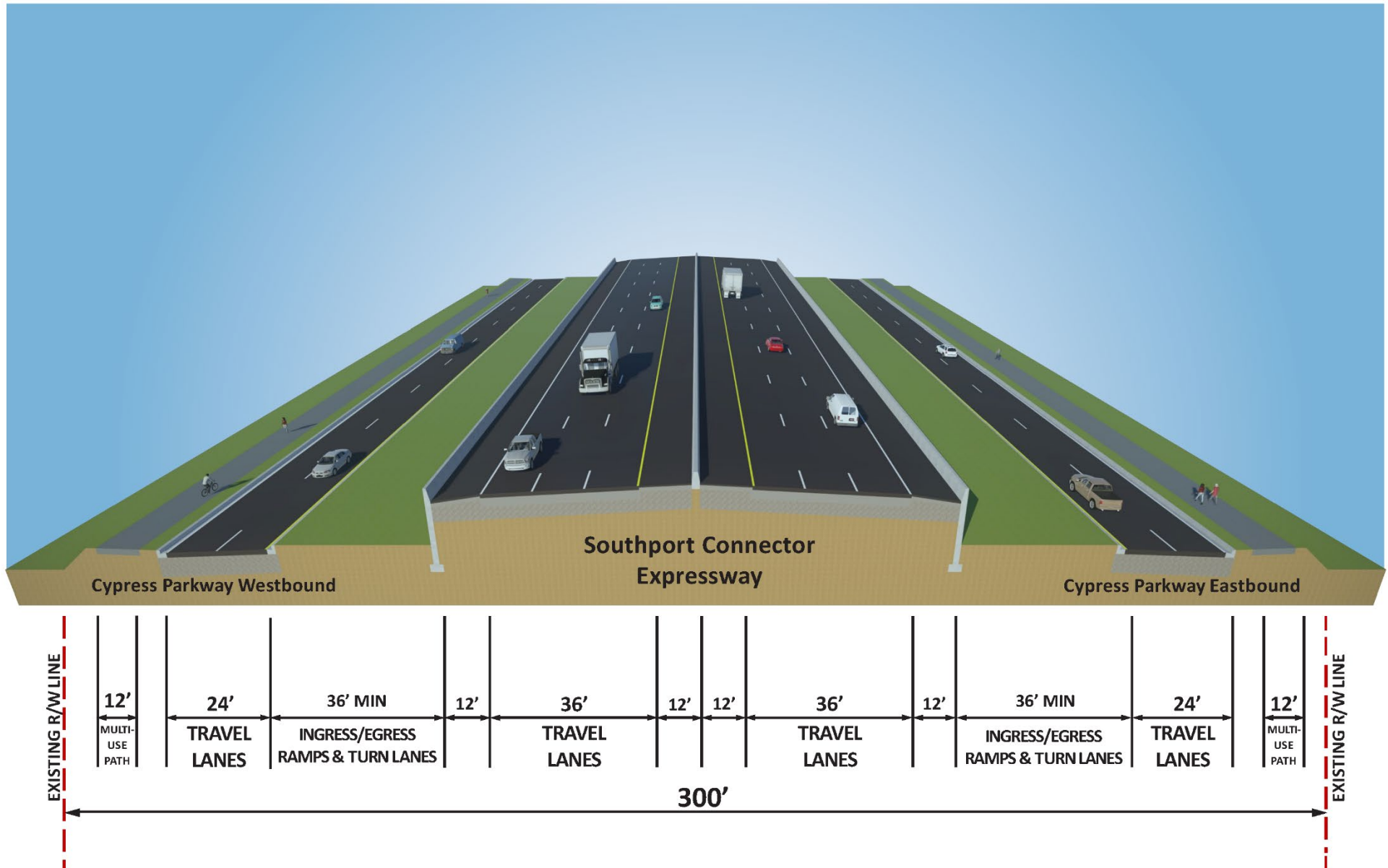


Figure 11: Southport Connector Expressway Mainline Typical Section

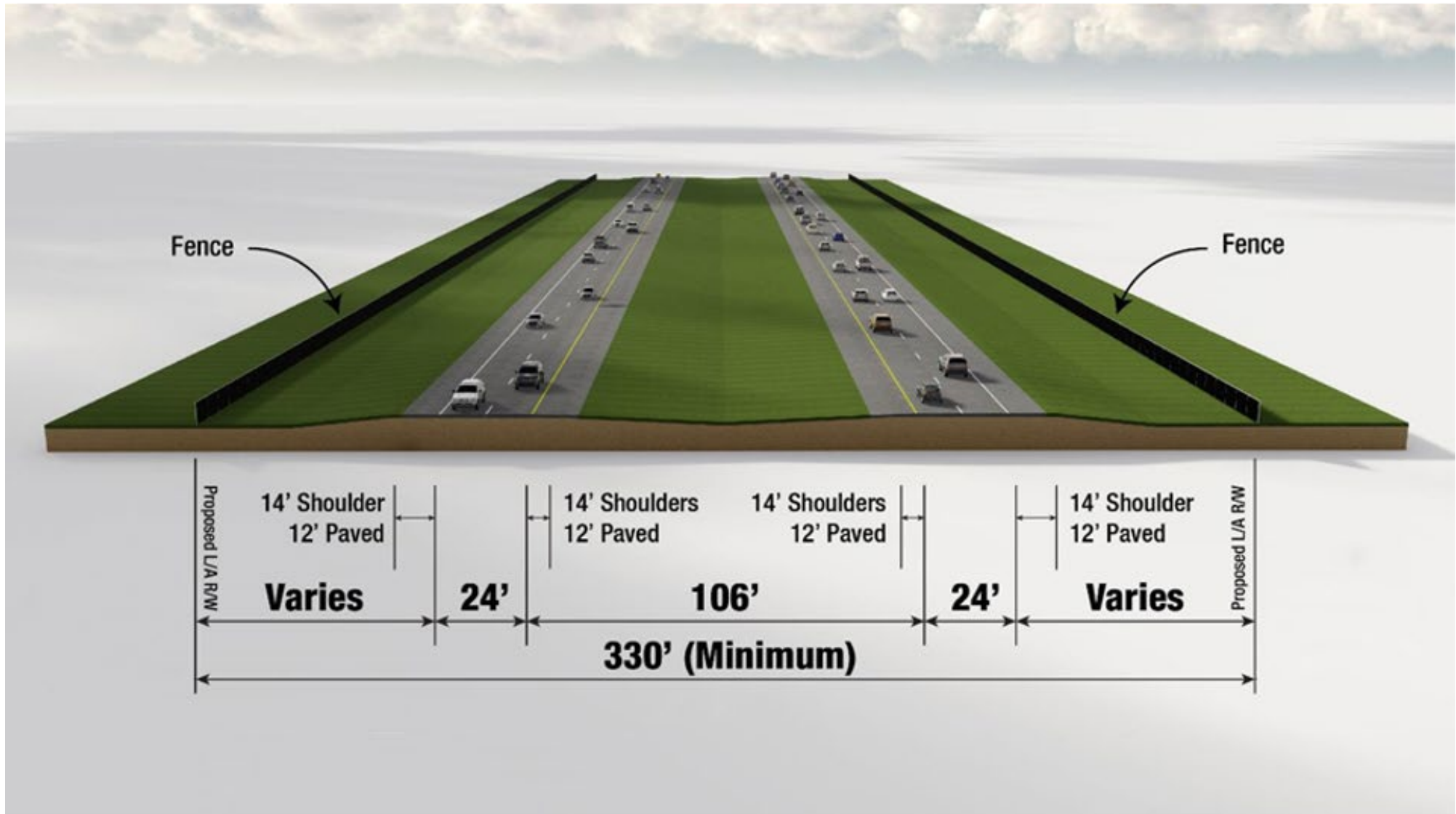
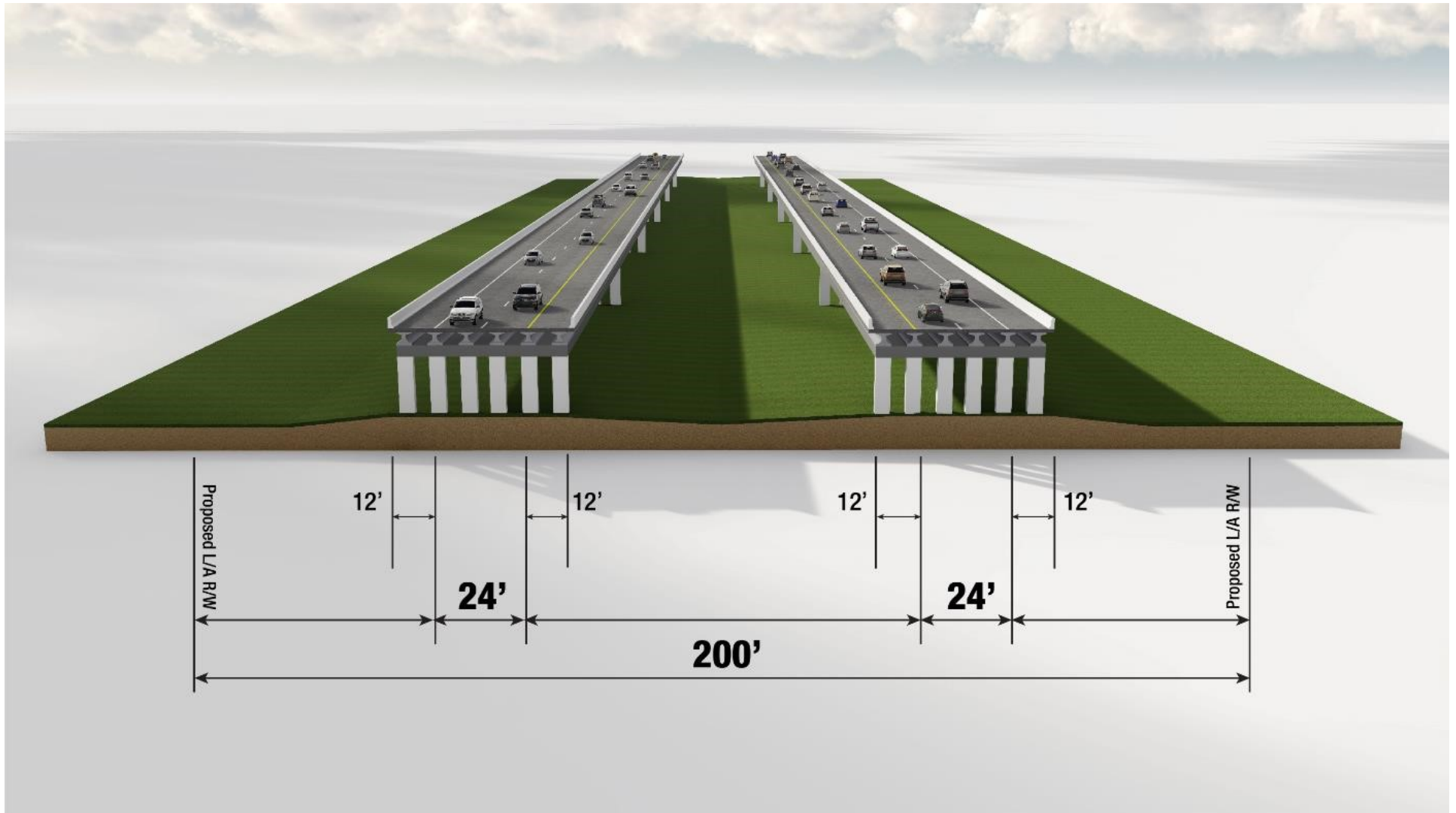


Figure 12: Southport Connector Expressway Reduced Typical Section



Below are descriptions of the 4 evaluated Southport Connector Expressway corridors.

The **Cypress Parkway Segment** begins at KOA Street traveling south along Poinciana Parkway to Cypress Parkway. The corridor continues east along Cypress Parkway for approximately 3.5 miles where it terminates at a proposed interchange at Pleasant Hill Road.

**Corridor 2000** includes the **Cypress Parkway Segment** then continues east crossing over Reedy Creek and the central portion of Lake Toho. It has a total length of 14.1 miles, which includes 5.0 miles of bridge. Corridor 2000 ends approximately 1.1 miles south of the Kissimmee Park Road interchange at FTE.

**Corridor 3000** includes the **Cypress Parkway Segment** then continues east crossing over Reedy Creek and curves to just south of Southport Road continuing east and south of Lake Toho. It has a total length of 16.7 miles, which includes 2.2 miles of bridge. Corridor 3000 ends approximately two miles north of the Canoe Creek Service Plaza at FTE.

**Corridor 4000** includes the **Cypress Parkway Segment** then continues east crossing over Reedy Creek and curves to the south and then east approximately midway between Lake Toho and the Urban Growth Boundary line. It has a total length of 16.9 miles, which includes 2.1 miles of bridge. Corridor 4000 ends approximately two miles north of the Canoe Creek Service Plaza at FTE.

**Corridor 7000** includes the **Cypress Parkway Segment** then continues east crossing over Reedy Creek and curves to the south and then east along the Urban Growth Boundary line. It has a total length of 17.4 miles, which includes 2.0 miles of bridge. Corridor 7000 ends approximately 2.6 miles north of the Canoe Creek Service Plaza at FTE.

## 5.0 ALTERNATIVE CORRIDOR EVALUATION RESULTS

The corridor alternatives were evaluated using project-specific criteria to complete a comparative analysis. The factors used for the evaluation included meeting the project purpose and need of the project, the potential direct and indirect effects on the environment, engineering considerations including costs, a narrative assessment of the corridors, an inventory of resources affecting each of the proposed alternatives, the development of a weighted scoring matrix, and agency/public input. Detailed descriptions of these factors are provided in this section.

### 5.1. Purpose and Need Evaluation

All alternatives considered were evaluated in terms of the ability to meet the project purpose and need. The purpose of the proposed project is to provide local expressway access within the study area. Factors constituting the project need include systems linkage; regional connectivity and mobility; social and economic needs; capacity constraints; consistency with adopted transportation plans; multimodal opportunities; and safety and evacuation support. Using these factors, as defined in Section 2.2, a value assessment was used to rate each alternative in **Table 7** with values ranging from None (0) to Good (3).

**Table 7: Purpose and Need Satisfaction Evaluation**

Purpose and Need Criteria	Cypress Parkway	Alternative 2000	Alternative 3000	Alternative 4000	Alternative 7000
<b>PURPOSE</b>					
Local Expressway Access	3	3	3	3	3
<b>NEEDS</b>					
System Linkage	3	2 <sup>a</sup>	3	3	3
Regional Connectivity and Mobility	3	2	3	3	3
Social / Economic Needs	3	1 <sup>b</sup>	3	3	3
Capacity Constraints	3	3	3	3	3
Consistency with Transportation Plans	3	1 <sup>c</sup>	3	3	3
Multimodal Opportunities	3	1 <sup>d</sup>	3	3	3
Safety and Evacuation Support	3	1 <sup>e</sup>	3	3	3
<b>Total Ranking</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>24</b>

<sup>a</sup> East terminus is at FTE with no direct connection to the Northeast Connector Expressway

<sup>b</sup> Does not serve the South Lake Toho Master Plan

<sup>c</sup> Inconsistent with local and/or regional Master Plan

<sup>d</sup> No available space on bridge section over Lake Toho to accommodate multimodal opportunities

<sup>e</sup> Terminates on east end at FTE which is another major evacuation route

**Legend:**

3 – Good

2 – Fair

1 – Poor

0 - None

## 5.2. Potential Environmental Impacts

The potential direct and indirect effects on the environment have been considered for each of the project's alternative corridors. **Table 9** provides a comparative evaluation of the potential physical, cultural, and natural resource impacts for each corridor.

### 5.2.1. Contamination

Potential contamination concerns were identified utilizing aerial photographs, a Google Earth railroad map layer, and FDEP's Map Direct website. These concerns include cattle grazing operations that may have incorporated cattle dip vats and cattle pens/barns (arsenic/pesticides), citrus groves (herbicides/pesticides/heating oil), tank sites, hazardous material handlers, solid waste facilities, a (dry) oil well, a waste cleanup site, and agricultural/active farm sites.

### 5.2.2. Cultural Resources

A desktop analysis was conducted to identify potential cultural resources and previously recorded historic properties that are listed, or may be eligible for listing, in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The Florida Master Site File (FMSF) database was reviewed for any previous surveys or previously recorded resources. Archaeological site probability was evaluated based on various environmental conditions demonstrated to be reliable indicators for past human occupation, including topography, soil drainage, distance to water, and prior disturbance. In addition, the Osceola County and Polk County Property Appraiser's GIS database was reviewed to determine if parcels containing structures constructed prior to 1977 are located in the vicinity of any corridor alternative. All corridor alternatives run adjacent to Section 4(f) properties including the Osceola County Environmental Study Center which lies within the SFWMD Lake Russell parcel, and Vance Harmon Park. There is a potential for all corridors to impact an unevaluated archaeological site (Cultural Resource Site OS00023).

### 5.2.3. Natural Resources

The estimate of the natural resource impacts is based on the GIS layers that are identified in **Table 5**. The alternative corridors and the project study area are shown on **Figure 9**. Quantifiable values for social, cultural, natural, and physical environment have been shown in the matrix evaluation table.

Numerous state- and federally-listed species are known to occur within the project study area. However, many of these species are habitat generalists (i.e., having habitat requirements that are satisfied by areas that occur within all of the proposed corridors). Upon review of the available data, it was determined that the corridor evaluation would be based on the preliminary species analysis of three species: Audubon's crested caracara (*Polyborus plancus audubonii*), bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), and Everglade snail kite (*Rostrhamus sociabilis plumbeus*). These species were selected because the project study area contains designated critical habitat for the species, has documented occurrences within the project study area, or their presence could substantially affect one corridor alternative over another.

Potential impacts to the nesting and foraging habitat for the Audubon's crested caracara, Everglade snail kite, and bald eagle are of particular importance for this project. The Audubon's crested caracara is a federally-designated threatened species, the Everglade snail kite is a federally-listed endangered species, and the bald eagle is protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, Migratory Bird Treaty Act, and Rule 68A-16.002, FAC.

It should be noted that all four corridors involve wetland and surface jurisdictional waters of the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), SFWMD, and FDEP. The USACE maintains jurisdiction over the federally-retained wetlands and surface waters associated with Lake Toho, Reedy Creek and Southport Canal, and the



FDEP will have jurisdiction over the non-federally retained wetlands and surface waters. The SFWMD has state jurisdictional authority over all wetlands and surface waters and impacts to these wetlands and surface waters will require permits from USACE, FDEP, and SFWMD. Additionally, there are two navigable waters of the United States (Lake Toho and Southport Canal) within the project study area and all alternative corridors either cross Lake Toho or Southport Canal. Therefore, the crossing of any of the alternative corridors will require a United States Coast Guard (USCG) navigational bridge permit.

Three conservation areas are located adjacent to the study area: the Upper Lakes Basin Watershed and the Southport Mitigation Bank are managed by SFWMD, and the Disney Wilderness Preserve is managed by The Nature Conservancy (TNC). SFWMD and TNC practice prescribed burns on these conservation lands to maintain a preferred variety of plant communities and to reduce the risk of wildfires. During a prescribed burn there is the potential for smoke intrusion on nearby roads to cause hazardous conditions for drivers. Each agency follows a Prescribed Fire Activity Plan which includes management strategies for avoiding negative impacts from fire or smoke to the surrounding communities.

In 2010, TNC developed Critical Smoke Dispersal Area (CSDA) buffer zones intended to be used as a land-planning tool to provide guidance for the locations of new developments. The CSDA classified areas within two-miles of conservation lands into four zones (one-quarter mile, one-half mile, one-mile and two miles), each zone identified for specific types of smoke-sensitive development. Through coordination with the FDOT, road classes were assigned a minimum distance from a conservation boundary to avoid impacts from smoke intrusion. According to **Table 8** published by TNC, the distance from a conservation boundary for FDOT Road Class 11: *Principal arterial – freeways/expressways, urban* is recommended to be greater than one-mile. As shown on **Figure 13** Corridor 7000 is almost entirely within the one-mile CSDA buffer zone and is therefore the least favorable compared to Corridors 2000, 3000 and 4000.

**Table 8: Smoke-Sensitive Area Recommended Distances from Conservation Boundaries within the Buffer Zones of CSDA**

Smoke-sensitive area		Minimum distance from conservation boundary	CSDA buffer zone(s) in which can be present
FDOT <sup>a</sup> Road Class	Description		
6	Minor arterial—rural	402 m (0.25 mi)	2, 3, and 4
8	Minor collector—rural	402 m (0.25 mi)	2, 3, and 4
9	Local—rural	402 m (0.25 mi)	2, 3, and 4
1	Principal arterial—interstate, rural	805 m (0.50 mi)	3 and 4
2	Principal arterial—other, rural	805 m (0.50 mi)	3 and 4
7	Major collector—rural	805 m (0.50 mi)	3 and 4
16	Minor arterial—urban	805 m (0.50 mi)	3 and 4
17	Collector—urban	805 m (0.50 mi)	3 and 4
19	Local—urban	805 m (0.50 mi)	3 and 4
11	Principal arterial—interstate, urban	1,609 m (1 mi)	4
	Principal arterial—freeways/		
12	expressways, urban	1,609 m (1 mi)	4
14	Other principal arterial—urban	1,609 m (1 mi)	4
Other land uses			
	Residential/commercial/industrial	402 m (0.25 mi)	2, 3, and 4
	Hospitals/nursing homes	1,609 (1 mi)	4
	Aviation areas	3,220 m (2 mi)	Do not occur within CSDA

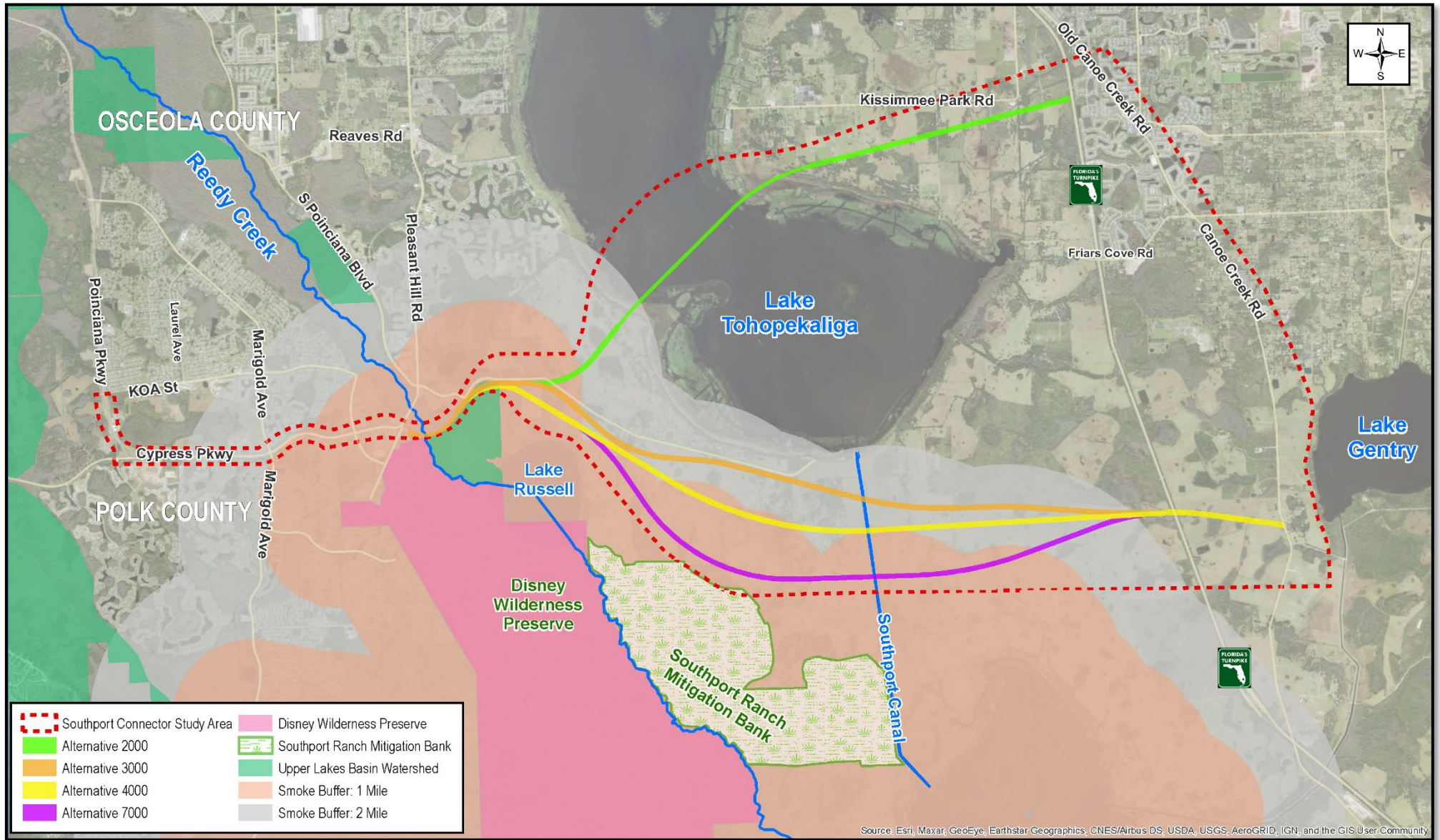
<sup>a</sup> FDOT, Florida Department of Transportation.

Source: The Nature Conservancy. (2010) *A GIS Data Layer for Guiding Development Compatible with Fire Management of Neighboring Conservation Sites*

**Table 9: Potential Environmental Impacts**

Evaluation Criteria	Unit of Measure	Cypress Parkway	Alternative 2000	Alternative 3000	Alternative 4000	Alternative 7000
<b>Physical</b>						
Contamination Sites & Facilities	No. of Conflicts	24	14	9	8	8
<b>Cultural Environment Effects</b>						
Public Lands (Public Recreation Lands)	Acres	0	0	0	0	0
Potential Historic Resources	No. of Conflicts	18	4	2	2	0
Potential Historic Linear Resources (Canals/Highways/Railroads)	No. of Resources	0	0	2	1	1
Potential Archaeological Resources	No. of Resources	0	4	3	3	3
<b>Natural Environment</b>						
Water Features <i>Ponds / Lakes (ponds + surface waters)</i>	Acres	0	48.1	2.2	2.6	2.6
<i>Canals / Regulated Floodways</i>	No. of Conflicts	1	4	2	2	2
<i>Flood Hazard Areas: 100 Year Floodplain</i>	Acres	21.0	311.6	199.7	228.8	300.7
Wetlands (non-forested and forested)	Acres	0	45.0	73.2	59.4	74.2
Potential Habitat Federal and State Listed Species	Acres	0	546.2	343.4	460.5	375.5
Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV)	Acres	0	1.3	0	0	0
Potential Bald Eagle Nest (Direct + Buffer Zone)	Y/N	N	Y	N	Y	N
Critical Smoke Dispersal Area	Y/N	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
Mitigation Banks - <i>None</i>	Acres	0	0	0	0	0
Conservation Easement ( <i>Solivita HOA</i> )	Acres	0	0	0	0	0
SFWMD Lands <i>Upper Lakes Basin Watershed/KCOLA</i>	Acres	0	18.0	18.0	18.9	19.3

Figure 13: Prescribed Burn Area Smokeshed





### 5.3. Engineering Considerations

Several engineering factors including utility conflicts, right-of-way, drainage concerns and interchange spacing on FTE were considered and evaluated for a comparative corridor analysis. Below are detailed descriptions of each of these factors and the effects they have on each corridor.

#### 5.3.1. Utility Conflicts

The majority of utility conflicts are associated with the Cypress Parkway segment of all the alternatives from Poinciana Parkway to Pleasant Hill Road. Major utility conflicts east of Pleasant Hill for Corridors 3000, 4000, and 7000 primarily traverse through undeveloped land where most of the utilities that will be encountered are small service utilities located on rural roadways. The potential for conflicts along these corridors is minimal and can likely be avoided or relocated at minimal cost. Corridor 2000 passes through a residential area on the east side of Lake Toho where multiple utilities serve the community. The potential for utility conflicts is high in this area and will result in higher relocation costs than the other corridors. The number of potential existing and planned utility conflicts is listed in **Table 10**.

**Table 10: Potential Utility Conflicts**

Evaluation Criteria	Unit of Measure	Cypress Parkway	Alternative 2000	Alternative 3000	Alternative 4000	Alternative 7000
<b>Engineering Considerations</b>						
Major Utility Conflicts - Existing	No. of Conflicts	16	10	3	3	3
Major Utility Conflicts - Planned	No. of Conflicts	2	0	1	1	1

#### 5.3.2. Right-of-Way

Right-of-way data was gathered from parcel lines obtained from Osceola and Polk County GIS data and utilized to calculate the area of take for each corridor alternative. The area of take was determined using the typical sections described in Section 4.0: a 300-foot right-of-way width along Cypress Parkway (**Figure 10**), the CFX standard new location 330-foot-wide typical section for the corridors east of Pleasant Hill Road (**Figure 11**) with a reduced 200-foot-wide typical section through environmentally sensitive areas like Reedy Creek (**Figure 12**).

As shown in **Table 11**, the area of take for Corridors 3000, 4000, and 7000 includes two full systems interchanges at FTE and Canoe Creek. The area of take for Corridor 2000 considers a half interchange at FTE. The estimated pond areas to provide the required stormwater treatment for each corridor alternative were calculated using an assumed pre-development curve number of 77 and adding an additional 50% of standard treatment volume to meet Lake Okeechobee Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP) criteria. The required acreage includes the stacking of treatment volume and attenuation volume.



**Table 11: Potential Right-of-Way Area of Impact**

Evaluation Criteria	Unit of Measure	Cypress Parkway	Alternative 2000	Alternative 3000	Alternative 4000	Alternative 7000
<b>Engineering Considerations</b>						
Right-of-way Area of Impact Includes FTE and Canoe Creek interchanges (not including proposed ponds)	Acres	24	325	686	694	717
Estimated Pond Area (mainline)	Acres	22	42	62	60	64
Potential Existing Residential Impacts (includes partially impacted parcels)	Total Parcels	13	67	9	5	5
Potential Existing Commercial Impacts (includes partially impacted parcels)	Total Parcels	19	8	7	7	6
Potential Existing Government and Vacant Parcel Impacts (includes partially impacted parcels)	Total Parcels	13	38	45	41	40
Community Facilities (Environmental Learning Center)	No. of Conflicts	0	1	1	1	1

### 5.3.3. Florida's Turnpike Interchange Spacing and Facility Usage

FTE evaluated the location of the potential Southport Connector systems interchange relative to the existing interchanges at the Canoe Creek Service Plaza and Kissimmee Park Road, as well as the proposed interchange improvements at Kissimmee Park Road (FPID: 441224-2). The interchange improvement project will remove the existing ramps at the Kissimmee Park Road partial interchange and a new FTE interchange will be constructed at an extension of Nolte Road located approximately one-half mile north of the existing Kissimmee Park Road interchange. The new diverging diamond interchange will provide all directional access to and from the FTE offering improved capacity with a smaller footprint.

The proposed location of the FTE systems interchange associated with Corridor 2000 does not meet the required spacing to existing ramps at the Kissimmee Park Road interchange nor the proposed interchange at Nolte Road. The proposed interchange associated with Corridors 3000, 4000, and 7000 is located near milepost 232.5, which is approximately three miles south of Friars Cove Road, six miles south of the proposed interchange at Nolte Road and two miles north of the Canoe Creek Service Plaza.

FTE acknowledged that for Corridor 2000 to be assessed equally in terms of logical termini, the evaluation of Corridor 2000 should consider the utilization of the FTE from the point where Corridor 2000 terminates near Nolte Road south to the proposed systems interchange for all other corridors located north of the Canoe Creek Service Plaza. This enables Corridor 2000 to be equally considered relative to system linkage and regional connectivity but will require improvements to FTE to accommodate the additional traffic. These improvements will add significant costs for construction and mitigation for environmental impacts.

The correspondence from FTE is contained in **Appendix B**. An Interchange Justification Report for the proposed systems interchange north of the Canoe Creek Service Plaza will be developed as part of the PD&E study.

### 5.3.4. Expandability

The right-of-way width (330 feet) associated with Corridors 3000, 4000 and 7000 east of the bridge over Reedy Creek will accommodate future system expansions. While the majority of right-of-way associated with Corridor 2000 will provide for future system expansion, any future expansion of the 3-mile bridge over Lake Toho would create significant regulatory and financial challenges.

### 5.3.5. Permitting Complexity

Standard permitting will be required for Corridors 3000, 4000 and 7000. It is anticipated that permitting with the USCG to cross Southport Canal will be non-controversial with concurrence. As it crosses a notable body of water, Corridor 2000 will require significant federal action with the USCG, USACE, and FDEP due to impacts to submerged aquatic vegetation, snail kite habitat and surface water resulting from the construction of a 3-mile bridge over Lake Toho.

### 5.3.6. Cost

The preliminary project costs are shown in **Table 12**. Construction costs were based on 2019 costs provided by CFX. Roadway and structure costs were determined using the length of the project and the typical sections shown on **Figure 10**, **Figure 11**, and **Figure 12**. The cost associated with the structure over Lake Toho along Corridor 2000 does not yet include an additional cost component for piping to convey stormwater off of the bridge to pond locations. Wetland mitigation costs were based on average in-basin mitigation bank credit costs.

**Table 12: Estimated Preliminary Project Costs (in millions)**

Cost Item	Cypress Parkway	Alternative 2000	Alternative 3000	Alternative 4000	Alternative 7000
Roadway Construction	\$163	\$113	\$133	\$132	\$138
Bridges Construction	\$62	\$305	\$89	\$80	\$75
Interchanges Construction	\$0 <sup>1</sup>	\$552	\$400	\$400	\$400
Toll Collection Equipment	\$6	\$5	\$7	\$7	\$7
Mitigation: Wetlands, Floodplains & Wildlife	\$4	\$5	\$7	\$6	\$8
<b>Preliminary Alternative Costs</b>	<b>\$235</b>	<b>\$980</b>	<b>\$636</b>	<b>\$625</b>	<b>\$628</b>
<b>TOTAL Preliminary Alternative Costs</b> (Includes Cypress Parkway segment)		<b>\$1,215</b>	<b>\$871</b>	<b>\$860</b>	<b>\$863</b>

<sup>1</sup> Interchanges and slip ramps included in roadway construction costs

## 5.4. Inventory of Potential Impacts

The potential impacts to social, natural, cultural, and physical environmental features were documented and summarized into an inventory matrix. This matrix represents a comparative evaluation of resources affected by each of the proposed alternatives and includes a summary description of the engineering and design elements. A color-coded system of red, yellow, and green was used to illustrate the order of magnitude of impact and comparison of each alternative in each resource category (**Table 13**). Red represents a high level of impact, yellow is moderate or medium, and green is relatively low when compared to other alternatives. Potential project costs of each alternative were also considered. The comparative evaluation matrix is presented in **Table 14**.

**Table 13: Inventory Matrix Legend**

RED	Relatively High Impacts when compared to other alternatives
YELLOW	Relatively Medium Impacts when compared to other alternatives
GREEN	Relatively Low Impacts when compared to other alternatives



# Alternative Corridor Evaluation Report

Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study

**Table 14: Comparative Evaluation of Corridor Alternatives**

Evaluation Criteria	Unit of Measure	Cypress Parkway	Alternative 2000	Alternative 3000	Alternative 4000	Alternative 7000
<b>Design</b>						
Alternative Length (approximate)	Miles	4.5	14.0	15.4	15.5	16.3
Proposed right-of-way width (general: varies at interchanges and environmentally sensitive areas)	Feet	300	330	330	330	330
Proposed Bridges - total structures per alternative	Structures	11	14	18	16	16
Total length of all structures	Feet	3,939	22,248	7,414	7,100	6,119
Proposed Interchanges (includes FTE and Canoe Creek)	Number	2	5	5	5	5
Projected 2045 AADT Volume (as a tolled facility)	Vehicles $\pm 5\%$ - 10%	36,000	50,000	50,000	50,000	50,000
<b>Physical</b>						
Major Utility Conflicts - Existing	No. of Conflicts	16	10	3	3	3
Major Utility Conflicts - Planned	No. of Conflicts	2	0	0	0	0
Contamination Sites & Facilities	No. of Conflicts	24	14	9	8	8
<b>Cultural Environment Effects</b>						
Public Lands (Public Recreation Lands)	Acres	0	0	0	0	0
Potential Historic Resources	No. of Conflicts	18	4	2	2	0
Potential Historic Linear Resources (Canals/Highways/Railroads)	No. of Resources	0	0	2	1	1
Potential Archaeological Resources	No. of Resources	0	2	1	1	1
<b>Natural Environment</b>						
<b>Water Features</b>						
<i>Ponds / Lakes (ponds + surface waters)</i>	Acres	0	44	2	3	3
<i>Canals / Regulated Floodways</i>	No. of Conflicts	1	2	2	2	2
<i>Flood Hazard Areas - 100 Year Floodplain</i>	Acres	21	57	200	229	301
Wetlands (non-forested and forested)	Acres	0	45	73	59	74
Potential Habitat-Federal and State Listed Species	Acres	0	264	343	461	376
Submerged Aquatic Vegetation (SAV)	Acres	0	1	0	0	0
Potential Bald Eagle Nest (Direct + Buffer Zone)	Y/N	N	Y	N	Y	N
<b>Mitigation Banks - None</b>						
<b>Conservation Easement (Solivita HOA) - None</b>						
SFWMD Lands Upper Lakes Basin Watershed/KCOLA	Acres	0	18	18	19	19
<b>Social</b>						
Right-of-way Area (not including proposed ponds) Includes FTE and Canoe Creek interchanges	Acres	24	325	686	694	717
Estimated Pond Area (mainline)	Acres	22	42	62	60	64
Potential Existing Residential Impacts (includes partially impacted parcels)	Total Parcels	13	67	9	5	5
Potential Existing Commercial Impacts (includes partially impacted parcels)	Total Parcels	19	8	7	7	6
Potential Existing Parcel Impacts (Other <sup>1</sup> ) (includes partially impacted parcels)	Total Parcels	13	38	45	41	40
Community Facilities (Environmental Learning Center)	No. of Conflicts	0	1	1	1	1
Trails	No. of Conflicts	0	1	2	2	2
Community Cohesion Effects *according to CF&M	High/Med/Low	Med	High	Med	Med	Low
Proposed Development (PD) / Development of Regional Impact (DRI) (South Lake Toho and East Lake Toho)	Acres	0	286	503	453	479
<b>Estimated Preliminary Costs</b>						
Preliminary Alternative Costs (in millions)		\$235	\$980	\$636	\$625	\$628
TOTAL Preliminary Alternative Costs (in millions) (Including Cypress Parkway segment: roadway and bridge construction)			\$1,215	\$871	\$860	\$863

### 5.5. Weighted Evaluation and Ranking

A weighted evaluation and scoring process was developed to assist in the comparative evaluation of all alternatives considered. This evaluation utilizes key criteria from the previous steps in the process to focus on specific determining factors affecting the overall decision-making process. These key criteria were each assigned an overall weighted value with a total of all key criteria equal to 100. Sub-factors within each main criteria category were identified and assigned contributing sub-values to equal the total for each main criterion. A quantitative and qualitative assessment was then performed to compare and rank each alternative in each criterion. The Legend in **Table 15** below provides the descriptions and values used in this quantitative and qualitative assessment. Results of the scoring process are contained on **Figure 14** and **Figure 15**.

**Table 15: Weighted Evaluation Legend**

Code	Description	Value
++	SUBSTANTIALLY POSITIVE EFFECT OR BEST ALTERNATIVE	1.0
+	GENERALLY POSITIVE EFFECT OR GOOD ALTERNATIVE	0.8
0	GENERALLY NO EFFECT OR MODERATE ALTERNATIVE	0.6
-	GENERALLY NEGATIVE EFFECT OR INFERIOR ALTERNATIVE	0.4
--	GENERALLY NEGATIVE EFFECT OR WORST ALTERNATIVE	0.2

# Alternative Corridor Evaluation Report

Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study

Figure 14: Scoring Matrix (1 of 2)

IMPACTS ALTERNATIVES	Engineering 25			Social Environment 11			Natural Environment 15			
	Provides adequate Turnpike Interchange Spacing	Accommodates Expandability	Permitting Complexity	Potential Existing Residential Impacts	Potential Existing Commercial Impacts	Potential Parcel Impacts (other existing)	Wetland Impacts	100 Year Floodplain	Potential Habitat - Federal & State Listed Species	Potential Impacts to Bald Eagle Nests
	5	13	7	4	4	3	5	2	6	2
<b>Alternative 2000</b>	-- Less than 2 miles south of Nolte Rd.; within 1 mile of new ramps at Canoe Creek Rd.; less than 2 miles north of Friars Cove Road. 1	- Segment with 3.1 mile bridge over open water creates regulatory and financial challenges. 5.2	-- Impacts 1.3 acres of submerged aquatic vegetation; encroaches into snail kite habitat; requires 3.1 mile bridge in Lake Toho; 44.3 acres of surface water; requires vessel survey and significant federal action with USACE/USCG/FDEP. 1.4	-- 67 0.8	0 8 2.4	0 38 1.8	0 45 acres; has the least amount of direct impact. 3	+ 57.1 acres 1.6	0 263.5 acres and 1.3 acres of SAV 3.6	-- Direct impact: 1 + 139 ft inside Primary/ Secondary Buffer: 1 0.4
<b>Alternative 3000</b>	- ~ 2 miles north of Service Plaza; ~ 3 miles south of Friars Cove Road; ~ 6 miles south of Nolte Road. 2	++ Provides R/W width to accommodate system expansion. 13	0 Standard permitting requirements; USCG anticipates non-controversial permitting for Southport Canal crossing. 4.2	0 9 2.4	0 7 2.4	- 45 1.2	-- 73.2 acres; within one acre of the worst alternative. 1	0 199.7 acres 1.2	- 343.4 acres 2.4	0 Direct impact: 0 + Primary/ Secondary Buffer Impact: 0 1.2
<b>Alternative 4000</b>	- ~ 2 miles north of Service Plaza; ~ 3 miles south of Friars Cove Road; ~ 6 miles south of Nolte Road. 2	++ Provides R/W width to accommodate system expansion. 13	0 Standard permitting requirements; USCG anticipates non-controversial permitting for Southport Canal crossing. 4.2	0 5 2.4	0 7 2.4	0 41 1.8	- 59.4 acres; inferior to other alternatives. 2	- 228.8 acres 0.8	-- 460.5 acres 1.2	- Direct impact: 0 + 20 ft inside Primary/ Secondary Buffer: 1 0.8
<b>Alternative 7000</b>	- ~ 2 miles north of Service Plaza; ~ 3 miles south of Friars Cove Road; ~ 6 miles south of Nolte Road. 2	++ Provides R/W width to accommodate system expansion. 13	0 Standard permitting requirements; USCG anticipates non-controversial permitting for Southport Canal crossing. 4.2	0 5 2.4	0 6 2.4	0 40 1.8	-- 74.2 acres; worst of all alternatives considered. 1	-- 300.7 acres 0.4	- 375.5 acres 2.4	0 Direct impact: 0 + Primary/ Secondary Buffer Impact: 0 1.2



Figure 15: Scoring Matrix (2 of 2)

Physical Environment 4		Planning Consistency 15				Preliminary Estimated Costs 30			TOTAL SCORE
Potential Contamination Sites	Utility Conflicts	System linkage	Consistency with Adopted Plans (transportation/land use)	Regional Connectivity / Mobility	Minimize Parcel Remnants (uneconomic remainders)	Right-of-Way Cost	Wetland Mitigation Cost	Construction Cost	
2	2	4	5	4	2	10	5	15	
14	10	0 Direct connection to Turnpike; however, creates circuitous, disjointed routing to planned outer beltway; requires use of ~ 5 miles of TPK (an off-CFX system) as a link.	-- Not consistent with any adopted long range plans.	- Provides least direct connection to East Central Florida region.	-- Highest number of potential parcel remnants.	-- Lowest number of total R/W acres; largest number of individual parcels. Anticipate highest R/W cost.	+ Lowest cost for direct wetland impacts	-- Highest total construction cost.	36.4
0.4	0.4	2.4	1	1.6	0.4	2	4	3	
9	3	++ Provides system linkage with direct connection to Turnpike and planned outer beltway.	0 Generally consistent with adopted land use plans; requires comp plan amendment for SLT.	+ Provides all systems connections in a direct manor; optimal mobility	0 Results in fewer number of potential parcel remnants; co-located along Green Island and Bronson Ranch boundaries.	0 Impacts and anticipated cost comparable to other alternatives south of Lake Toho.	- Second highest cost for direct wetland impacts.	- Second highest cost of all alternatives considered.	58
0.8	0.8	4	3	3.2	1.2	6	2	6	
8	3	++ Provides system linkage with direct connection to Turnpike and planned outer beltway.	0 Generally consistent with adopted land use plans; requires comp plan amendment for SLT.	+ Provides all systems connections in a direct manor; optimal mobility	- Results in fewer number of potential parcel remnants; may have uneconomic remainders on north side of Bronson Ranch.	0 Impacts and anticipated cost comparable to other alternatives south of Lake Toho.	0 Second lowest cost for direct wetland impacts.	0 Lowest cost of all alternatives considered.	61.2
0.8	0.8	4	3	3.2	0.8	6	3	9	
8	3	++ Provides system linkage with direct connection to Turnpike and planned outer beltway.	++ Most consistent with all adopted plans.	+ Provides all systems connections in a direct manor; optimal mobility	- Results in fewer number of potential parcel remnants; maximizes space on north side of Bronson Ranch.	0 Impacts and anticipated cost comparable to other alternatives south of Lake Toho.	-- Highest cost for direct wetland impacts.	0 Comparable cost to Alt. 4000.	61.4
0.8	0.8	4	5	3.2	0.8	6	1	9	

### 5.6. Narrative Assessment by Corridor

Below is a narrative assessment for each of the corridors that were advanced from the CF&M Study into the Southport Connector Expressway PD&E process for further evaluation. Each narrative provides a description of any refinements to the corridor from the CF&M Study as well as the results of impact analyses in an effort to reveal any specific factors that may result in an unreasonable corridor. Public and agency input, such as input received from the Environmental Stewardship Committee, the PAG, the EAG, project stakeholders, and the general public, is also summarized in the narrative assessment.

#### 5.6.1. Corridor 2000

**Purpose and Need:** Corridor 2000 does not meet the following purpose and need criteria:

System Linkage:	East terminus is at FTE with no direct connection to the Northeast Connector Expressway (planned outer beltway).
Social and Economic Needs:	Does not serve the South Lake Toho Master Plan.
Consistency with Transportation Plans:	Inconsistent with local and/or regional Master Plan.
Multimodal Opportunities:	No available space on bridge section over Lake Toho to accommodate multimodal opportunities.
Safety and Evacuation Support:	Terminates on east end at FTE which is another major evacuation route

**Social Environment:** Corridor 2000 has the highest number of potential social impacts including 68 existing residential impacts, 11 existing commercial impacts and 54 government or vacant parcels.

**Cultural Environment:** Corridor 2000 has equal potential for cultural impacts as all other corridors. All corridors run adjacent to Section 4(f) properties including the Osceola County Environmental Study Center which lies within the SFWMD Lake Russell parcel, and Vance Harmon Park. There is a potential for all corridors to impact an unevaluated archaeological site (Cultural Resource Site OS00023).

**Natural Environment:** Corridor 2000 has high potential for natural impacts. The corridor crosses Lake Toho which is managed by SFWMD and FWC for snail kites. Corridor 2000 has a high degree of potential impact to snail kites and their nests, one direct impact to a bald eagle nest located within the corridor and one impact to a bald eagle primary nest buffer zone located approximately 140 feet from the corridor. This corridor could have approximately 45 acres of potential forested and non-forested wetland impacts, 57 acres of floodplain impacts, 263 acres of potential federal and state listed species habitat, and 1.3 acres of potential impact to submerged aquatic vegetation.

**Physical Environment:** Corridor 2000 has the highest impacts to the physical environment. The corridor has the potential to impact 14 contamination sites including the City of St. Cloud water treatment plant. There is also the potential of encountering 10 utility conflicts within Corridor 2000 in the vicinity of Pleasant Hill Road and Cypress Parkway. These conflicts will likely result in the relocation of major utilities.

**Project Estimated Costs:** Corridor 2000 has the highest estimated preliminary project cost. The estimated project cost for Corridor 2000 is \$1,215,000,000.

**Consistency with Local Planning:** Corridor 2000 is not consistent with the South Lake Toho Element of the Osceola County Comprehensive Plan, the CFX 2040 Master Plan or any other adopted long range plans.

**Interchange Spacing:** The proposed interchange for Corridor 2000 is less than two miles south of the proposed new FTE interchange at Nolte Road; within one-mile of new ramps at Canoe Creek Road, and less than two miles north of the planned interchange at Friars Cove Road. These distances are not in compliance with the minimum interchange spacing criteria.

**Other Considerations:** Corridor 2000 will require the construction of a three-mile four to six-lane bridge covering approximately 40 acres of surface water on Lake Toho. In addition to the added cost, there are concerns the bridge will affect the viewshed over the lake, create noise pollution in popular recreational boating and fishing areas, and impact sensitive snail kite nesting habitat. The construction of Corridor 2000 will also necessitate significant federal action with the USACE, USCG and Florida DEP. Only a small percentage of this corridor travels through TNC's one-mile CSDA buffer zone.

For Corridor 2000 to satisfy the project's need for system linkage and regional connectivity, the corridor must terminate at the proposed systems interchange north of the Canoe Creek Service Plaza. This would require Corridor 2000 to utilize five miles of FTE from the point where Corridor 2000 terminates near the existing Kissimmee Park Road interchange south to said proposed systems interchange. The utilization of FTE will require roadway improvements including the addition of two lanes in both directions, resulting in significant additional costs.

**Advantages and Disadvantages:** Figure 14 and Figure 15 (Weighted Matrix) summarize the major advantages and disadvantages associated with Corridor 2000 and provide a weighted score for comparison purposes (see Section 5.5). The weighted score for Corridor 2000 is 36.4 which is the lowest (least favorable) of all the alternatives.

**Specific Factors Affecting Reasonableness of Corridor:** This corridor does not meet the Purpose and Need of the project, it has the highest potential contamination sites, utility conflicts and parcel impacts including over seven times the number of potential existing residential impacts as the other corridor alternatives. The corridor bisects the rural residential community located along Kissimmee Park Road and has direct impacts to the City of St. Cloud potable water well field.

The construction of a three-mile four to six-lane bridge over Lake Toho and the subsequent noise pollution could result in significant impacts to sensitive snail kite nesting and foraging habitat. Other environmental concerns include the direct impact to a bald eagle nest located within the footprint of the corridor, an impact to the primary buffer of a bald eagle nest located within 140 feet of the corridor, impacts to 1.3 acres of submerged aquatic vegetation, and the effect the bridge will have on the viewshed across the lake. This corridor's proposed interchange at FTE does not comply with minimum interchange spacing criteria. Corridor 2000 has the highest cost of all corridors. The total cost of Corridor 2000 is at least 28 percent higher than Corridors 3000, 4000, and 7000 which have costs comparable to each other.

To assess all alternatives with equality in terms of logical termini, the assessment of Corridor 2000 should consider the utilization of FTE from the point where Corridor 2000 terminates near the existing Kissimmee Park Road interchange south to the proposed systems interchange for all other corridors located north of the Canoe Creek Service. This enables Corridor 2000 to be equally considered relative to system linkage and regional connectivity and will require improvements to FTE to accommodate the additional traffic. These improvements will add significant costs for construction and mitigation for environmental impacts.

**Agency & Public Input:** At the request of CFX's Environmental Stewardship Committee and the study's Environmental Advisory Group, Alternative 2000 was added to the study to be evaluated along with Alternatives 3000, 4000 and 7000. During project stakeholder meetings the Audubon Society and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) have communicated their support for this corridor. Following a presentation for the



Southport Connector at an Osceola County Board of County Commissioners meeting, members of the Board stated their opposition as did attendees at the Public Alternatives Workshop held in October 2021. Detailed summaries regarding agency and public input regarding the study's corridor alternatives are included in **Appendix C**.

**Recommendation:** Corridor 2000 is **not recommended** to be carried forward for further analysis.

### 5.6.2. Corridor 3000

**Purpose and Need:** Corridor 3000 meets all purpose and need criteria. This corridor provides direct system linkage, provides all regional systems connections in a direct manor, and can offer an opportunity for optimal mobility. Corridor 3000 meets social and economic needs by serving the South Lake Toho Master Plan, is consistent with area transportation plans, can accommodate multimodal opportunities, and would provide evacuation support to area traffic.

**Social Environment:** Corridor 3000 has the second highest number of potential social impacts including nine existing residential impacts, seven existing commercial impacts and 45 government or vacant parcels.

**Cultural Environment:** Corridor 3000 has equal potential for cultural impacts as all other corridors. All corridors run adjacent to Section 4(f) properties including the Osceola County Environmental Study Center which lies within the SFWMD Lake Russell parcel, and Vance Harmon Park. There is a potential for all corridors to impact an unevaluated archaeological site (Cultural Resource Site OS00023).

**Natural Environment:** Corridor 3000 has a moderate potential for natural impacts comparable to Corridors 4000 and 7000. This corridor could have approximately 73 acres of potential forested and non-forested wetland impacts, 200 acres of floodplain impacts, and 343 acres of potential federal and state listed species habitat. Corridor 3000 does not have any direct or primary/secondary buffer impacts to any bald eagle nests.

**Physical Environment:** Corridor 3000 has a moderate potential for impacts to the physical environment comparable to Corridors 4000 and 7000. The corridor has the potential to impact nine contamination sites ranging from a low to medium risk rating. There is the potential of encountering three utility conflicts within Corridor 3000 which is equal to the number of potential utility conflicts within Corridors 4000 and 7000. These conflicts could result in the relocation of major utilities.

**Project Estimated Costs:** Corridor 3000 has the second highest estimated preliminary project cost; however, it is considerably lower than the highest (Corridor 2000) and is comparable to the cost of Corridors 4000 and 7000. The estimated project cost for Corridor 3000 is \$871,000,000.

**Consistency with Local Planning:** Corridor 3000 is generally consistent with the South Lake Toho Element of the Osceola County Comprehensive Plan and the CFX 2040 Master Plan.

**Interchange Spacing:** The proposed systems interchange for Corridor 3000 is at the same location as Corridors 4000 and 7000. The interchange is approximately two miles north of the Canoe Creek Service Plaza, six miles south of the existing Kissimmee Park Road interchange, and three miles south of the planned interchange at Friars Cove Road.

**Other Considerations:** Corridor 3000 will have standard permitting requirements and the USCG anticipates non-controversial permitting for crossing Southport Canal. It is located midway between Lake Toho and Osceola County's Urban Growth Boundary which results in potential parcel remnants and may have uneconomic parcel remainders on the north side of Bronsons Ranch. Only a small percentage of this corridor travels through TNC's one-mile CSDA buffer zone.

**Advantages and Disadvantages:** Figure 14 and Figure 15 (Weighted Matrix) summarize the major advantages and disadvantages associated with Corridor 3000 and provide a weighted score for comparison purposes (see Section 5.5). The weighted score for Corridor 3000 is 58.0 which is comparable to Corridor 7000 and only three points lower than the highest of all the alternatives (Corridor 4000).

**Specific Factors Affecting Reasonableness of Corridor:** This corridor avoids direct and secondary impacts to known bald eagle nests. It is generally consistent with adopted land use plans; however, it will require a comprehensive plan amendment for the South Lake Toho Master Plan.

**Agency & Public Input:** During project stakeholder meetings, The Nature Conservancy stated their preference for Alternative 3000 compared to 4000 and 7000 since it is located furthest from the Disney Wilderness Preserve and their prescribed burning smoke shed. No direct comments regarding this corridor were received from attendees at the Public Alternatives Workshop held in October 2021. Detailed summaries regarding agency and public input regarding the study's corridor alternatives are included in **Appendix C**.

**Recommendation:** Corridor 3000 is **recommended** to be carried forward for further analysis.

### 5.6.3. Corridor 4000

**Purpose and Need:** Corridor 4000 meets all purpose and need criteria. This corridor provides direct system linkage, provides all regional systems connections in a direct manor, and can offer an opportunity for optimal mobility. Corridor 4000 meets social and economic needs by serving the South Lake Toho Master Plan, is consistent with area transportation plans, can accommodate multimodal opportunities, and would provide evacuation support to area traffic.

**Social Environment:** Corridor 4000 is comparable to 7000 which has the lowest number of potential social impacts including five existing residential impacts, seven existing commercial impacts and 41 government or vacant parcels.

**Cultural Environment:** Corridor 4000 has equal potential for cultural impacts as all other corridors. All corridors run adjacent to Section 4(f) properties including the Osceola County Environmental Study Center which lies within the SFWMD Lake Russell parcel, and Vance Harmon Park. There is a potential for all corridors to impact an unevaluated archaeological site (Cultural Resource Site OS00023).

**Natural Environment:** Corridor 4000 has a moderate potential for natural impacts comparable to Corridors 3000 and 7000. This corridor has the lowest amount of potential forested and non-forested wetland impacts with approximately 59 acres. It has the potential for 229 acres of floodplain impacts, and 460 acres of potential federal and state listed species habitat. Corridor 4000 does not have any direct impacts to bald eagle nests; however, it is approximately 20-feet inside the primary/secondary buffer of one bald eagle nest.

**Physical Environment:** Corridor 4000 has a moderate potential for impacts to the physical environment comparable to Corridors 3000 and 7000. The corridor has the potential to impact eight contamination sites ranging from a low to medium risk rating. There is the potential of encountering three utility conflicts within Corridor 4000 which is equal to the number of potential utility conflicts within Corridors 3000 and 7000. These conflicts could result in the relocation of major utilities.

**Project Estimated Costs:** Corridor 4000 has the second lowest estimated preliminary project cost; however, it is considerably lower than the highest (Corridor 2000) and is comparable to the cost of Corridors 3000 and 7000. The estimated project cost for Corridor 4000 is \$860,000,000.

**Consistency with Local Planning:** Corridor 4000 is generally consistent with the South Lake Toho Element of the Osceola County Comprehensive Plan and the CFX 2040 Master Plan.

**Interchange Spacing:** The proposed systems interchange for Corridor 4000 is at the same location as Corridors 3000 and 7000. The interchange is approximately two miles north of the Canoe Creek Service Plaza, six miles south of the existing Kissimmee Park Road interchange, and three miles south of the planned interchange at Friars Cove Road.

**Other Considerations:** Corridor 4000 will have standard permitting requirements and the USCG anticipates non-controversial permitting for crossing Southport Canal. It is located midway between Lake Toho and Osceola County's Urban Growth Boundary which results in potential parcel remnants and may have uneconomic parcel remainders on the north side of Bronsons Ranch. Approximately fifty percent of this corridor travels through TNC's one-mile CSDA buffer zone.

**Advantages and Disadvantages:** Figure 14 and Figure 15 (Weighted Matrix) summarize the major advantages and disadvantages associated with Corridor 4000 and provide a weighted score for comparison purposes (see Section 5.5). The weighted score for Corridor 4000 is 61.2 which is less than half a point lower than the highest of all the alternatives (Corridor 7000).

**Specific Factors Affecting Reasonableness of Corridor:** This corridor avoids direct impacts to known bald eagle nests. It is generally consistent with adopted land use plans; however, it will require a comprehensive plan amendment for the South Lake Toho Master Plan.

**Agency & Public Input:** No direct comments regarding this corridor were received during project stakeholder meetings or from attendees at the Public Alternatives Workshop held in October 2021. Detailed summaries regarding agency and public input regarding the study's corridor alternatives are included in **Appendix C**.

**Recommendation:** Corridor 4000 is **recommended** to be carried forward for further analysis.

### 5.6.4. Corridor 7000

**Purpose and Need:** Corridor 7000 meets all purpose and need criteria. This corridor provides direct system linkage, provides all regional systems connections in a direct manor, and can offer an opportunity for optimal mobility. Corridor 7000 meets social and economic needs by serving the South Lake Toho Master Plan, is consistent with area transportation plans, can accommodate multimodal opportunities, and would provide evacuation support to area traffic.

**Social Environment:** Corridor 7000 is comparable to 4000 and has the lowest number of potential social impacts including five existing residential impacts, six existing commercial impacts and 40 government or vacant parcels.

**Cultural Environment:** Corridor 7000 has equal potential for cultural impacts as all other corridors. All corridors run adjacent to Section 4(f) properties including the Osceola County Environmental Study Center which lies within the SFWMD Lake Russell parcel, and Vance Harmon Park. There is a potential for all corridors to impact an unevaluated archaeological site (Cultural Resource Site OS00023).

**Natural Environment:** Corridor 7000 has a moderate potential for natural impacts comparable to Corridors 3000 and 4000. This corridor could have approximately 74 acres of potential forested and non-forested wetland impacts, 300 acres of floodplain impacts, and 376 acres of potential federal and state listed species habitat. Corridor 7000 does not have any direct or primary/secondary buffer impacts to any bald eagle nests.

**Physical Environment:** Corridor 7000 has a moderate potential for impacts to the physical environment comparable to Corridors 3000 and 4000. The corridor has the potential to impact eight contamination sites ranging from a low to medium risk rating. There is the potential of encountering three utility conflicts within Corridor 7000 which is equal to the number of potential utility conflicts within Corridors 3000 and 4000. These conflicts could result in the relocation of major utilities.

**Project Estimated Costs:** Corridor 7000 has the lowest estimated preliminary project cost and is comparable to the cost of Corridors 3000 and 4000. The estimated project cost for Corridor 7000 is \$863,000,000.

**Consistency with Local Planning:** Corridor 7000 is consistent with the CFX 2040 Master Plan and is the most consistent with the South Lake Toho Element of the Osceola County Comprehensive Plan.

**Interchange Spacing:** The proposed systems interchange for Corridor 7000 is at the same location as Corridors 3000 and 4000. The interchange is approximately two miles north of the Canoe Creek Service Plaza, six miles south of the existing Kissimmee Park Road interchange, and three miles south of the planned interchange at Friars Cove Road.

**Other Considerations:** Corridor 7000 will have standard permitting requirements and the USCG anticipates non-controversial permitting for crossing Southport Canal. It is located nearest Osceola County's Urban Growth Boundary resulting in the least amount of parcel remnants and maximizing space on the north side of Bronsons Ranch. This corridor is almost entirely within TNC's one-mile CSDA buffer zone.

**Advantages and Disadvantages:** Figure 14 and Figure 15 (Weighted Matrix) summarize the major advantages and disadvantages associated with Corridor 7000 and provide a weighted score for comparison purposes (see Section 5.5). The weighted score for Corridor 7000 is 61.4 which is the highest of all the alternatives.

**Specific Factors Affecting Reasonableness of Corridor:** This corridor avoids direct and secondary impacts to known bald eagle nests. It is the most consistent with the adopted South Lake Toho Master Plan.

**Agency & Public Input:** Alternative 7000 is representative of the limited access facility included in the Osceola County South Lake Toho Master Plan and is therefore Osceola County's preferred corridor. Attendees at the Public Alternatives Workshop held in October 2021 and the Kenansville Ranch representative stated their preference for Alternative 7000 over Alternatives 2000, 3000 and 4000. Detailed summaries regarding agency and public input regarding the study's corridor alternatives are included in **Appendix C**.

**Recommendation:** Corridor 7000 is **recommended** to be carried forward for further analysis.



### 5.7. Alternative Corridor Evaluation Summary

The evaluation summary in **Table 16** is derived from previous sections of this report including the Purpose and Need Matrix (**Table 7**), the Inventory of Potential Impacts and the Corridor Evaluation (Weighted Score) Matrix (**Figure 14** and **Figure 15**).

**Table 16: Comparative Analysis of Corridor Alternatives**

Corridor Alternative	Purpose & Need Satisfaction	Potential for Relatively High Impacts	Evaluation Matrix Weighted Score	Estimated Cost (in millions)	Recommendation for Further Consideration
2000	No	10	36.4	\$1,215	No
3000	Yes	1	58.0	\$871	Yes
4000	Yes	2	61.2	\$860	Yes
7000	Yes	2	61.4	\$863	Yes

Due to the complexity of the design and permitting to construct a three-mile bridge segment over Lake Toho, Corridor 2000 ranks least favorable by a significant disparity. This ranking which includes high construction costs along with drainage, environmental and social impact concerns, led to the recommendation that Corridor 2000 should not be carried forward for further evaluation.

## 6.0 AGENCY AND PUBLIC INPUT

Agency and public outreach throughout the PD&E process are important to engage stakeholders and identify the benefits and concerns of the affected public that may influence the development and evaluation of the project corridor alternatives. The coordination efforts to date have assisted in identifying which corridors should be considered for further evaluation.

A summary of the outreach efforts and meetings to date are shown in **Table 17** and detailed summaries are included in **Appendix C**.

**Table 17: Summary of Stakeholder Meetings**

Item	Description	Date
CFX Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC)	The purpose of the meeting was to introduce the study team to the Committee and to discuss the project. Key topics of discussion were the advancement of the project to the PD&E stage and next steps.	August 20, 2020
Osceola County Staff	The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the PD&E study and receive input on the initial corridor alternatives. Key topics of discussion were the importance of maintaining a continuous local connection along Southport Road, Osceola County's preference for Alternative 7000 and next steps.	September 29, 2020
FTE Coordination Meeting	The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the PD&E study. Key topics of discussion were the location of the potential systems interchange at FTE, future traffic analyses and next steps.	October 1, 2020

**Table 17: Summary of Stakeholder Meetings (continued)**

Item	Description	Date
Polk County Staff	The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the PD&E study and receive input on the initial corridor alternatives. Key topics of discussion were Polk County's plans for roadway improvements along Cypress Parkway and CFX 2045 Master Plan update.	October 6, 2020
Kenansville Ranch Coordination Meeting	The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the PD&E study. and receive input on the initial corridor alternatives in relation to the ranch property. Representatives for the ranch stated their preference for Alternative 7000 over the other corridors.	November 2, 2020
Green Island Ranch Coordination Meeting	The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the PD&E study and receive input on the initial corridor alternatives in relation to the ranch property. The representative for Green Island Ranch stated his preference for a corridor that travels along the southern boundary of Green Island and the importance of connecting the expressway to Canoe Creek Road.	November 11, 2020
Audubon Society Coordination Meeting	The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the PD&E study and receive input on the initial corridor alternatives and any environmental impacts. Key topics of discussion were the Audubon Society's preference for an elevated expressway along Cypress Parkway, an alternative that crosses Lake Toho and next steps.	November 11, 2020
The Nature Conservancy (TNC) Coordination Meeting	The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the PD&E study and receive input on the initial corridor alternatives in relation to the Disney Wilderness Preserve owned and managed by TNC. Key topics of discussion included TNC's concern for the project advancing to the PD&E stage and the proximity of the expressway to the Disney Wilderness Preserve and their prescribed burn smoke shed.	November 18, 2020
Project Kickoff Notification	The notification package was sent electronically to an approved list of participating agencies, organizations, and special interest groups. The package provided an overview of the project and the request for input.	November 20, 2020
US Fish and Wildlife Service Coordination Meeting	The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the PD&E study and receive input on initial corridor alternatives and any potential environmental impacts. The USFWS stated their concern the project will promote growth in the region causing impacts to wildlife habitat. The USFWS would like the project mitigation plan to include the preservation of land south of the corridor.	December 1, 2020
Environmental Advisory Group (EAG) Meeting	EAG members consist of a variety of environmental professionals who are invited to provide expertise and input throughout the PD&E process. At this meeting members were provided an overview of the project with a focus on the environmental features and constraints within the project study area.	December 3, 2020

**Table 17: Summary of Stakeholder Meetings (continued)**

Item	Description	Date
Project Advisory Group (PAG) Meeting	PAG members consist of a variety of agency staff and stakeholders that have an interest in the project. At this meeting members were provided an overview of the project with a focus on planned developments, social features, and constraints within the project study.	December 3, 2020
Osceola County Executive Board	The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the PD&E study and receive input on the corridor alternatives including the addition of a corridor crossing Lake Toho based on feedback from the ESC and advisory groups. Members of the Board stated strong opposition for an alternative crossing Lake Toho.	January 11, 2021
Southport Ranch Coordination Meeting	The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the PD&E study and receive input on the initial corridor alternatives in relation to the ranch property. Key topics of discussion included wildlife observed on the ranch property, appropriate weather conditions for prescribed burning and traffic needs in the area.	January 12, 2021
Polk County Executive Board	The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the PD&E study. Key interest points were schedule and public outreach activities.	January 15, 2021
Dan Smith Coordination Meeting	The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the PD&E study and receive input regarding any potential wildlife corridor impacts. Dan relayed information regarding local wildlife recorded in the study area, suggestions for wildlife crossings and resources for data collection.	January 19, 2021
US Coast Guard Coordination Meeting	Discuss anticipated permitting requirements to construct a corridor crossing Lake Toho and/or the Southport Canal. Notable information received from USCG included the likelihood that the majority of vessels utilizing Lake Toho and Southport Canal are recreational. It is anticipated the USCG permitting process will be non-controversial.	January 19, 2021
Bronsons Ranch Coordination Meeting	The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the PD&E study and receive input on the initial corridor alternatives in relation to the ranch property. Key topics of discussion were the Ranch's preference for Alternative 7000 over the others and their concern that Alternative 2000 would not provide an opportunity to extend the expressway eastward beyond the FTE.	January 25, 2021
Doc Partin Ranch Coordination Meeting	The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the PD&E study and receive input on the initial corridor alternatives in relation to the ranch property. Notable information relayed from the ranch representative included the need for transportation in the area, a preference to orient the proposed FTE interchange to allow the expressway to travel south around Lake Gentry and his position to advocate against Alternative 2000.	January 28, 2021

**Table 17: Summary of Stakeholder Meetings (continued)**

Item	Description	Date
US Army Corps of Engineers Coordination Meeting	The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the PD&E study and receive input on the corridor alternatives. Key topics of discussion included permitting requirements for crossing the Southport Canal and the importance for mitigating any potential impacts to wildlife habitat.	January 28, 2021
SFWMD Coordination Meeting	The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the PD&E study and receive input on the corridor alternatives. Key topics of discussion included SFWMD's fire management plan, potential water level fluctuations in the study area resulting from the Kissimmee River restoration project and the potential for impacts to SFWMD land.	February 2, 2021
CFX Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC)	This meeting was held to provide a project status update including revisions to the corridor alternatives based on input received to-date and receive added input from the ESC.	February 18, 2021
Osceola School District Education Study Center (OSDEC)	This meeting took place on site at the OSDEC. Project team members provided an overview of the PD&E study displaying a map of the PD&E alternatives and their proximity to the OSDEC. It was noted that none of the proposed alternatives directly impact any buildings at the OSDEC. Discussion was held regarding the importance of maintaining access to the OSDEC during the design phase of the project.	March 17, 2021
The Toho Water Authority (TWA) Coordination Meeting	This meeting was held to provide an overview of the PD&E study and receive input on any planned TWA facilities located within the study area. The TWA provided information regarding the location of existing pipes along Cypress Parkway and a planned water treatment plant with associated piping within the study area.	March 19, 2021
Polk County Community Development District (CDD)	The purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the PD&E study with a focus on the Cypress Parkway segment and all the CDD to comment.	March 30, 2021
Project Kickoff Notification – Revised to include Corridor 2000	The revised notification package was sent electronically to the same recipient group that received the initial Project Kickoff Notification. The package was revised to include a corridor alternative crossing Lake Toho in the project description and overview. In response to the request for input, four comments were received (see <b>Appendix D</b> ).	April 16, 2021
Solivita Homeowners Association (HOA)	This meeting was held at the request of the Solivita HOA to provide an overview of the PD&E study and allow for comment.	May 20, 2021
FTE Project Status Meeting	The purpose of the meeting was to provide a project update, discuss systems interchange locations and the potential use of the FTE to carry Alternative 2000 to the project's logical termini.	June 8, 2021



**Table 17: Summary of Stakeholder Meetings (continued)**

Item	Description	Date
Poinciana Residents for Smart Change (PRFSC) Project Briefing	This meeting was held at the request of the PRFSC to provide an overview of the PD&E study and a project status update.	June 16, 2021
CFX Environmental Stewardship Committee	This meeting was held to provide a project status update and discuss the analyses and results of the corridor alternatives evaluation matrices. The meeting also allowed for comments from ESC attendees.	August 19, 2021
Environmental Advisory Group (EAG) Meeting	This meeting was held to provide a project status update and discuss the analyses and results of the corridor alternatives evaluation matrices. The meeting also allowed for comments from EAG members.	August 24, 2021
Project Advisory Group (PAG) Meeting	This meeting was held to provide a project status update and discuss the analyses and results of the corridor alternatives evaluation matrices. The meeting also allowed for comments from PAG members.	August 24, 2021
SFWMD	The purpose of this meeting was to review the geometry of the corridor alternatives in relation to the Upper Lakes Basin Watershed managed by the SFWMD and the request for a Right of Entry permit to perform required archeological field work on a cultural resources site within the study area. Key topics of discussion included SFWMD's preference for the corridor alternatives to avoid their land and the recommendation for the project team to evaluate alternatives circumventing their property.	August 27, 2021
Osceola County Public Works	The purpose of this meeting was to review the geometry of the SFWMD avoidance alternatives in relation to the Osceola County landfill. Key information relayed from the Public Works Director included a list of probable ramifications of impacting the landfill	December 9, 2021

### 6.1. Modifications to Corridors Based on Public Input

The results of the corridor analysis documented in the foregoing ACER were presented at a Public Information Meeting held on October 19, 2021. No public comments were received indicating a need to modify any of the alternative corridors evaluated in this study. Any future corridor modifications will be documented in the Preliminary Engineering Report and Project Environmental Impact Report, as needed.

# APPENDIX A

## FDOT Generalized AAD Volumes

TABLE 1

Generalized **Annual Average Daily** Volumes for Florida's  
Urbanized Areas

January 2020

INTERRUPTED FLOW FACILITIES						UNINTERRUPTED FLOW FACILITIES					
STATE SIGNALIZED ARTERIALS						FREEWAYS					
Class I (40 mph or higher posted speed limit)						Core Urbanized					
Lanes	Median	B	C	D	E	Lanes	B	C	D	E	
2	Undivided	*	16,800	17,700	**	4	47,600	66,400	83,200	87,300	
4	Divided	*	37,900	39,800	**	6	70,100	97,800	123,600	131,200	
6	Divided	*	58,400	59,900	**	8	92,200	128,900	164,200	174,700	
8	Divided	*	78,800	80,100	**	10	115,300	158,900	203,600	218,600	
						12	136,500	192,400	246,200	272,900	
Class II (35 mph or slower posted speed limit)						Urbanized					
Lanes	Median	B	C	D	E	Lanes	B	C	D	E	
2	Undivided	*	7,300	14,800	15,600	4	45,900	62,700	75,600	85,400	
4	Divided	*	14,500	32,400	33,800	6	68,900	93,900	113,600	128,100	
6	Divided	*	23,300	50,000	50,900	8	91,900	125,200	151,300	170,900	
8	Divided	*	32,000	67,300	68,100	10	115,000	156,800	189,300	213,600	
Non-State Signalized Roadway Adjustments						Freeway Adjustments					
(Alter corresponding state volumes by the indicated percent.)						Auxiliary Lanes Ramp					
Non-State Signalized Roadways - 10%						Present in Both Directions Metering					
						+ 20,000 + 5%					
Median & Turn Lane Adjustments						UNINTERRUPTED FLOW HIGHWAYS					
Lanes	Median	Exclusive Left Lanes	Exclusive Right Lanes	Adjustment Factors		Lanes	Median	B	C	D	E
2	Divided	Yes	No	+5%		2	Undivided	11,700	18,000	24,200	32,600
2	Undivided	No	No	-20%		4	Divided	36,300	52,600	66,200	75,300
Multi	Undivided	Yes	No	-5%		6	Divided	54,600	78,800	99,400	113,100
Multi	Undivided	No	No	-25%							
—	—	—	Yes	+ 5%							
One-Way Facility Adjustment						Uninterrupted Flow Highway Adjustments					
Multiply the corresponding two-directional volumes in this table by 0.6						Lanes	Median	Exclusive left lanes		Adjustment factors	
						2	Divided	Yes		+5%	
						Multi	Undivided	Yes		-5%	
						Multi	Undivided	No		-25%	
BICYCLE MODE <sup>2</sup>						<sup>1</sup> Values shown are presented as two-way annual average daily volumes for levels of service and are for the automobile/truck modes unless specifically stated. This table does not constitute a standard and should be used only for general planning applications. The computer models from which this table is derived should be used for more specific planning applications. The table and deriving computer models should not be used for corridor or intersection design, where more refined techniques exist. Calculations are based on planning applications of the HCM and the Transit Capacity and Quality of Service Manual.					
(Multiply vehicle volumes shown below by number of directional roadway lanes to determine two-way maximum service volumes.)											
Paved											
Shoulder/Bicycle											
Lane Coverage	B	C	D	E							
0-49%	*	2,900	7,600	19,700							
50-84%	2,100	6,700	19,700	>19,700							
85-100%	9,300	19,700	>19,700	**							
PEDESTRIAN MODE <sup>2</sup>						<sup>2</sup> Level of service for the bicycle and pedestrian modes in this table is based on number of vehicles, not number of bicyclists or pedestrians using the facility.					
(Multiply vehicle volumes shown below by number of directional roadway lanes to determine two-way maximum service volumes.)											
Sidewalk Coverage											
B C D E											
0-49%	*	*	2,800	9,500		<sup>3</sup> Buses per hour shown are only for the peak hour in the single direction of the higher traffic flow.					
50-84%	*	1,600	8,700	15,800							
85-100%	3,800	10,700	17,400	>19,700							
BUS MODE (Scheduled Fixed Route) <sup>3</sup>						<b>** Not applicable for that level of service letter grade. For the automobile mode, volumes greater than level of service D become F because intersection capacities have been reached. For the bicycle mode, the level of service letter grade (including F) is not achievable because there is no maximum vehicle volume threshold using table input value defaults.</b>					
(Buses in peak hour in peak direction)											
Sidewalk Coverage											
B C D E											
0-84%	> 5	≥ 4	≥ 3	≥ 2							
85-100%	> 4	≥ 3	≥ 2	≥ 1		<i>Source:</i> Florida Department of Transportation Systems Implementation Office <a href="https://www.fdot.gov/planning/systems/">https://www.fdot.gov/planning/systems/</a>					

Source:

Florida Department of Transportation  
Systems Implementation Office  
<https://www.fdot.gov/planning/systems/>

**TABLE 1**  
(continued)

Generalized **Annual Average Daily** Volumes for Florida's  
Urbanized Areas

January 2020

INPUT VALUE ASSUMPTIONS	Uninterrupted Flow Facilities				Interrupted Flow Facilities					
					State Arterials			Class I		
	Freeways	Core Freeways	Highways		Class I		Class II		Bicycle	Pedestrian
ROADWAY CHARACTERISTICS										
Area type (urban, rural)	urban	urban								
Number of through lanes (both dir.)	4-10	4-12	2	4-6	2	4-8	2	4-8	4	4
Posted speed (mph)	70	65	50	50	45	50	30	30	45	45
Free flow speed (mph)	75	70	55	55	50	55	35	35	50	50
Auxiliary Lanes (n,y)	n	n								
Median (d, twlt, n, nr, r)				d	n	r	n	r	r	r
Terrain (l,r)	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l	l
% no passing zone			80							
Exclusive left turn lane impact (n, y)			[n]	y	y	y	y	y	y	y
Exclusive right turn lanes (n, y)					n	n	n	n	n	n
Facility length (mi)	3	3	5	5	2	2	1.9	1.8	2	2
TRAFFIC CHARACTERISTICS										
Planning analysis hour factor (K)	0.090	0.085	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090	0.090
Directional distribution factor (D)	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.550	0.560	0.565	0.560	0.565	0.565
Peak hour factor (PHF)	0.95	0.95	0.95	0.95	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000	1.000
Base saturation flow rate (pcphpl)	2,400	2,400	1,700	2,200	1,950	1,950	1,950	1,950	1,950	1,950
Heavy vehicle percent	4.0	4.0	2.0	2.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.5	2.0
Speed Adjustment Factor (SAF)	0.975	0.975		0.975						
Capacity Adjustment Factor (CAF)	0.968	0.968		0.968						
% left turns					12	12	12	12	12	12
% right turns					12	12	12	12	12	12
CONTROL CHARACTERISTICS										
Number of signals					4	4	10	10	4	6
Arrival type (1-6)					3	3	4	4	4	4
Signal type (a, c, p)					c	c	c	c	c	c
Cycle length (C)					120	150	120	120	120	120
Effective green ratio (g/C)					0.44	0.45	0.44	0.44	0.44	0.44
MULTIMODAL CHARACTERISTICS										
Paved shoulder/bicycle lane (n, y)									n, 50%, y	n
Outside lane width (n, t, w)									t	t
Pavement condition (d, t, u)									t	
On-street parking (n, y)										
Sidewalk (n, y)										n, 50%, y
Sidewalk/roadway separation(a, t, w)										t
Sidewalk protective barrier (n, y)										n
LEVEL OF SERVICE THRESHOLDS										
Level of Service	Freeways	Highways		Arterials			Bicycle	Ped	Bus	
	Density	Two-Lane	Multilane	Class I	Class II		Score	Score	Buses/hr.	
		%ffs	Density		ats					
B	≤ 17	> 83.3	≤ 17	> 31 mph	> 22 mph		≤ 2.75	≤ 2.75	≤ 6	
C	≤ 24	> 75.0	≤ 24	> 23 mph	> 17 mph		≤ 3.50	≤ 3.50	≤ 4	
D	≤ 31	> 66.7	≤ 31	> 18 mph	> 13 mph		≤ 4.25	≤ 4.25	< 3	
E	≤ 39	> 58.3	≤ 35	> 15 mph	> 10 mph		≤ 5.00	≤ 5.00	< 2	

% ffs = Percent free flow speed ats = Average travel speed



## APPENDIX B

### Florida's FTE Correspondence

**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

**DATE/TIME:** June 8, 2021, 1:00 p.m.

**Attendees:**

Will Hawthorne (CFX)	Henry Pinzon (FTE)	Ralph Bove (Volkert)
Jonathan Williamson (Dewberry)	Rax Jung (FTE)	Will Sloup (Volkert)
Kathy Putnam (Quest)	Andrew Velasquez (FTE)	Kelli Muddle (Volkert)
	Emam Emam (FTE)	

**Meeting with Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (FTE): Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study**

The following is a summary of the subject stakeholder coordination meeting.

Ralph Bove displayed a map of the revised Southport Connector Expressway alternative corridors including an alternative that crosses Lake Tohopekaliga (Toho), Alternative 2000, and the proposed interchanges at the Turnpike. Ralph explained that Alternative 2000 will be evaluated using the same 3-step comparative analysis process as the alternatives located south of Lake Toho (3000, 4000 and 7000). From a systems continuity standpoint, Alternative 2000 should terminate at the same logical termini as all the other alternatives; therefore, it is necessary for Alternative 2000 to utilize a segment of the Turnpike mainline for approximately 5 miles from the eastern terminus of the corridor to the systems interchange common to Alternatives 3000, 4000 and 7000. Ralph asked the FTE team their thoughts about the Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX) using that portion of the Turnpike for operational purposes similar to SR 408/SR 429 where the Turnpike is used as the connection.

Henry Pinzon stated they are trying to fix the problem between SR 408/SR 429 which is complex and becoming very expensive as the region grows. Henry added the better option will be to have an alignment that will address future needs. Having two major roadways at the intersection on the eastern end of Alternative 2000 doesn't help regional needs. It's not foreseeable that Alternative 2000 would have a frontage road and using the Turnpike for a short distance will likely not work. The FTE would have to address the capacity between two systems.

Ralph explained the project team will be using a weighted matrix like that used for the Lake/Orange Connector PD&E which will reflect the complexity of mixing the two systems together. The matrix includes a set of key criteria and one criterion will be negative impacts on the Turnpike. Each key criterion will be assigned a weighted value that will be used to perform a quantitative and qualitative assessment of each alternative. At the conclusion of the assessment, alternative corridors will be compared and ranked. The team agreed Alternative 2000 will likely not score well during the comparative analysis process.

Following the evaluation of satisfying purpose and need, impacts, cost and scoring, non-feasible alternatives will be eliminated, and the project team can move to a more detailed assessment and ultimately recommend a preferred alternative corridor.

Henry stated the area around the Turnpike is growing at a fast rate and Osceola County is trying to get another interchange in the area. Adding another interchange or two from developments on the east side of the Turnpike could create an unfavorable condition. Andrew Velasquez confirmed the County's request for a Friars Cove Road interchange, near the Three Lakes Toll Plaza and suggested the team consider this during the comparative analysis.

Ralph mentioned the interchange access request Methodology Letter of Understanding (MLOU) for this project is on hold until we get more information in this study area. Emam Emam stated the FTE generally waits for a MLOU until there's a preferred alignment. Ralph responded that in this case, the MLOU will only show the shaded area where alternative corridors are being evaluated. The goal is to advance the interchange access request so it can be completed within the remainder of the PD&E study.

Henry stated they are using this same process with their projects so by the time a preferred alignment is determined the team can move forward on the interchange access request. Canoe Creek is going through a lot of growth and there's not enough capacity in that area to move traffic north. Henry noted that approximately 500 feet north of this project's connection to the Turnpike the FTE is reviewing another connection to relieve traffic going to Canoe Creek. This connection would be in addition to an interchange the County is requesting.

Ralph asked if Volkert should estimate the cost of widening the segment of the Turnpike Alternative 2000 would need to utilize or estimate costs to construct a separate system. Andrew directed Ralph to estimate the cost to widen the Turnpike from its current four lanes to eight lanes. The FTE has 300 feet of ROW.

The team agreed Volkert will coordinate with the FTE when conducting a planning level cost estimate to give FTE the opportunity to point out potential issues. The FTE will share a cost per mile based on their recent concept for widening the Turnpike from Ft. Pierce to Yeehaw Junction from four to six lanes. The FTE requested they be informed of any other interchange that has a potential to be impacted.

Will Hawthorne agreed that all four corridors should have similar logical termini so the study team should move forward using the logical termini shared by Alternatives 3000, 4000 and 7000 displayed on the current alternatives map. He asked FTE if calculating traffic numbers will help advance the MLOU. Emam responded that traffic information does not need to be presented in the MLOU, only the traffic forecasting model that will be used.

Ralph clarified that the segment from the Canoe Creek Service Plaza up to the new Nolte Road interchange would be the area of influence for the MLOU. Andrew recommended adding language that due to the long distance, the area of influence will not include Yeehaw Junction at SR 60. Andrew suggested meeting to discuss the MLOU prior to the Alternatives Public Meeting.

Adjourn: The meeting ended at approximately 2:00 p.m.

## APPENDIX C

### Stakeholder Meeting Summaries



# CENTRAL FLORIDA EXPRESSWAY AUTHORITY

## MINUTES CENTRAL FLORIDA EXPRESSWAY AUTHORITY ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING August 20th, 2020

### Location: Virtual

The Committee Meeting can be accessed through Zoom Webinar by calling the toll-free number (877) 853-5257 and entering the webinar ID: 910 1438 6242 or can be viewed by clicking the link, [https://cfxway.zoom.us/Environmental Stewardship Committee Meeting/8.20.20](https://cfxway.zoom.us/Environmental%20Stewardship%20Committee%20Meeting/8.20.20) and entering the passcode: 027458

### Committee Members Present:

Robert Mindick, Osceola County Representative, Committee Chair  
Jim Barfield, Brevard County Representative  
Richard Durr, Seminole County Representative  
Beth Jackson, Orange County Representative  
Charles Lee, Citizen Representative  
Timothee Sallin, Lake County Representative  
Brittany Sellers, City of Orlando Representative

### Also Present:

Laura Kelley, Executive Director  
Glenn Pressimone, Chief of Infrastructure  
Michelle Maikisch, Chief of Staff/ Public Affairs Officer  
Mimi Lamaute, Board Services Coordinator/CFX Financial Disclosure Coordinator  
Rita Moore, Recording Secretary/Executive Assistant  
Dale Allen, Florida Greenways and Trails Foundation  
Ralph Bove, Volkert, Inc.  
Dan Kristoff, RS&H  
Kelli Muddle, Volkert, Inc.  
Clif Tate, Kimley-Horn and Associates

### **A. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at approximately 9:00 am by Chairman Mindick. Roll Call was conducted to confirm a quorum.

**B. PUBLIC COMMENT**

We received one public comment which was read in by General Counsel, Woody Rodriguez.

**C. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS – (Info Item)**

Ms. Kelley, CFX Executive Director, welcomed everyone to the committee and thanked them for their time and commitment.

Mr. Rodriguez, CFX General Counsel, explained the procedures and policies of the Committee voting process. Mr. Rodriguez stated that the Committee members will be operating under Robert's Rules.

Chairman Mindick stated the purpose of the Environmental Stewardship Committee from the Committee Charter.

**D. FLORIDA NATIONAL SCENIC TRAIL CROSSING OF SR 528 – PRESENTED BY DALE ALLEN, FLORIDA GREENWAYS AND TRAILS FOUNDATION (info. item)**

Mr. Dale Allen presented a proposed land bridge crossing of S.R. 528. After looking at a multitude of options for a corridor the idea of a land bridge was proposed as an option. St. Johns Water Management district was consulted about the potential site and had two main concerns, impacts to the wetland and cavity trees for the red-cockaded woodpecker. The potential site was selected for multiple reasons, mainly it has no impact to the wetlands or the red-cockaded woodpecker nesting cavity trees. The site is west of Turkey Creek Road, which is pasture land with no trees and on its north side it would fall on a former road, so it will not affect wetlands. FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation was consulted as well, they stated they were not aware of any Florida red-cockaded woodpecker's in the area. CFX offered three (3) different proposals for the project, a 20 ft. wide pedestrian only bridge, 50 ft. wide multi-use bridge (limited wildlife capacity), and 100 ft. bridge land bridge that would accommodate a multi-use corridor for people and wildlife.

A discussion was had around the whether the land bridge would continue paving the disturbed road into Hal Scott Regional Park and Preserve. Mr. Allen stated that at these beginning stages we have no plans for that.

A discussion was had around the Department of Transportation in Volusia County newly constructed wildlife crossing over Interstate-4 and the development of the land on one side of it that renders the crossing potentially wasted and concerns that the south end of the proposed S.R. 528 bridge could meet a similar end if no promises were made by the landowners to preserve the land around this bridge. Mr. Lee stated that this should be a wildlife crossing in his opinion and suggested working and speaking with Deseret Ranch. Mr. Allen responded that Florida Greenway and Trails Foundation is in talks with Deseret Ranch and they are cooperative and in the loop.

Ms. Sellers suggested gathering quantifiable data around best practices regarding other land bridges. Specifically, requirements for wildlife, what species would use the bridge, and referring to the National Wildlife Foundation guidelines. She suggested identifying benefits of the land bridge to the owners/developers.

(This item was presented for information only. No formal committee action was taken.)

**E. OSCEOLA / BREVARD COUNTY CONNECTOR CONCEPT, FEASIBILITY AND MOBILITY (CF&M) STUDY – PRESENTED BY CLIF TATE P.E., PROJECT MANAGER, KIMLEY-HORN AND ASSOCIATES – INFO ITEM**

Mr. Clif Tate of Kimley-Horn and Associates presented the CF&M study for the Osceola/Brevard County Connector. He stated that we are currently in the feasibility stage of the project development process which looks for potential flaws in the project. The East Central Florida Corridor Task Force recommended study areas for two new East-West transportation corridors. There are three major property owners in the study area, Deseret Ranches, St. Johns River Water Management District, and the Viera Company. Osceola County and Deseret Ranches have developed the North Ranch Sector Plan which include corridors consistent with the task force recommendations. The Viera company's master plan does not include an expressway corridor through its property and they have expressed opposition to an expressway corridor impacting their existing or planned development, or wilderness conservation areas. Mr. Tate presented an environmental board with potential constraints to the project. He then presented the alternatives board which illustrated the social constraints. Mr. Tate presented conceptual corridors and asked the Committee members to provide input on the different alignments.

Discussion was had around the Development of Regional Impact (DRI) from the Viera Company and the work with the Environmental Community to work out all the details of conservation lands that were included in the DRI. Mr. Barfield stated that he had concerns that some of that land could be impacted with multiple alignments shown as they 'skirt' the area.

Mr. Durr commented on the language in the response from the Viera Company specifically about if an alignment was chosen that crossed through the DRI area it would effectively reopen the DRI.

Discussion was had around understanding some of the opportunities and constraints with each alignment. Mr. Durr stated he would like to know the needs and rationale between the spacing between the connections.

Discussion was had around corridor D1 and D2 and its impacts to Tosohatchee and if the plan is to co-locate that route to be co-located with the existing bridge that already impacts Tosohatchee or would it have further impacts? Mr. Tate answered D1 connects to SR520 and then stops and D2 would start and run parallel to 520.

Discussion was had around which of the alternatives would actually impact the Viera Company? Mr. Tate answered that F1 and F1b would impact Viera. There is a power line that comes down south toward I-95 so we've laid this out so it would run parallel with that power line.

Ms. Jackson stated that Corridor D1 or D2 it would also have significant impacts on the Econlockhatchee river and the mosaic of wetlands that feed both the Econlockhatchee river and the St. Johns river.

Discussion was had around the Deseret Ranches Sector Plan and the amount of transportation planning that went into it. Mr. Lee commented that Deseret had strong wishes for a crossing springing off Nova Rd. and joining the old Pineda route. When the Governors Task Force met to discuss this, it concluded that the study of this corridor could remain but of all the possibilities presented that this corridor presented the greatest environmental impacts. Mr. Lee suggested an addition to 192 to join with 520, an entire co-location exercise similar to the Wekiwa Parkway design.

Ms. Sellers seconded Mr. Durr's comment regarding the opportunities and constraints of the alternatives.

Chairman Mindick stated we really need to look at the impact to the EW Corridor that connects the Econlockhatchee river to the St. Johns conversation areas. Anything going through the north band of the study area would have a high environmental impact. The F4 alternative looks like it would have the least environmental impact. Every time we look at something crossing the St. Johns river, I think this is the major corridor nationally for wildlife movement and climate change adjustments.

(This item was presented for information only. No formal committee action was taken.)

**F. SOUTHPORT CONNECTOR EXPRESSWAY PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT (PD&E) STUDY – PRESENTED BY RALPH BOVE, PROJECT MANAGER, VOLKERT, INC. – INFO ITEM**

Ralph Bove of Volkert, Inc. presented the PD&E study for the Southport Connector Expressway. This is in the area of northern Polk county and western Osceola county. The Southport connector is generally oriented along the existing cypress parkway alignment as it intersects the poinciana parkway, then crossing reedy creek into an area south of Lake Toho and terminating at Canoe Creek Rd. Osceola County conducted the South Lake Toho Master Plan which included a Southport Connector alignment study. FDOT conducted a preliminary Southport Connector Alternative Corridor Evaluation Report (ACER). These provided some good background when CFX acquired the jurisdiction of Osceola County and engaged in the Southport Connector CF&M study, that was completed in May of 2018 and included a re evaluation of the FDOT ACER. Potential Environmental Challenges and impacts were identified along the Southport Connector study area. Volkert Inc. will prepare a Natural Resource Evaluation (NRE) which will establish an impact matrix which will help identify a preferred alternative. Mr. Bove summarized the process and multiple reports that will be produced by Volkert, Inc. on the 15-month track of the study.



Discussion was had around CFXs decision to pursue the Southport Connector project after it was placed on hold due to projected toll revenues. Mr. Pressimone stated that CFX continued to monitor changes in development and CFX was approached by Green Isle DRI about the potential for donation of right-of-way. Mr. Lee voiced concerns about the cost to travel for the community.

A discussion was had around the Nature Conservancy's position on the Southport Connector project as laid out in the presentation. Mr. Lee stated he reached out to The Nature Conservancy on their input regarding the Southport Connector that was included in the presentation. A letter was added to the record regarding the Nature Conservancy's position. Mr. Pressimone stated we will be revisiting our relationship with the Nature Conservancy in this study.

Chairman Mindick commented he did not see the mitigation banks on this study especially pertaining to the private ranches that are on property in this study zone. Chairman Mindick recommended spending more time on this project and stressed its importance.

(This item was presented for information only. No formal committee action was taken.)

**G. NORTHEAST CONNECTOR EXPRESSWAY PHASE 1 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT (PD&E) STUDY – PRESENTED BY DAN KRISTOFF P.E., PROJECT MANAGER, RS&H– (INFO ITEM)**

Mr. Dan Kristoff of RS&H presented the Northeast Connector Expressway Phase 1 Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study. Study area is from Cyrils Drive to Nova Road, 4.40 miles. Two (2) alternative corridors will be evaluated and presented at a public meeting. One (1) corridor will be selected from the two and more precise alignments will be investigated, and engineering and environmental reports will be prepared. No fatal flaws in anticipated wetland and species impacts. Our goal is avoidance of the wetland systems where possible.

A discussion was had around the proximity this corridor would have to the Lake Ajay community. Mr. Kristoff estimated that it was a mile and half away.

A discussion was had around unfulfilled need to pin down the dedication of wildlife corridors within the NE district. Mr. Lee stated that the advent of the study of this route would be a good place to incorporate efforts to get commitments from Deseret Ranches and Tavistock for the permanent dedication of those wildlife corridors and they have got to include uplands and wetlands.

A discussion was had around the sensitivity of this study area and the need to look at it very carefully. Chairman Mindick stated that the upland species will need to be looked at very carefully. He stated that Caracara and burrowing owls may also be present in this area.

(This item was presented for information only. No formal committee action was taken.)

**H. OTHER BUSINESS**

Chairman Mindick requested input from the Committee Members on preferences for meeting frequency and suggestions for upcoming meeting topics.

Mr. Barfield suggested presenting upcoming projects and studies in the early stages.

Mr. Durr seconded Mr. Barfield's recommendation.

Ms. Jackson requested a summary of the East Central Florida Corridors Task Force as they seem to drive many of the road projects.

Mr. Lee suggested quarterly meetings depending on need and requested a status update on the Osceola Parkway and the Split Oak Preserve.

Ms. Kelley of CFX suggested every 2-month frequency and move to a quarterly frequency once we are caught up.

**A motion was made by Ms. Jackson and seconded by Mr. Lee to set the frequency of our meetings to every two (2) months. The motion carried unanimously with five (7) members present voting AYE by voice vote.**

Mr. Lee exited the meeting at 11:06 a.m.

Chairman Mindick requested more information on 'Item E' and 'Item F' of the Agenda in a future meeting.

## **I. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Mindick adjourned the meeting at approximately 11:09 a.m.

Minutes approved on October 22nd, 2020.

*Pursuant to the Florida Public Records Law and CFX Records Management Policy, audio tapes of all Board and applicable Committee meetings are maintained and available upon request to the Records Management Liaison Officer at [publicrecords@CFXway.com](mailto:publicrecords@CFXway.com) or 4974 ORL Tower Road, Orlando, FL 32807.*

**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)  
[+1 407-630-7039](#)  
Conference ID: 583 677 763#

**DATE/TIME:** September 29, 2020, 10:00 a.m.

**Invitees/Attendees:**

Will Hawthorne (CFX)	Joshua DeVries (Osceola County)	Ralph Bove (Volkert)
Jonathan Williamson (GEC)	Justin Eason (Osceola County)	Will Sloup (Volkert)
Kathy Putnam (PIC)		Kelli Muddle (Volkert)
		Ivannia Bok (Volkert)

**Meeting with Osceola County: Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study**

The following is a summary of the subject biweekly meeting. Attendees present are in **bold** text. Agenda items are in *italics*.

1. ***Introductions/Meeting Purpose:*** Following self-introductions, Ralph stated the purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the Southport Connector PD&E Study to Osceola County staff (Justin Eason and Joshua DeVries).
2. ***Overview of PD&E Study***
  - a. ***Public Involvement:*** QCA is developing the Draft Public Involvement Plan (PIP) for the study. Ralph and Kathy reviewed the following highlights of the PIP.
    - i. ***Public meetings/hearing:*** The study will include a Public Kickoff Meeting (3<sup>rd</sup> week in January 2021), an Alternatives Public Meeting (mid-May 2021) and a Public Hearing (mid-September 2021).
    - ii. ***Stakeholders (ESC, EAG, PAG, Osceola County, Polk County, Florida's Turnpike Enterprise, Landowners):*** Stakeholder coordination will be an important part of the study and will include meetings/presentations to the Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC), Environmental Advisory Committee (EAG), Project Advisory Committee (PAG), Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (FTE), local government staff (Osceola and Polk Counties) and major landowners. Kathy noted the first EAG/PAG meetings are being scheduled for December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Individual meetings with members of the EAG/PAG will be scheduled as needed throughout the study. Coordination with the ESC is anticipated prior to each EAG/PAG meeting and it was noted a project kickoff presentation was provided to the ESC in August 2020.

- iii. Web site: Using the CFX web site as the base, a link to the project web site has been set up by QCA. Project related information includes Study Area Map, Project Description, Project History, ESC Kickoff Presentation, and Project Schedule.
- b. Engineering Analysis and Reports
  - i. Corridor analysis, roadway, structures, drainage, utilities, interchange concepts: Ralph reviewed the corridor analysis and elements of the preliminary engineering work to be performed under the PD&E study. The study team is currently reviewing the project details documented in the Southport Connector Concept, Feasibility and Mobility (CF&M) Study completed in May 2018. The CF&M study will serve as the basis upon which the PD&E study will be advanced.
  - ii. Project segments (Cypress Parkway, South of Lake Toho, Turnpike to Canoe Creek Road): The entire study area will be evaluated and documented in the PD&E study; however, from an analysis and potential project phasing standpoint, the study area has been divided into the following segments: 1) along Cypress Parkway from Poinciana Parkway to Pleasant Hill Road; 2) Pleasant Hill Road to the Turnpike; and, 3) Turnpike to Canoe Creek Road.

For the Cypress Parkway segment, the study team will review the CF&M study concept from a geometric design criteria and traffic operational standpoint. The corridors south of Lake Toho identified in the CF&M study will be evaluated and refined as needed to reduce the number of viable corridors and identify a preferred corridor by the end of the alternatives analysis phase. For the segment from the Turnpike to Canoe Creek Road, a corridor analysis will be conducted to determine the most viable or reasonable alignment orientation across the Turnpike and leading to the future Northeast Connector Expressway east of Canoe Creek Road (ie: north or south of Lake Gentry). Jonathan added the toll viability aspect of the connection to Canoe Creek Road is important. The traffic analysis performed during the CF&M study showed that connecting to Canoe Creek Road past the Turnpike increased travel demand to/from Poinciana.

- iii. Traffic analysis (CDM Smith): CDM Smith will be providing the traffic analysis for the PD&E study. As a result of the initial project team coordination meeting held with CDM Smith, a list of questions regarding the status of transportation network improvements and land use decisions in Osceola County was prepared for County staff to consider. The questions were designed to assist CDM Smith in developing the methodology and assumptions for the travel demand forecasting work effort. The questions and initial responses provided are included in this meeting summary as Attachment 1. The group agreed to schedule a follow up meeting to continue the land use and network discussion.

Josh mentioned the need to provide a continuous local connection along Southport Road (as a framework roadway) east of Reedy Creek in order to maintain local access to existing and future development in the South Lake Toho area. This connection would minimize or avoid the use of the expressway for short distance (less than one-half mile) local trips. Josh also indicated the need to improve the curve radius along the existing Southport Road in the area east of Reedy Creek.



- c. Environmental Analysis and Reports
  - i. Social, natural, cultural and physical resources: Ralph indicated the study will include a series of environmental support documents for the various natural, social, cultural and physical environmental resources assessments. A Project Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) will be the main environmental document presented to the CFX Board for approval at the end of the study.
- 3. Project Administration
  - a. Project schedule (15 months): The current PD&E study schedule is 15 months. Kathy noted the CFX policy is there will be no additional in-person public meetings in the month of December besides the Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup> EAG/PAG meetings. All public meetings will be held virtually for the remainder of 2020.
  - b. Progress meetings: Biweekly progress meetings with the CFX team started on Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup> and will be held throughout the study. Local government partners (Polk and Osceola Counties) have been invited to attend the first progress meeting of each month beginning Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>.
- 4. Ongoing Activities: The following items were briefly reviewed and represent current work in progress by the CFX and study team:
  - a. Public Involvement Plan (QCA): As noted earlier, the Draft PIP is being generated by QCA and will include the public and agency outreach techniques to be used for the study.
  - b. Advance Notification Package: Volkert is preparing the AN package which will be distributed to federal, state, and regional environmental agencies and local transportation organizations to serve as early notification that the PD&E study has started and to receive initial comments.
  - c. Revised study area boundary; base map prep: Minor adjustments to reduce the project study area boundary have been made in the vicinity of the Cypress Parkway/Poinciana Parkway intersection, across the Reedy Creek wetland area, and north of the Southport Mitigation Bank. In addition, the study area boundary has been slightly expanded in the vicinity of Kenansville Ranch and east of Canoe Creek Road.
  - d. Data collection: Ongoing
    - i. Existing (2019) aerials, survey/LiDAR data: FDOT aerials have been downloaded for use in the study but initially were not geo-referencing correctly. The County has current photography available if needed. (Note, since the progress meeting, Volkert was able to reference the FDOT aerials.) Volkert will also be reaching out to agencies such as the Water Management District to obtain existing topographic and/or LiDAR information to assist with the concept development particularly along the Cypress Parkway segment. Josh indicated the County may have as-built plans for the Cypress Parkway segment.

- ii. Existing Conditions Tech Memo: An Existing Conditions Analysis Technical Memorandum will be prepared as part of the study. The study team is conducting desktop reviews of existing data to include in the Tech Memo.
- e. Review of proposed concept along Cypress Parkway: As noted earlier, the study team is reviewing the geometric layout of the proposed CF&M concept along Cypress Parkway.
- f. Corridor Analysis/Refinement: As noted earlier in the project overview discussion, the study includes the refinement of the alternative corridors south of Lake Toho as well as an evaluation of alternative corridors east of the Turnpike to Canoe Creek Road.
  - i. South Lake Toho Corridors
  - ii. East of Canoe Creek Road, Lake Gentry
- g. Turnpike Interchange: The study includes an evaluation of a proposed interchange with the Turnpike. This topic was also discussed in the project overview and as part of the County's responses to the questions provided by CDM Smith.
  - i. Meeting with Turnpike (10/1): This meeting was scheduled and subsequently held to initiate coordination with Turnpike staff. A separate meeting summary will be provided.
  - ii. Green Island DRI, South Lake Toho Master Plan: The additional Turnpike interchange as shown in the South Lake Toho Master Plan within the boundaries of the Green Island DRI was a topic of discussion while addressing the questions presented by CDM. Further details are provided in the attached Q & A summary.
- 5. Miscellaneous Discussion: Will S. asked if the southernmost corridor alternative evaluated in the CF&M study was still preferred by the County. Josh indicated that since it is part of the South Lake Toho Master Plan it is the most favorable; however, representatives of Kenansville Ranch have indicated to the County they may be moving forward with the development of preliminary site plans for their property and would be interested in an interchange connection to the Southport Connector. This could affect the location and orientation of potential corridors to consider in the PD&E study. Josh indicated a comprehensive plan amendment would be needed for any changes to the South Lake Toho Master Plan which the County would consider if the change benefits other aspects of the overall corridor analysis and selection process.
- 6. Adjourn: The meeting ended at approximately 11:15 a.m.

Attachment: Summary of Osceola County Input

**Attachment to Stakeholder Meeting Summary****Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study  
Stakeholder Meeting with Osceola County  
September 29, 2020**

Prior to the subject stakeholder meeting with Osceola County, a request for information/list of questions was provided to the County via e-mail to obtain a status update on various transportation networks and/or land use changes/development approvals potentially affecting the PD&E study alternatives analysis. Below is a summary of the responses provided by Osceola County (Josh DeVries) during the stakeholder meeting on Sept. 29<sup>th</sup>.

- 1. Please verify the future number of lanes for Cypress Parkway and Pleasant Hill Road. In the current adopted LRTP they are 6-lanes, but we understand there is a moratorium on 6-lane facilities.**

**Response:** Our current policy is not to exceed four lanes for arterial roadways, but that doesn't mean we wouldn't pass up the opportunity if there's a great need to have an auxiliary or extended turning lane. If there are areas where local traffic is backing up due to congestion and turning movement, we'd look to expand.

- 2. Please provide the most updated alignment of the Cross Prairie Parkway and schedule for implementation. We know some sections have been constructed, others have ROW reservations and some sections are conceptual. Any and all information is helpful.**

**Response:** Cross Prairie Parkway is a developer-driven project and is not part of our capital improvements program. The only alignment set is north of Friars Cove Road north of your project limits. Implementation of future phases will be up to the developer's schedule. The alignment can shift as needed then there would be a transfer of property and right-of-way as needed.

- 3. Kissimmee Park Road: What is the status of the completion of this interchange – ramps to and from south? (Turnpike Widening PD&E: Alt 1 – just improvement to ramps to and from north; Alt 2 – DDI with ramps to and from south).**

**Response:** This is an ongoing PD&E Study being conducted by FTE. Josh referred the team to the Turnpike website for more information. There is a Public Hearing scheduled for November. Jonathan mentioned Dewberry is leading the PD&E Study for Turnpike. The proposed concept considers removing the existing interchange ramps at Kissimmee Park and providing a diverging diamond interchange (DDI) at a new location (Nolte Road). Additional slip ramps to/from Canoe Creek Road may also be considered.

- 4. South Lake Toho Master Plan: Have there been any updates to 2010 Master Plan? Can the County provide a max. build out (acreage/population) of the master plan?**

**Response:** The South Lake Toho Master Plan is a stand-alone element within the County's comp plan. There is a link to the Master Plan on the County's web site that has detailed information regarding potential development build-out and thresholds. Josh was not sure if it has been updated or amended since approval in 2010.

5. **Crossings of Turnpike:** Currently there are three crossings of Turnpike at Kissimmee Park Road, Friars Cove Rd./Deer Run Rd. and Canoe Creek Rd. Are there any additional crossings planned outside the Southport Connector?

**Response:** Josh confirmed there are three crossings over the Turnpike within or near the Southport Connector study area: Kissimmee Park Road, Friars Cove Road and Canoe Creek Road (*note: this is south of the Service Plaza*). He mentioned the Edgewater Concept Plan (CP) that is part of the East Lake Toho Master Plan (north of the South Lake Toho Master Plan). The Edgewater CP shows the proposed DDI at the Turnpike and the secondary access (slip ramps) to Canoe Creek Road. In the County's review of the Edgewater CP, they indicated that the secondary access should not only be on/off but should also act as a crossing to integrate with the development that's there. (**Note: Subsequent to this meeting, Josh sent the Edgewater CP information to Ralph and Jonathan. This topic was also discussed with Turnpike on Oct. 1.**)

6. **Planned Interchanges on Turnpike:** In So. Lake Toho Master Plan, there is a planned local access interchange within the Green Island DRI property. Has there been any additional discussions with Turnpike – is it in their plans? Should this be included in SCE study?

**Response:** Josh was not sure if the local access interchange with Turnpike is in the Turnpike long range plan or not (**Note: In the stakeholder meeting with Turnpike on Oct. 1, this local access interchange with the Turnpike (and others like it) would be developer driven and therefore is not in the current FTE plan.**)

Josh noted the County would prefer a local interchange with Turnpike closer to Friars Cove Road (near the northern edge of Green Island's property). There is some flexibility to modify the location and configuration as long as it is generally consistent with the conceptual master plan for Green Island. Ralph and Josh agreed there needs to be a follow-up meeting to discuss the plans and impacts in this area.

Ralph asked if there are any development orders or resolutions that have been passed to support development plans within Green Island. Josh said the Green Island DRI has been rescinded; however, the property owner retained vested rights for future development which will still need to be consistent with the South Lake Toho Master Plan.

7. **Poinciana Area:** Are there plans to extend Laurel Avenue to the north and connect to Koa Street?

**Response:** There's nothing in our work program but we have a plan of framework streets that show an avenue connection extending Laurel Avenue to the north and east connecting to Skipping Stone Boulevard.

**8. Poinciana Area: Please provide the proposed 2045 LRTP improvements in this area – Number of lanes and any new connections.**

**Response:** Our comp plan does not specify number of lanes per roadway. We use designations such as Avenues, Boulevards, Transit/Multimodal corridors, etc. We are discussing this topic with MetroPlan Orlando as well and, in general, Avenues are two-lane divided and Boulevards are four-lane divided. Avenues could be expanded to four lanes if warranted by travel demand. The County has a GIS layer that shows the roadway framework of Avenues, Boulevards, etc.

This concludes the summary of the input received from Osceola County on September 29<sup>th</sup> in response to the study teams' request for information. Ralph noted during the discussion that a follow up meeting would be beneficial to be sure the land use and network assumptions used in the PD&E traffic analysis are reasonable and consistent with the County's plans and visions for this area.



**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)  
[+1 407-630-7039](#)  
Conference ID: 710 401 411#

**DATE/TIME:** October 1, 2020, 1:30 p.m.

**Invitees/Attendees:**

Will Hawthorne (CFX)  
Jonathan Williamson (Dewberry)  
Kathy Putnam (Quest)  
Hugh Miller (CDM Smith)  
Carleen Flynn (CDM Smith)  
Om Kanike (CDM Smith)

Henry Pinzon (FTE)  
Rax Jung (FTE)  
Jimmy Mulandi (FTE)  
Emam Emam (FTE)

Ralph Bove (Volkert)  
Will Sloup (Volkert)  
Brian Kirwan (Volkert)  
Ivannia Bok (Volkert)  
Kelli Muddle (Volkert)

**Meeting with Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (FTE): Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study**

The following is a summary of the subject stakeholder coordination meeting. Attendees present are in **bold** text. Agenda items are in *italics*.

1. *Introductions/Meeting Purpose:* Following self-introductions, Ralph stated the purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the Southport Connector PD&E Study to FTE staff (Henry Pinzon, Rax Jung, Jimmy Mulandi and Emam Emam).
2. *Project/Study Area Overview:* FTE was involved in the previous Concept, Feasibility and Mobility (CF&M) studies for the Southport Connector and Northeast Connector (NEC). Ralph mentioned the Southport Connector PD&E Study will consider a potential system-to-system interchange with the Turnpike. It was noted the Southport Connector study area boundary has been extended to Canoe Creek Road. Alternative concepts for the potential Turnpike interchange and corridor extensions to Canoe Creek Road were part of the NEC CF&M Study. The interchange concepts and corridor locations to Canoe Creek Road will be further evaluated during the Southport Connector PD&E Study.

Henry asked if CFX was considering an adjustment in the location of the proposed Southport Connector/Turnpike interchange. Henry indicated tolling conditions have changed since the CF&M study regarding conversion of the Three Lakes Mainline toll plaza/ticket system (north of this location) to All Electronic Tolling (AET). Operations related to the Canoe Creek Service Plaza located to the south remain a concern with a new interchange in this area due to spacing. If CFX is considering a shift in the proposed interchange location, moving north would be acceptable but moving south would be constrained by the service plaza. Ralph and Jonathan responded if the interchange location is shifted it would likely shift to the north due to input received by CFX since the CF&M studies were completed. Shifting the interchange location north would comply with spacing criteria related to the

service plaza, minimize impact to future development plans related to the Bronson's Ranch, and keep the proposed interchange within the Osceola County Urban Services Growth Boundary.

Jimmy asked if the Southport Connector project is funded for design or construction. Will H. confirmed design is not funded in the current CFX Five-Year Work Plan. Ralph indicated the study has three distinct segments and the PD&E study will consider implementing the project in phases. Jimmy asked if the proposed typical section concept was initially four lanes expandable to six lanes. Ralph stated the standard CFX typical section for new corridors allows for an initial four-lane facility with the ability to be expanded to eight lanes in the future as traffic warrants. For the portion of the Southport Connector within the existing Cypress Parkway segment, the Parkway would be reconstructed to the north and south of the existing arterial with the proposed Southport Connector located in the center of the existing Parkway right-of-way. Ingress, egress and local access points including grade separations at key intersections along this segment were coordinated with Osceola and Polk Counties during the CF&M study.

3. PD&E Study Highlights: The following highlights of the Southport Connector PD&E Study were discussed.
  - a. Public Involvement: Quest is developing the Draft Public Involvement Plan (PIP) for the study. A summary of the outreach tools and techniques proposed for this study include the following items.
    - i. CFX web site: A project page has been set up within the overall CFX web site. Project related information includes Study Area Map, Project Description, Project History, Project Kickoff Presentation to the CFX Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC), and Project Schedule.
    - ii. EAG/PAG and stakeholder coordination: Stakeholder coordination will be an important part of the study and will include meetings/presentations to the Environmental Advisory Group (EAG), Project Advisory Group (PAG), FTE, local government staff (Osceola and Polk Counties) and major landowners. Henry and Rax served on the PAG for the CF&M study. Henry asked to have Jimmy and Emam added for the PD&E study.
    - iii. Public Kickoff Meeting (January 2021): The Public Kickoff Meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 19, 2021. Currently, all CFX public meetings are being held as virtual meetings with no in-person meetings through the rest of 2020.
      1. EAG/PAG Meeting, December 3<sup>rd</sup>: Kathy noted the first EAG/PAG meetings are being scheduled for December 3<sup>rd</sup> and will be held via TEAMS meeting.
    - iv. Alternatives Public Meeting (May 2021): The Alternatives Public Meeting is tentatively scheduled for mid-May 2021 and will be focused on the comparison of viable project alternatives.
    - v. Public Hearing (September 2021): The Public Hearing is tentatively scheduled for mid-September 2021 and will be focused on the presentation of the preferred build and no-build alternatives.

- b. Engineering/Environmental Analysis: Ralph briefly reviewed the following activities related to engineering and environmental analyses for the PD&E study.
- i. Data collection, review Concept, Feasibility and Mobility Study: The Southport Connector CF&M study completed by CFX in May 2018 will serve as the basis upon which the PD&E study will be conducted. Engineering and environmental data will be updated and documented in an Existing Conditions Analysis Technical Memorandum.
  - ii. Traffic analysis (CDM Smith): As the CFX traffic and revenue consultant, CDM Smith will provide the traffic analysis including future year forecasts and operational analyses to support the PD&E study. Coordination with Osceola County is ongoing regarding the status of land use approvals and transportation network improvements affecting future year travel demand.
  - iii. Corridor analysis/concept development (Cypress Parkway, South of Lake Toho, Turnpike to Canoe Creek Road): The proposed project will be evaluated and documented in the PD&E study; however, from an analysis and potential project phasing standpoint, the proposed project has been divided into the following segments: 1) along Cypress Parkway from Poinciana Parkway to Pleasant Hill Road; 2) Pleasant Hill Road to the Turnpike; and, 3) Turnpike to Canoe Creek Road.
  - iv. Project Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) and support documents: A series of engineering and environmental support documents will be prepared to document the results of the PD&E study. A Draft and Final PEIR will be prepared and presented to the CFX Board for approval.

Henry indicated the items discussed above appear to be straightforward. New interchanges on the Turnpike would be FTE's main concern. From a system connection and linkage standpoint, this project will work well with FTE's connection to I-4 which will further define the project purpose and need.

4. Coordination with FTE

- a. Southport Connector traffic analysis (by CDM Smith): CDM Smith will be providing the necessary traffic analysis to support the concept development for the proposed Southport Connector. The traffic scope of work is being developed but is anticipated to provide the appropriate analyses needed for each of the unique project segments within the study area.
- b. System improvements and operations
  - i. Kissimmee Park Road/Edgewater: Henry stated the ongoing Turnpike PD&E for the Kissimmee Park Road interchange is evaluating an alternative to relocate the interchange approximately one-mile north to the Nolte Road location. Carleen asked about the timing of future implementation of this project. Henry indicated Turnpike is reviewing the current financial situation and revenue forecasts for this improvement. Volkert will follow up with FTE regarding the status of this project in the current FTE Five-Year Work Plan. It was noted that the Nolte Road interchange will provide full access to the Turnpike and a proposed partial access point

just south of Nolte Road that provides direct connection to and from the north at Canoe Creek Road.

- ii. South Lake Toho Master Plan/Green Island DRI:* A discussion was held regarding the South Lake Toho Master Plan and Green Island DRI as they relate to a future service interchange with the Turnpike north of the proposed Southport Connector/Turnpike systems interchange. Henry stated this is not in Turnpike's long-range plan. This would be a developer-driven and funded interchange; however, the proposed location as shown in the South Lake Toho Master Plan could present a spacing issue and this is FTE's main concern.

The need for this additional interchange access was further discussed along with potential arterial network crossings over the Turnpike within and just outside the South Lake Toho Master Plan. Rax indicated the service interchange with Turnpike within the South Lake Toho Master Plan should not be assumed in the future network since it would be developer-driven. Henry agreed, since it is difficult to assume the status of development-driven interchanges, the focus needs to be on the Southport Connector interchange. Moving the Southport Connector interchange to the north could impact a developer interchange due to spacing concerns. Henry noted this area will be all electronic tolling by the time this project starts construction.

*iii. Systems interchange with Southport Connector*

- 1. Extension to Canoe Creek:* A corridor analysis will be conducted to determine the most viable or reasonable alignment orientation across the Turnpike and leading to the future NEC east of Canoe Creek Road (ie: north or south of Lake Gentry). Jimmy acknowledged the improved mobility benefits of connecting to Canoe Creek Road would seem to be favorable to Osceola County.

- iv. Canoe Creek Service Plaza:* A key concern for the Turnpike is the interaction of traffic to/from the Canoe Creek Service Plaza and the new systems interchange.

*v. Toll operations:*

- 1. Ticket and/or AET:* The planned AET conversion along this segment of the Turnpike was discussed above. Volkert will continue coordination with FTE and request the AET conversion plans and supporting documentation to be considered as needed in the PD&E study.

*5. Project Administration*

- a. Project schedule (15 months):* Ralph stated the current PD&E study schedule is 15 months. Henry indicated the system-to-system interchange with Turnpike will require an Interchange Justification Report (IJR) which may include coordination with FDOT Central. Henry indicated the entire IJR approval process may require a 9 to 12-month duration. Ralph indicated the IJR was not included in the PD&E scope of work. FTE staff stated since CFX is proposing to connect to the Turnpike, CFX would serve as the IJR applicant and Turnpike would be a reviewing and approving agency.

Emam indicated the process begins with the preparation of an Interchange Access Request (IAR) and Methodology Letter of Understanding (MLOU). Since this is a new interchange, the IAR would result in the determination that a full IJR is needed. A comment was made by FTE staff that Central Office may require approval of the IAR/IJR prior to the PD&E public hearing. Henry added the FDOT process would need to be followed and offered FTE's assistance to CFX in following the process. Henry indicated the PD&E schedule should include the IJR process.

Internally, CFX staff will discuss the need to include an IJR as part of the PD&E study. Discussions will include the need to revisit the project schedule, confirm the level of involvement with Central Office (i.e. Systems Implementation Group vs. Office of Environmental Management), and determine the order of approvals for the IJR and PD&E relative to the CFX Board action to approve their own PD&E study (as opposed to a traditional FDOT PD&E).

Ralph acknowledged AECOM is a subconsultant to Volkert on the PD&E study and preparation of the Turnpike IJR would be AECOM's responsibility with CDM Smith providing the travel demand forecasts. Emam indicated AECOM staff supporting FTE in this process would need to execute disclosure statements to document there would be no conflict of interest in this arrangement. Regarding future interchange operational analyses to support the IJR and with respect to the direct ramp connections at Canoe Creek Road discussed above as part of the Nolte Road alternative, Jimmy suggested the IJR should consider alternatives with and without these connections.

- b. Biweekly Progress meetings: Biweekly progress meetings with the CFX team started on Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup> and will be held throughout the study. Local government partners (Polk and Osceola Counties) have been invited to attend the first progress meeting of each month beginning Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>.

6. *Miscellaneous Discussion*: There was no miscellaneous discussion.

7. *Adjourn*: The meeting ended at approximately 2:30 p.m.



**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)  
[+1 407-630-7039](#)  
Conference ID: 413 066 376#

**DATE/TIME:** October 6, 2020, 1:30 p.m.

**Invitees/Attendees:**

**Will Hawthorne (CFX)**  
**Jonathan Williamson (Dewberry)**  
**Kathy Putnam (Quest)**  
Colleen Shea (Quest)

**Jay Jarvis (Polk County)**  
**Joe Montoya (Polk County)**  
**Amy Gregory (Polk County)**  
**William Lorenzo (Polk County)**  
Wade Allen (Polk County)  
**Rob Julius (Polk County/AECOM)**

**Ralph Bove (Volkert)**  
**Will Sloup (Volkert)**  
Brian Kirwan (Volkert)  
**Ivannia Bok (Volkert)**  
**Kelli Muddle (Volkert)**

**Meeting with Polk County: Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study**

The following is a summary of the subject stakeholder coordination meeting. Attendees present are in **bold** text. Agenda items are in *italics*.

- 1. *Introductions/Meeting Purpose:*** Following self-introductions, Ralph stated the purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the Southport Connector PD&E Study to Polk County staff. Attendees representing Polk County are highlighted above.
- 2. *Project/Study Area Overview:*** Polk County was involved in the previous Concept, Feasibility and Mobility (CF&M) study for the Southport Connector. The segment along the existing Cypress Parkway alignment, from west of Poinciana Parkway to Marigold Avenue, is within Polk County's jurisdiction. Ralph reviewed the project limits and overall study area boundaries. Minor adjustments to the project study area boundary have been made in the vicinity of the Cypress Parkway/Poinciana Parkway intersection. Ralph noted the PD&E study area has also been extended to Canoe Creek Road on the eastern end.
- 3. *PD&E Study Highlights:*** The following highlights of the Southport Connector PD&E Study were discussed.
  - a. *Public Involvement:*** Serving as the CFX Public Involvement Consultant, Quest is developing the Draft Public Involvement Plan (PIP) for the study. The PIP will outline the outreach tools and techniques proposed for this study and will include the following items.

- i. CFX web site*: A project page has been set up within the official CFX web site. Project related information includes Study Area Map, Project Description, Project History, Project Kickoff Presentation to the CFX Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC), and Project Schedule.
  - ii. EAG/PAG and stakeholder coordination (Polk County members)*: Stakeholder coordination will be an important part of the study and will include meetings/presentations to the Environmental Advisory Group (EAG), Project Advisory Group (PAG), Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (FTE), local government staff (Osceola and Polk Counties) and major landowners. Jay Jarvis served on the PAG during the CF&M study and Polk County staff listed above will be added to the PAG mailing list.
  - iii. Public Kickoff Meeting (January 2021)*: The Public Kickoff Meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 19, 2021. Currently, all CFX public meetings are being held as virtual meetings with no in-person meetings through the rest of 2020.
    - 1. EAG/PAG Meeting, December 3<sup>rd</sup>*: Kathy noted the first EAG/PAG meetings are being scheduled for December 3<sup>rd</sup> and will be held via TEAMS meeting.
  - iv. Alternatives Public Meeting (May 2021)*: The Alternatives Public Meeting is tentatively scheduled for mid-May 2021 and will be focused on the comparison of viable project alternatives.
  - v. Public Hearing (September 2021)*: The Public Hearing is tentatively scheduled for mid-September 2021 and will be focused on the presentation of the preferred build and no-build alternatives.
- b. Engineering/Environmental Analysis*: Ralph briefly reviewed the following activities related to engineering and environmental analyses for the PD&E study.
  - i. Data collection, review Concept, Feasibility and Mobility Study*: The Southport Connector CF&M study completed by CFX in May 2018 will serve as the basis upon which the PD&E study will be advanced. Engineering and environmental data will be updated and documented in an Existing Conditions Analysis Technical Memorandum.
  - ii. Traffic analysis (CDM Smith)*: Serving as the CFX traffic and revenue consultant, CDM Smith will provide the traffic analysis including future year forecasts and operational analyses to support the PD&E study. Coordination with local government stakeholders is ongoing regarding the status of land use approvals and transportation network improvements affecting future year travel demand.
  - iii. Corridor analysis/concept development (Cypress Parkway, South of Lake Toho, Turnpike to Canoe Creek Road)*: The proposed project will be evaluated and documented in the PD&E study; however, from an analysis and potential project phasing standpoint, the proposed project has been divided into the following segments: 1) along Cypress Parkway from Poinciana Parkway to Pleasant Hill Road; 2) Pleasant Hill Road to the Turnpike; and, 3) Turnpike to Canoe Creek Road.

- iv. Project Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) and support documents:* A series of engineering and environmental support documents will be prepared to document the results of the PD&E study. A Draft and Final Project Environmental Impact Report (PEIR) will be prepared and presented to the CFX Board for approval.
- 4. Coordination with Polk County:* The primary purpose of this meeting was to receive an update from Polk County on the status of widening Cypress Parkway. The topics below were used to facilitate this discussion.
- a. Existing information (as-builts, drainage, permits, utilities, survey, LiDAR, etc.):* As part of the data collection effort for the PD&E study, Volkert will be requesting existing information from Polk County to update the information provided during the CF&M study. Examples include as-built plans, drainage plans, existing permits, utility data, and existing survey including topographic and/or LiDAR data.
- b. Cypress Parkway widening:* During the CF&M study, the widening of Cypress Parkway within Polk County was on the County's top five list of priority projects. The widening was put on hold pending the results of the CF&M study. Since the completion of the CF&M study in 2018, the Polk County Board of County Commissioners (BOCC) decided to move forward with the widening of Cypress Parkway and authorized a Preliminary Engineering Study and Final Design effort. According to Jay, the project is fully funded through construction.

Rob Julius (AECOM) is the County's Project Manager for this project. Rob indicated the study documents are nearing completion (within the next two weeks) and 15% Line and grade plans are due at the end of October/early November. The 60% design plans are scheduled for early summer 2021. Ralph and Rob will continue to communicate and share information as needed to coordinate the efforts of Polk County and CFX. Rob indicated the widening is consistent with the typical section recommendations documented in the CFX CF&M study. Local access will be provided along the outside edges with the future Southport Connector Expressway located within the center of the right-of-way. The widening will transition back to the intersection with the Poinciana Parkway extension lining up to Solivita Boulevard on the west. Cypress Parkway will be on the outside edges of the right-of-way on the north and south sides to tie back in.

In addition to Cypress Parkway, the County is moving forward with improvements along Marigold Avenue from Coyote Road to Cypress Parkway. This project is also being produced by AECOM and both are being led by County PM Bill Lorenzo. The proposed improvements along Marigold Avenue will include minor intersection improvements at Cypress Parkway and are being bundled with the Cypress Parkway widening. Jay indicated the four-laning along Cypress Parkway will transition into the existing four-lane segment west of Marigold Avenue. Ralph will follow up and continue to coordinate with Rob and Bill to obtain information about these improvements. The County asked about the next phase of Southport Connector and while it is not currently funded for design, Will H. indicated it is likely to be included in the next work program update.

- c. *Land-use changes/development approvals:* The study team will follow up with Polk County regarding potential changes in land-use or new development approvals as the methodology for the travel demand forecasts and traffic analysis is developed.

5. *Project Administration*

- a. *Project schedule:* Ralph stated the current PD&E study schedule is 15 months.

- b. *Biweekly Progress meetings:* Biweekly progress meetings with the CFX team started on Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup> and will be held throughout the study. Local government partners (Polk and Osceola Counties) have been invited to attend the first progress meeting of each month beginning Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>. Polk County invitees will include Jay Jarvis, Bill Lorenzo and Rob Julius.

- 6. *Miscellaneous Discussion:* Although it is outside of the Southport Connector study area, Jonathan asked for an update on the Central Polk Parkway project in Polk County with respect to potential corridor locations along Powerline Road and potential effects of MCORES. Joe Montoya indicated his understanding was the first extension segment of the Polk Parkway in Polk County will be from SR 540 to US 17 then the second extension will be US 17 to SR 60. FDOT did a mobility study in this area and the Powerline Road corridor is an area of interest. This would be an alternate to US 17 through the Davenport area. MCORES adds another layer of uncertainty in terms of future corridor needs.

Jonathan indicated that as the CFX is updating its Master Plan, FTE discussed the possibility of extending Cypress Parkway to the Polk Parkway in the vicinity of Powerline Road. Joe indicated that connection would seem to be beneficial. As part of the CFX 2045 Master Plan update, Jonathan will follow up with Polk County and others regarding these opportunities.

- 7. *Adjourn:* There being no further discussion, the meeting ended at approximately 2:30 p.m.

**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** Microsoft Teams Meeting  
+1 618-484-9061  
Conference ID: 539 674 955#

**DATE/TIME:** November 2, 2020, 1:30 p.m.

<b>Attendees:</b>	<b>Will Hawthorne (CFX)</b>	<b>J. Christy Wilson, III (J.C. Wilson &amp; Associates)</b>
	<b>Jonathan Williamson (Dewberry)</b>	<b>B. Diane Smith (J.C. Wilson &amp; Associates)</b>
	<b>Merissa Battle (Dewberry)</b>	<b>Ralph Bove (Volkert)</b>
	<b>Kathy Putnam (Quest)</b>	<b>Will Sloup (Volkert)</b>
		<b>Kelli Muddle (Volkert)</b>

#### Stakeholder Meeting: Kenansville Ranch

The following is a summary of the subject stakeholder meeting. Attendees present are in **bold** text. Agenda items are in *italics*.

- 1. Introductions/Roles of Team Members:* Ralph opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees. Self-introductions were provided and study team members identified their specific roles on the project. The purpose of the meeting was to provide a project update to representatives of Kenansville Ranch and to receive their input for consideration during the PD&E study.
- 2. Project Overview:* Ralph provided a brief project overview and acknowledged there was coordination with Kenansville Ranch representatives during the CFX Concept, Feasibility and Mobility (CF&M) Study completed in May 2018.

*Results of 2018 Concept Study:* J. Christy Wilson, III acknowledged he was familiar with the previous study and stated his firm represents the property owners associated with Kenansville Ranch. He referenced an Authorization to Represent document dated July 10, 2017 previously submitted to the CFX during the CF&M Study (Note: Following the subject meeting, a copy of this document was provided to the study team for the project file.). Ralph acknowledged there was correspondence in the CF&M study documenting previous coordination with Kenansville Ranch.

- 3. Overview of the PD&E Study:* Ralph reviewed a map of the current study corridors and stated the results of the CF&M Study have been advanced into the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study phase of project development. A general overview of the PD&E study scope of services and schedule was provided, as follows:

*General Scope of Services:* The PD&E study will focus on a more detailed level of engineering and environmental analysis with the goal of identifying a preferred build alternative to advance into the



design phase. The PD&E study is currently the only phase funded by CFX. Public involvement and stakeholder coordination are important aspects of the PD&E study phase. The results of the PD&E study will be documented in a series of engineering and environmental reports and presented to the CFX Board for approval.

*Project Schedule:* The PD&E study started in September 2020 and is expected to be completed in December 2021, a duration of approximately 15 months. Public meetings will be held beginning with a Public Kickoff Meeting in late-January/early February 2021. An Alternatives Public Meeting is tentatively scheduled for mid-May 2021 and the Public Hearing is tentatively scheduled for mid-September 2021.

4. *Discuss Kenansville Ranch:* the following represents a summary of the discussion held regarding the Southport Connector study corridors and Kenansville Ranch:

Mr. Wilson asked how the Cypress Parkway segment affects the Ranch. A review of the study corridor along the existing Cypress Parkway alignment, from Poinciana Parkway to just east of Pleasant Hill Road, illustrated this portion of the project does not directly affect Kenansville Ranch. Mr. Wilson agreed this segment does not affect the Ranch; however, he stated the northern two corridors east of the proposed Reedy Creek crossing do directly affect the Ranch property and associated agricultural operations. Mr. Wilson asked why the southerly alternatives in this area were not being considered. He indicated, in his opinion, these represented more direct routes for the proposed expressway and do not directly affect Kenansville Ranch.

A clarification was made that Mr. Wilson was referring to the corridor alternatives in the vicinity of the northern boundary of the Disney Wilderness Preserve north of Lake Russell. He mentioned while he understood the evaluation in the CF&M study considered the potential smoke-shed resulting from prescribed burns on the Preserve; however, he questioned the validity of that concern. Mr. Wilson stated his clients desire is for the Ranch property to remain whole. He stated the direct impacts to Kenansville Ranch would impact the cattle operations resulting in business damages.

Mr. Wilson asked the study team who they were coordinating with at Osceola County and asked for a copy of the stakeholders list. Study team members stated the staff at Osceola County involved in the project includes Tawny Olore, Joshua DeVries and Justin Eason. Kathy mentioned the project stakeholder lists were being developed and once approved by CFX they will be provided to Mr. Wilson.

Mr. Wilson reiterated his clients' position is not just a NIMBY (not in my backyard) position but one that should consider the potential impacts to the Ranch infrastructure and operation. The study team acknowledged this position and asked if the boundaries of the Ranch, as illustrated on the study corridor map, appear correct and Mr. Wilson confirmed they appear accurate (Note: These boundaries have been confirmed with Osceola County Property Appraiser data).

Will Sloup mentioned there was a position paper authored by the Ranch owners and submitted to FDOT during the previous Alternative Corridor Evaluation Report (ACER) process in 2015. Mr. Wilson acknowledged the position paper was actually prepared by his office. He stated he will look through his files and send it to the study team once located.

Ms. Smith asked for a copy of the material presented during the meeting. Following the meeting, Ralph provided a copy of the study corridor map from the CF&M study and indicated the information on the map is considered preliminary. All material displayed during the meeting is attached to this summary.

Ms. Smith also asked who the primary point of contact will be for future communications. As Consultant Project Manager, Ralph is the study team point of contact. Kathy asked that any correspondence sent to Ralph should copy [projectstudies@cfxway.com](mailto:projectstudies@cfxway.com).

5. Next Steps: Ralph reviewed the next steps in the PD&E study including updated data collection, existing conditions analysis, corridor evaluation and preparing for the Public Kickoff Meeting.

6. Adjourn: There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:00 p.m.

This concludes the summary of the subject stakeholder meeting with Kenansville Ranch. Please contact Ralph Bove at [ralph.bove@volkert.com](mailto:ralph.bove@volkert.com) if there are any questions or clarifications on the information provided above.

End of Summary

Attachments: Meeting Material

**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)  
[1-618-484-9061](#)  
Conference ID: 423 334 896#

**DATE/TIME:** November 11, 2020, 3:00 p.m.

<b>Attendees:</b>	<b>Glenn Pressimone (CFX)</b>	<b>Jeremy Kibler (KDA Engineering)</b>
	<b>Will Hawthorne (CFX)</b>	<b>Ralph Bove (Volkert)</b>
	Jonathan Williamson (Dewberry)	<b>Will Sloup (Volkert)</b>
	<b>Merissa Battle (Dewberry)</b>	<b>Kelli Muddle (Volkert)</b>
	<b>Nicole Gough (Dewberry)</b>	
	<b>Kathy Putnam (Quest)</b>	

#### Stakeholder Meeting: Green Island Ranch DRI

The following is a summary of the subject stakeholder meeting. Attendees present are in **bold** text. Agenda items are in *italics*.

1. *Introductions/Roles of Team Members:* Ralph opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees. Self-introductions were provided and study team members identified their specific roles on the project. The purpose of the meeting was to provide a project update to representatives of Green Island and to receive their input for consideration during the PD&E study.
2. *Project Overview:* Ralph provided a brief project overview and acknowledged there was coordination with Green Island representatives during the CFX Concept, Feasibility and Mobility (CF&M) Study completed in May 2018.

*Results of 2018 Concept Study:* Jeremy Kibler, Principal with KDA Engineering, acknowledged he was very familiar with the previous study and stated his firm represents the future development interests of the Green Island property owners. Ralph presented a brief summary of the CF&M study and displayed the corridor alternatives developed in the area south of Lake Toho. Ralph acknowledged the study team has reviewed the meeting correspondence in the CF&M study documenting previous coordination with Green Island.

3. *Overview of the PD&E Study:* Ralph stated the results of the CF&M Study have been advanced into the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study phase of project development. A general overview of the PD&E study scope of services and schedule was provided, as follows:

*General Scope of Services:* The PD&E study will focus on a more detailed level of engineering and environmental analysis with the goal of identifying a preferred build alternative to advance into the

design phase. The PD&E study is currently the only phase funded by CFX. Public involvement and stakeholder coordination are important aspects of the PD&E study phase. The results of the PD&E study will be documented in a series of engineering and environmental reports and presented to the CFX Board for approval.

*Project Schedule:* The PD&E study started in September 2020 and is expected to be completed in December 2021, a duration of approximately 15 months. Public meetings will be held beginning with a Public Kickoff Meeting in late-January/early February 2021. An Alternatives Public Meeting is tentatively scheduled for mid-May 2021 and the Public Hearing is tentatively scheduled for mid-September 2021.

4. *Discuss Green Island:* The following represents a summary of the discussion held regarding the Southport Connector study corridors and Green Island:

Mr. Kibler indicated the map of the Green Island DRI shown during the overview depicted the previous Map H from the original DRI. Since the DRI was approved, Map H has been amended to essentially reflect the South Lake Toho Master Plan land use and transportation network concept.

Mr. Kibler stated Green Island continues to be supportive of the proposed Southport Connector Expressway and remains in favor of either CF&M Corridor 200, 300, 400 and 600. Each of these corridor alternatives share a common segment along the south boundary of Green Island. He said it was always important to capture as many trips as the roadway can support and recognized the location of the proposed expressway along the boundary of both Green Island and Bronson's is beneficial so neither entity could control growth or access. He also stated the importance of connecting to Canoe Creek Road as part of the Southport Connector, not the Northeast Connector (NEC).

The potential interchange access locations within the South Lake Toho Master Plan with respect to the boundaries of Green Island were discussed. The CF&M Corridors affecting Green Island show a potential service interchange west of the Turnpike serving future land use in this area. The proposed systems interchange with the Turnpike is partially located within the boundary of Green Island.

A discussion was held regarding the spacing between the proposed systems interchange and the potential service interchange to the north along the Turnpike as well as the effects of the Three Lakes Mainline Toll Plaza. The operational characteristics in this area may change when the Turnpike converts this section to all-electronic tolling. These topics will be addressed in the Turnpike interchange access request (IAR) process. Mr. Kibler acknowledged they would need to initiate the IAR process with Turnpike through coordination with Osceola County.

Mr. Kibler stated a willingness to be cooperative and contribute to a potential comprehensive land use plan amendment with Osceola County if land use and network modifications were needed to amend the South Lake Toho Master Plan within the boundaries of Green Island. He indicated the Green Island development plan places a high importance on the ability to have access to the Southport Connector as well as the Turnpike.

Mr. Kibler indicated there have been discussions with other land owners and developers within the vicinity of Green Island regarding conceptual site planning for future development in the area and there have been initial conversations with FTE regarding access to the Turnpike. He indicated there is a potential to move forward with the development of up to 3,000 residential units within the next 5 years and possibly a portion of the East Urban Center. He also mentioned the Green Island development plan includes a permitted marina providing access along the shores of Lake Toho. Future development plans also include connections to Friars Cove Road and Canoe Creek Road.

Mr. Kibler asked about the right-of-way width for the proposed expressway. Ralph stated the current CFX standard for planning purposes is 330 feet. This allows for an initial four-lane facility with the ability to add capacity as needed over time. Mr. Kibler also asked if the NEC was still on hold. Glenn confirmed that the NEC was still on hold. The CFX focus is on the next 5 to 10-year planning horizon and the NEC is beyond that at the current time.

Glenn indicated the timing to begin the PD&E study was appropriate due to the added travel service benefits in connecting to the Turnpike as well as Canoe Creek Road. The potential for partnership opportunities with Green Island and others relative to future project development was discussed.

Mr. Kibler asked if the study team has received any additional input from neighboring landowners, specifically Bronson's Ranch and Southport Ranch. Ralph indicated the team has reached out to both of these groups, as well as the Doc Partin Ranch east of the Turnpike, and will be setting up individual stakeholder meetings.

5. Next Steps: Ralph briefly reviewed the next steps in the PD&E study including updated data collection and existing conditions analysis, ongoing corridor evaluation and preparing for the Public Kickoff Meeting. Kathy mentioned Green Island would be receiving an invitation to attend the Dec. 3<sup>rd</sup> PAG meetings.
6. Adjourn: There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 4:00 p.m.

This concludes the summary of the subject stakeholder meeting with Green Island. Please contact Ralph Bove at [ralph.bove@volkert.com](mailto:ralph.bove@volkert.com) if there are any questions or clarifications on the information provided above.

End of Summary

Attachments: Meeting Material



**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)  
[1-618-484-9061](#)  
Conference ID: 722 318 312#

**DATE/TIME:** November 19, 2020, 11:00 a.m.

<b>Attendees:</b>	<b>Charles Lee (Florida Audubon)</b>	<b>Kathy Putnam (Quest)</b>
	Glenn Pressimone (CFX)	<b>Ralph Bove (Volkert)</b>
	Will Hawthorne (CFX)	Will Sloup (Volkert)
	<b>Jonathan Williamson (Dewberry)</b>	<b>Kelli Muddle (Volkert)</b>
	<b>Merissa Battle (Dewberry)</b>	

#### Stakeholder Meeting: Florida Audubon Society

Ralph opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees. Self-introductions were provided, and study team members identified their specific roles on the project. The purpose of the meeting was to provide a project update to representatives of the Florida Audubon Society and to receive their input for consideration during the PD&E study.

Ralph acknowledged Charles Lee, representing the Florida Audubon Society, was very familiar with the project; therefore, the study team agreed to streamline the discussion on the project overview including the results of the 2018 Concept Study and overview of the PD&E study process. The following represents a summary of the discussion held.

Charles was hired by Florida Audubon in May 1972 to work on environmental issues in Central Florida. His first assignment was to analyze a proposal to the State Clearinghouse for a highway from Florida's Turnpike south across Lake Tohopekaliga (Toho) to Poinciana; therefore, he has been involved in this project for very long time. He indicated in those days this concept would have killed the project and further indicated this is a hint on where he comes from in viewing this project.

Charles stated he believes the connection to SR 429 and providing a route to Poinciana that includes improving the existing two-lane Poinciana Parkway Expressway (PPE) is needed and understands the purpose is to improve traffic capacity and mobility. He further stated he understands how this portion of the Poinciana Parkway can be deemed a fundable and necessary transportation project. Charles also stated he does not object to the western end of the proposed Southport Connector. His concerns begin on Pleasant Hill Road and continues east to Florida's Turnpike.

Regarding Cypress Parkway, Charles asked if the proposed concept included a separate toll road or improvement to Cypress Parkway. Ralph responded the concept includes toll road located within the median of Cypress Parkway which would also be improved and serve as a parallel arterial to provide access

to surrounding land uses and community facilities. Charles asked if this would be elevated like SR 414 and Ralph replied the concept is to elevate on fill with grade separations at select crossroad locations.

Charles stated this area of Poinciana is representative of a town center and serves a cohesive community. He suggested a grade-level expressway replacing Cypress Parkway would significantly affect community cohesion and change the character of the area. He suggested the study team look at a fully elevated expressway like SR 414 to minimize impacts to community cohesion. In reviewing the concept plans from the CFX Concept Feasibility and Mobility (CF&M) study, Charles pointed out an example along Cypress Parkway between Doverplum and Pleasant Hill Road where impacts to community cohesion could be minimized with a fully elevated section. He suggested since a bridge crossing of Reedy Creek is needed along with a bridge over Pleasant Hill Road, just continue west as an elevated expressway. Ralph indicated this may be something we can look explore during the PD&E study.

Referring to the South Lake Toho Master Plan, Charles questioned the viability of future development in the area east of Reedy Creek and south of Lake Toho. He indicated his understanding is that west of Southport Canal, the landowners are not sympathetic to the South Lake Toho development plan. Whether it's Southport or Kenansville Ranch, he stated they appear to be opposed to the project and potential for converting ranch land into a mixed-use development. He does not believe these landowners would be willing partners. Charles indicated Southport Ranch is putting most of its land in conservation easements and other ranchers are looking to those conservation easements, at least west of the Southport Canal. Ralph replied that the study team is in the process of reaching out to the major landowners and to determine the status of their plans for future development and to understand their position regarding this project. Subsequent to this meeting, the study team has received input from all major landowners within the study area including Kenansville Ranch, Southport Ranch, Bronson's Ranch, Green Island and Doc Partin Ranch.

Charles mentioned he believes Green Island could develop and include a portion of the Southport Connector without any connection to the west indicating he believes the primary travel direction from Green Island would be east toward the Turnpike and not west toward Poinciana.

Charles restated he supports the project west of Pleasant Hill Road, especially if an elevated section is considered to minimize impacts to the community center. His issues are to the east of Pleasant Hill Road. He urged CFX to conceptualize and validate the section west of Pleasant Hill Road as a freestanding project all the way to SR 429. Charles does not understand the desire for commuters in Poinciana to travel southeast to the Turnpike (adding 10-15 miles and tolls) to get to Orlando. Charles indicated he hasn't seen traffic projections that would show the travel patterns between Pleasant Hill Road and Florida's Turnpike and questioned the ridership would be from Poinciana.

Ralph indicated that as development increased in the region, travel patterns to/from the Turnpike would increase. Jonathan added these patterns are more east to west from Florida's Turnpike to Poinciana and over to I-4/429. Travel demand forecasts by CFX (CDM Smith) indicate the east to west traffic pattern would occur. The PD&E study will include the updated travel demand forecasts and design traffic data to be used by the study team.

Charles stated Audubon has discussed concerns about an alignment south of Lake Toho in previous correspondence and referenced a letter written in 2015 when FDOT was conducting their Alternative Corridor Evaluation study for this project. Charles mentioned the Audubon Society's position is that a potential crossing of Lake Toho, joining Florida's Turnpike further north, would be a better decision in the interest of regional traffic movement. Audubon does not agree with FDOT's primary justification to eliminate lake crossings based on impacts to snail kite habitat. Charles urged the study team to consider stepping back and reconsidering crossing Lake Toho as an alternative in the PD&E study.

Charles stated his concern with a route south of Lake Toho, adding that The Nature Conservancy (TNC) desired the alignment to be as far north as possible if it is to be constructed south of Lake Toho. TNC also wanted a CF&M study alignment that followed Southport Road. The Audubon Society concurs. If the alignment is developed south of Lake Toho, it should run as close to Lake Toho as possible. Charles pointed out an interchange shown just west of Southport Canal and stated the idea of a road going south of this expressway is of great concern to the Audubon Society. Charles mentioned that Osceola County drew a fairly hard line south of the proposed expressway alternatives for the Urban Growth Boundary. He added Osceola County has stated they do not foresee future growth occurring south into the ranch lands. Charles stated that with the location of the Everglades Headwaters Refuge and the Kissimmee River restoration project moving forward, pushing the Urban Boundary south into the Kissimmee Prairie is dangerous and becomes the can opener causing the Urban Development Boundary to move south. He continued saying Cypress Lake is pristine and an important part of the Okeechobee headwaters. There is a lot of strategic synergy in this area. Charles believes there is a strong argument for locating the roadway tight up against Lake Toho as far north as possible and keep the area free of development-propagating interchanges. He stated the strategic issues associated with this alignment are far more important than a few caracara nests. The possibility of growth to the south is very worrisome and not mitigatable which is the biggest issue on the table. Moving the road as far north as possible will also mitigate the smoke shed issue for the Disney Wilderness Preserve. North is good; south is bad.

Charles stated that in regard to the South Lake Toho Master Plan, landowners west of the Southport Canal are really against the development of the expressway. He added that most members who were on the county commission when the Southport Connector was approved are gone and recently elected commissioners are much greener than their predecessors. Charles mentioned he is not sure Green Island would have been approved with the current commission and the South Lake Toho Master Plan would have been laughed out of the room.

Ralph briefly reviewed the next steps in the PD&E study including updated data collection and existing conditions analysis, ongoing corridor evaluation and preparing for the Public Kickoff Meeting. Subsequent to this meeting Charles Lee from the Audubon Society attended the first Environmental Advisory Group meeting which was held on December 2<sup>nd</sup>.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:00 p.m.

**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)  
[1-618-484-9061](#)  
Conference ID: 530 156 150#

**DATE/TIME:** November 18, 2020, 1:00 p.m.

<b>Attendees:</b>	<b>Janet Bowman (TNC)</b>	Will Hawthorne (CFX)	<b>Ralph Bove (Volkert)</b>
	<b>Zach Prusak (TNC)</b>	Jonathan Williamson (Dewberry)	Will Sloup (Volkert)
	Daniel Cole (TNC)	<b>Nicole Gough (Dewberry)</b>	<b>Kelli Muddle (Volkert)</b>
	<b>Petra Royston (TNC)</b>	Merissa Battle (Dewberry)	
		<b>Kathy Putnam (Quest)</b>	

**Stakeholder Meeting: The Nature Conservancy (TNC)/Disney Wilderness Preserve (DWP)**

The following is a summary of the subject stakeholder meeting. Attendees present are in **bold** text. Agenda items are in *italics*.

1. ***Introductions/Roles of Team Members:*** Ralph opened the meeting and welcomed the attendees. Self-introductions were provided and study team members identified their specific roles on the project. The purpose of the meeting was to provide a project update to representatives of TNC/DWP and to receive their input for consideration during the PD&E study.
2. ***Project Overview:*** Ralph provided a brief project overview and acknowledged there was coordination with TNC/DWP representatives during the CFX Concept, Feasibility and Mobility (CF&M) Study completed in May 2018.

***Results of 2018 Concept Study:*** Ralph presented a brief summary of the CF&M study and displayed the corridor alternatives developed in the area south of Lake Toho. Ralph acknowledged the study team has reviewed the meeting correspondence in the CF&M study documenting previous coordination with TNC.

3. ***Overview of the PD&E Study:*** Ralph stated the results of the CF&M Study have been advanced into the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study phase of project development. A general overview of the PD&E study scope of services and schedule was provided, as follows:

***General Scope of Services:*** The PD&E study will focus on a more detailed level of engineering and environmental analysis with the goal of identifying a preferred build alternative to advance into the design phase. The PD&E study is currently the only phase funded by CFX. Public involvement and stakeholder coordination are important aspects of the PD&E study phase. The results of the PD&E

study will be documented in a series of engineering and environmental reports and presented to the CFX Board for approval.

*Project Schedule:* The PD&E study started in September 2020 and is expected to be completed in December 2021, a duration of approximately 15 months. Public meetings will be held beginning with a Public Kickoff Meeting in late-January/early February 2021. An Alternatives Public Meeting is tentatively scheduled for mid-May 2021 and the Public Hearing is tentatively scheduled for mid-September 2021. Subsequent to this meeting the study team has coordinated with CFX to adjust the study area boundaries to expand the corridor analysis, therefore the study schedule will be extended.

4. *Discuss TNC/DWP:* The following represents a summary of the discussion held regarding the Southport Connector study corridors and TNC:

Janet Bowman stated she participated in the CF&M study and recalled the project was not deemed to be financially feasible. Janet listened in on the Environmental Stewardship Committee meeting in August 2020 and understands a landowner is interested in a right-of-way partnership; however, in the opinion of TNC, this does not justify moving to the PD&E stage. This is a concern to TNC.

Ralph acknowledged that during the CF&M study, a specific process was used by CFX to determine toll viability and at the time the project as a whole did not meet the financial viability; therefore, the CFX Board just accepted the results of the study. However, in the time since the CF&M study was completed, several other projects in the region have been advanced and traffic congestion continues to grow along Cypress Parkway. With increased traffic and congestion along Cypress Parkway and a potential partnership interest by landowners, CFX decided to advance the PD&E Study and to explore developing the project in phases. For example, Phase 1 could be along Cypress Parkway from Poinciana Parkway to Pleasant Hill Road. Ralph also noted that final design is not currently funded in the current CFX Work Program.

Janet added that considering the system as a whole, Southport would connect to the Northeast Connector and the Northeast Connector was also deemed to not be financially feasible at this time; therefore, she questions if the timing is right to advance these projects from a traffic standpoint. Again, this is a concern of TNC.

Jonathan Williamson added when CFX did the concept study, it was looking at a connection with Florida's Turnpike to the east. As we went through the CF&M and extended Southport further east to Canoe Creek Road, the toll revenue increased which moved the viability percentage closer to 50%. Looking at moving into the PD&E stage, it's the west side that factors into that, especially the idea of a phased approach with Phase 1 focused on the Cypress Parkway segment. Poinciana Parkway is now being widened and the extension of it is in design. Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (FTE) is now starting a PD&E study from CR 532 to I-4. The possibility of getting off I-4 and down into Poinciana, the Cypress Parkway Phase 1 and getting to the Turnpike raises feasibility for the future.

Janet asked if this data is available and Jonathan responded it will be part of the PD&E study. The concept study only factored a connection from Florida's Turnpike over to the west before the other



projects really started to advance. We'll run more traffic and revenue numbers that will paint a clearer picture regarding viability.

Janet asked about the status of the section of Poinciana Parkway connecting to SR 429. Jonathan responded Poinciana Parkway Extension to CR 532 is currently in design, along with the widening of the existing roadway from Cypress Parkway north to the end of the existing two-lane section in the vicinity of CR 54 (Ronald Reagan Boulevard). There's a 15-18-month design process for the Extension and the FTE PD&E study for the extension from CR 532 to I-4/SR 429 is anticipated to start in Dec/Jan. Jonathan noted that FTE doesn't have funding for design and construction for their section yet.

Petra Royston added she lives in Solivita and traffic backs up every day. On some days, it can take 30 minutes to travel about three miles. She asked about the proposed improvement along Cypress Parkway. Ralph showed the concept from the CF&M study indicating the elevated expressway would be located within the existing right-of-way of Cypress Parkway with Cypress Parkway operating as a parallel arterial to provide local access to surrounding land uses and community facilities. Ralph asked Petra if she has observed any significant reductions in the traffic due to COVID-19. Petra responded she did notice a change at first but now traffic volumes are increasing.

Additional comments from TNC were discussed as follows:

DWP: TNC is concerned about the proximity of the project to their prescribed burning smoke shed.

Lake Russell: TNC is concerned about the effects this project might have on water quality and the viewshed across Lake Russell.

Urban Growth Boundary: TNC is concerned this project may induce development beyond the current boundary.

Wildlife Patterns: TNC discussed the migration of certain wildlife species northward from the northern Everglades onto the DWP/Reedy Creek watershed and suggested CFX consider including wildlife crossings as part of the concept design for this project.

Corridors: TNC stated their preference is for corridors to be as far away as possible from DWP.

5. Next Steps: Ralph briefly reviewed the next steps in the PD&E study including updated data collection and existing conditions analysis, ongoing corridor evaluation and preparing for the Public Kickoff Meeting. Subsequent to this meeting representatives from TNC attended the first meeting of the EAG and PAG was held on December 3<sup>rd</sup>.
6. Adjourn: There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:00 p.m.

This concludes the summary of the subject stakeholder meeting with TNC. Please contact Ralph Bove at [ralph.bove@volkert.com](mailto:ralph.bove@volkert.com) if there are any questions or clarifications on the information provided above.

End of Summary

November 20, 2020

SUBJECT: Project Kickoff Notification  
Southport Connector Expressway  
Poinciana Parkway to Canoe Creek Road  
Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project No.: 599-233  
Osceola and Polk Counties, Florida

Dear Sir/Madam:

The attached Project Kickoff Notification document for the Southport Connector Expressway is hereby submitted to your office for review and comment. This is a non-federal action and the Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX) will determine what degree of environmental documentation will be necessary. This determination will be based upon in-house environmental evaluations and comments received through coordination with other agencies.

Please review this project's consistency, to the maximum extent feasible, with the requirements of Chapter 163 of the Florida Statutes. A consistency review in accordance with 15 CFR 930 is not required because this is a non-federal action.

Reviewers have 45 days from the date of this Project Kickoff Notification (Monday January 4, 2021) to provide their comments. If you need more review time, please send a written request for an extension of 15 days to our office within the initial 45-day comment period.

An improvement alternative which includes this project (as well as other alternatives which are no longer under study) was previously reviewed by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) through the Environmental Screening Tool as part of the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) Programming Screen. The previous FDOT project is listed as ETDM #13961 – Poinciana Parkway Southport Connector. The Programming Screen Summary Report was published in July 2016. The Environmental Technical Advisory Team (ETAT) agency members may review that report on the ETDM website. Non-ETAT agencies may review that report on the public access website located at: <http://etdmpub.flc-etat.org>.

Your comments and requests should be submitted to Will Hawthorne, PE via mail or e-mail at:

Will Hawthorne, PE  
Central Florida Expressway Authority  
4974 ORL Tower Road  
Orlando, FL 32807  
[Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com](mailto:Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com)

Sincerely,



Glenn M. Pressimone, P.E.  
Chief of Infrastructure  
Central Florida Expressway Authority

Attachments

**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

**DATE/TIME:** December 1, 2020, 9:00 a.m.

**Invitees/Attendees:**

John Wrublik (USFWS)	Merissa Battle (Dewberry)	Ralph Bove (Volkert)
Will Hawthorne (CFX)	Kathy Putnam (Quest)	Will Sloup (Volkert)
Jonathan Williamson (Dewberry)	George McClatchey (DRMP)	Kelli Muddle (Volkert)
Nicole Gough (Dewberry)	Chuck Smith (DRMP)	

**Meeting with USFWS: Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study**

Ralph Bove presented a brief project overview of the CFX Southport Connector Expressway Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study.

Ralph acknowledged that John Wrublik provided Volkert with letters and comments submitted by the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) during previous studies for the Southport Connector Expressway. The letters and comments stated USFWS' concerns and position on the development of the expressway. A copy of these letters can be provided upon request. Volkert is reviewing these resources in addition to the comments provided through the FDOT Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process.

John stated the USFWS has no additional comments beyond those provided in the ETDM for FDOT. The USFWS' concern is that the new project will promote more growth in the region causing impacts to existing wildlife habitat. If the project moves forward, the USFWS would like Osceola County to preserve land south of the corridor to reduce the potential ensuing development and protect the loss of habitat in the region. John added that it is the primary wish of the USFWS that the roadway would not be approved since that would be the best option for fish and wildlife in the area.

Jonathan Williamson reported that members of the Environmental Advisory Group have requested wildlife crossings be incorporated as part of this project and asked for John's input on that request.

John recommended the team focus on either side of the road wherever there's suitable habitat for crossings. He added that it appears development would encroach along the roadway and negate any habitat for wildlife.

Ralph stated that Osceola County's South Lake Toho Master Plan envisions the southernmost corridor for the roadway providing a buffer for the lake and could retain habitat north of the roadway.

Nicole Gough asked if the specificity of wildlife locations should be determined during the PD&E study or during the design phase. Nicole also asked John if there is anything else in this corridor that needs a more detailed review during the study process. John replied that the team knows what to look for and will likely need to perform surveys as part of design.

Nicole asked if USFWS would like something more detailed than the guidance provided by the Florida Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and John responded that the FWC guidance is good.

John stated that if Osceola County or CFX develops this roadway, the USFWS recommends a mitigation plan that includes the preservation of habitat south of the new roadway. John added this project would provide access to undeveloped land used by fish and wildlife and with the presence of a new corridor that land will likely be developed. It is USFWS' request that the County preserve additional habitat beyond what is already preserved south of the corridor.

# **SOUTHPORT CONNECTOR EXPRESSWAY**

## PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT STUDY

### **SOUTHPORT CONNECTOR PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT STUDY ENVIRONMENTAL ADVISORY GROUP (EAG) MEETING #1 SUMMARY**

**Date/Time:** December 2, 2020 at 9:30 a.m.

**Location:** Virtual meeting (Microsoft Teams)

**Attendees:** 24 attendees

#### **I. Notifications**

Invitation letters were emailed to 45 members of the EAG on November 10, 2020.

#### **II. Welcome**

Kathy Putnam, Public Involvement Coordinator with Quest Corporation of America, called the meeting to order at 9:31 a.m. and welcomed everyone. She provided virtual housekeeping information and Title VI information before turning the meeting over to Ralph Bove of Volkert, Inc., the study consultant firm, for the presentation.

#### **III. Southport Connector Presentation**

Ralph Bove presented on the following information, including:

- **Project Development Process**

Ralph explained the various stages of project development and shared that this project is currently in the PD&E Study phase which allows for more detailed preliminary engineering and environmental evaluation to identify a recommended preferred alternative that can be advanced to final design. He further explained that the project could be divided into segments for the Design phase in the future.

- **Advisory Group Roles**

There have been two advisory groups created for this study: The Environmental Advisory Group and the Project Advisory Group. Today are the first EAG and PAG meetings; the second EAG and PAG meeting will likely be held in April 2021 and will build upon the input received in today's meeting. Then, likely in August in 2021, there will be a third EAG and PAG meeting followed by a public hearing, likely in September 2021, where CFX will present its findings.

- **Project History**

The most recent history of this project dates to 2010 when Osceola County adopted the South Lake Toho Master Plan as part of its Long-Range Comprehensive Land Use Plan. In August 2013, the Osceola County Expressway Authority (OCX) Master Plan identified this project as part of its future transportation plan, and in 2015, the Florida Department of O



Transportation (FDOT) completed its Southport Connector Alternative Corridor Evaluation Report (ACER).

In May 2018, CFX began its Concept, Feasibility, and Mobility Study.

- **Goals and Objectives**

- Improve connections to existing facilities
- Enhance mobility to accommodate regional growth in population and employment
- Provide opportunities to incorporate transit and other multi-modal modes of transportation
- Promote regional system connectivity

- **PD&E Study Process**

Ralph highlighted that, with all of its regional improvements underway within the past 2.5 years, the CFX Board decided to advance the proposed Southport Connector Expressway to the PD&E Study phase. The study will further examine the results of the Concept,

Feasibility, and Mobility Study completed in May 2018 and will investigate the viability of advancing the project in segments or phases.



He also outlined the PD&E Study process, which allows for more detailed blending of preliminary engineering, environmental analysis and public involvement and includes the development of several engineering and environmental documents to support the decision-making process.

- **CF&M Purpose and Need**

Ralph outlined the factors that constitute the project's purpose and need:

- Meeting future travel demand based on projected growth in regional population and employment
- Relieving congestion on existing facilities by providing additional capacity as well as opportunities for multi-modal facilities
- Promoting regional connectivity and enhancing emergency evacuation routes

- **Public Involvement**

Public involvement and stakeholder coordination are integral to the study and we have already conducted several one-on-one stakeholder meetings that have provided us with important early input.

This effort will continue and multiple opportunities for participation in the form of EAG and PAG, stakeholder, and public meetings, as well as various municipal board presentations, will be provided.

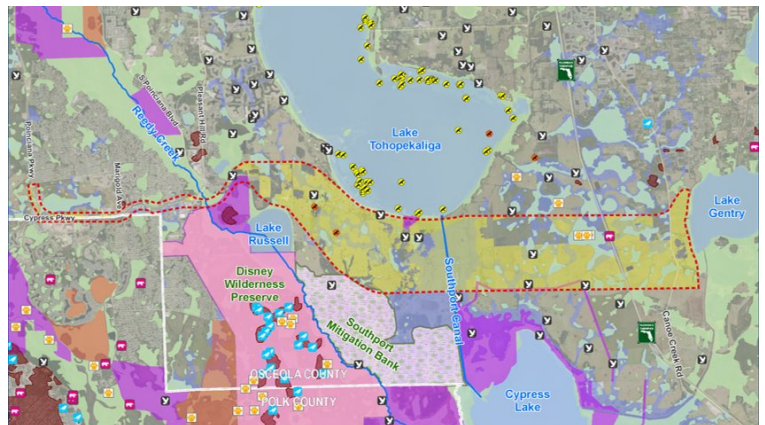
- **Study Area**

Ralph showed a map of the study area. The Southport Connector Expressway is a proposed limited-access facility from Poinciana Parkway to Canoe Creek Road, about 15 miles. The study area limits for the PD&E study were extended to Canoe Creek Road to allow for a more detailed evaluation of traffic and revenue forecasting.



- **Environmental Constraints**

- Wetlands and surface water
- Floodplains
- Public lands and conservation easements
- Large-scale managed lands including the Disney Wilderness Preserve and the Southport Mitigation Bank
- Federal and state listed species and habitats



- **Social Constraints**

Ralph showed a Social Constraints map that included the South Lake Toho Master Plan, major area landowners and ranchers including Kenansville Ranch, Southport Ranch, Bronson's Ranch and Doc Partin Ranch, and other current land uses in the area.

- **CF&M Corridors: Preliminary Alternatives**

The study corridors developed in the CF&M will be re-examined in the PD&E study. From east of Reedy Creek to Florida's Turnpike, a total of six corridor alternatives were developed in the concept study. Some of these corridors represent the final corridors identified by FDOT in their 2015 Alternative Corridor Evaluation Report. From Florida's Turnpike to Canoe Creek Road, the corridor alternatives developed for the Northeast Connector Concept, Feasibility Study will be re-examined in the Southport Connector PD&E Study.

The key environmental issues in this CF&M corridor include avoiding and minimizing impacts to threatened and endangered species and their habitats, the presence of potential archaeological sites, water quality within the Reedy Creek and Lake Russell watersheds, and fire management operations in the area.

The key social constraints as identified by Ralph in this slide deck are avoiding and minimizing impacts to existing and future land use and potential development plans in the South Lake Toho Master Plan.

- **Engineering Analysis**

Ralph described a number of engineering-related aspects of the project that will be taken into account as the PD&E progresses such as interchange configurations and access requirements along the Cypress Parkway segment, updating corridor and alignment geometry to meet current CFX design criteria, and updating project cost estimates.

- **Turnpike Interchange**

CFX will be coordinating with Florida's Turnpike on potential new interchanges and spacing constraints, interchange configurations and future connections to Canoe Creek Road.

- **CF&M Study Results**

Most of the proposed expressway along the existing Cypress Parkway alignment would be elevated within the center of the Cypress Parkway right-of-way.

The existing and future four-lane Cypress Parkway would have two lanes in each direction located to the outside of the expressway to provide and maintain access to local land uses and community facilities.

- **Cypress Parkway Segment: Key Issues**

The key engineering elements of this project were identified as follows:

- Polk County's widening of Cypress Parkway from west of Poinciana to Marigold
- CFX design-build along Poinciana Parkway north of Cypress Parkway.
- Overhead transmission lines along the north and south sides of the existing road

The key social/community issues include:

- Minimizing right-of-way impacts
- Maintaining access to local land uses and community facilities (overpasses and U-turns at Laurel Avenue, Solivita Boulevard, Marigold Avenue, Cypress Branch Road, Cypress Drive and Doverplum Avenue) includes emergency services and medical facilities, residential, commercial, and recreational land uses
- Access to and from Cypress Parkway to Southport (interchanges at Poinciana Parkway and Pleasant Hill Road and slip ramps for ingress and egress at select locations)
- Solivita Golf Club – south side
- Vance Harmon Park – outdoor recreational complex – south side
- Neighborhood shopping complex – Pleasant Hill Road to Doverplum Avenue
- Emergency services – hospital/fire station
- Very high percentage of Hispanic residents

- **East of Pleasant Hill Road: Key Issues**

East of Pleasant Hill Road the issues include minimizing impacts to social and environmental resources such as:

- A commercial shopping center and retirement complex just east of Pleasant Hill Road and adjacent to the Reedy Creek watershed

- Crossing Reedy Creek and proximity to the Nature Conservancy's Disney Wilderness Preserve boundary as well as the South Florida Water Management District conservation easement.

- **Typical Sections**

East of Pleasant Hill Road to the terminus of Reedy Creek bridge, the team will look at opportunities to reduce the overall right-of-way width of the proposed typical section in order to minimize the direct impacts across the Reedy Creek watershed.

East of the proposed Reedy Creek bridge to Canoe Creek Road, the PD&E study will re-examine and evaluate the corridor locations in the CF&M study using the most current standard typical section for a four-lane expressway with opportunity for expansion as warranted by future travel demand.

- **Study Schedule**

The study schedule will be completed in 15 months. A public kick-off meeting will be held in February 2021 and the next EAG/PAG meetings will be in April 2021. The third EAG/PAG meetings are planned for August of next year with the study to be concluded in December 2021.

*At this time, Ralph Bove turned the meeting over to Nicole Gough, Senior Scientist with Dewberry, CFX's General Engineering Consultant, to moderate the discussion.*

**Nicole Gough, Dewberry:** We would like to begin the discussion. Please see this slide as a guide for the discussion.

## Today's EAG & PAG Meetings



### Present Environmental and Social Constraints

Topic	EAG	PAG
Purpose and Need	Input	Input
Potential Challenges	Emphasis	Emphasis
Project Phasing	Input	Emphasis
Evaluation Measures	Input	Input

**Katrina Shadix, Executive Director of Bear Warriors United:** I have a question regarding slide 41. I see there are fences on both sides of the highway, and I think there is a more effective way to protect wildlife from car collisions. What people are finding with studies of overpasses is that a very successful thing to do instead of fences, to save the lives of panthers and bears from getting killed, would be building wildlife overpasses. Overpasses could prevent the fragmentation of wildlife habitats. We need to invest in overpasses and not just fences, which I consider the bare minimum. Thank you.

**Nicole Gough:** Do you have any comments about the purpose and need for this corridor, Katrina?

**Katrina Shadix:** Like I said, I am not going to fight against every roadway project as an environmentalist. I think all the information you captured on this study is incredible. Since we do need to have better transportation, I would personally love to see a high-speed rail coexist with existing highways. For now, I just hope highways can be built with state-of-the-art wildlife overpasses.

**Janet Bowman, The Nature Conservancy:** On the topic of purpose and need, I am interested in at what point we will be able to review the financials of this project.

**Ralph Bove:** We are in the process of working with CFX traffic and revenue consultants on this. We will likely have this information between the middle of next year and the fall of 2021.

**Janet Bowman:** Thank you.

**Robert Mindick, Osceola County:** Referring to slide 33, the purpose of this corridor has been identified as very important to our community. It will save a lot of transportation blockage we get along Poinciana Boulevard when we try to get across to the Turnpike. This is a very sensitive area and important connector to the east for wildlife, as well. It is also a prime bald eagle habitat. So, it will be important to carefully look at where this road is going. What I am suggesting is that we avoid the Disney property, the Southport Mitigation Bank, and the Vance Harmon Park, which is the most important park for the Poinciana community and is something that should not be removed from public use. I support the thoughts of wildlife overpasses and/or underpasses, but one of the things that is still missing from these evaluations is input from the Fish and Wildlife Commission that would determine where the important wildlife crossings are. We need the data to show that we are putting potential wildlife crossings in the right spot. That needs to be added to the information database because this area is the most important corridor in the eastern United States, as identified by several wildlife researchers. Thank you for the opportunity to speak.

**Paul Gray, Audubon Florida:** I am aware of the traffic needs there, as I have been stuck in traffic myself in that area. One of the things I am curious about is the impact of the upcoming Kissimmee River Restoration Project, which will raise the maximum elevation of Lake Cypress to 54 feet. The purple area on the map will be flooded during rainy seasons, and any planning should consider the changing water tables in the future and will potentially change wildlife migration patterns. I have one other comment: there were earlier versions of this where they put a bridge across Lake Toho, which I considered to be a better route. What happened to that alternative? Thanks.

**Ralph Bove:** First, could you provide a contact for us to follow up with the Kissimmee River Restoration Project so we can consider that during PD&E?

**Paul Gray:** I'll hook you up with Lawrence Glenn, who is the head of that program.

**Ralph Bove:** And about the alternative Lake Toho bridge crossing plan: when the FDOT was conceptualizing this project, the bridge crossings at Lake Toho were evaluated in 2015 and reevaluated by CFX in 2018. It was found those alternatives were not viable from the standpoint of minimizing environmental impacts, and it did not provide adequate connections to the other roadways you see on this map.

**Paul Gray:** Thank you, I will look up those reports.

**Ralph Bove:** We can send you links to the concept study so you can look at it.



**Paul Gray:** Thank you.

**Elizabeth Fleming, Defenders of Wildlife:** I know we have touched on some of this already, but I wanted to reiterate the importance of looking at the regional connections to put this all into context and to make sure all the available data is being utilized to make the best decisions. For example, the Florida Panther Recovery Implementation Team has put together a report for looking at the impact of I-4 on the movement of panthers and bears. I hope that report can be utilized. Similarly, Dr. Dan Smith from UCF is putting together some models for panther pathways that would include this area, so we should utilize his study information. Of course, we have a large depository of information of where bears have been hit [by cars], and that should be used in this study as well. As we know, there have been tremendous efforts over the last several decades to protect intact wildlife areas, and we want to make sure we avoid fragmenting those areas as much as possible. I just wanted to be sure that we are aware of all the available important data sets and that they're all incorporated and utilized to make the best decisions.

**Nicole Gough:** Ralph, I do believe you've been using all available data, but is there anything she mentioned you would like more information about?

**Ralph Bove:** Yes. The more information we can gather in terms of research can help us make better decisions. Right now, we are utilizing all public information included in the GIS database, but we could always use more data.

**Katrina Shadix:** Looking at this map, I see three bear icons. Is that right?

**Ralph Bove:** Yes.

**Katrina Shadix:** Okay. As representative for an advocacy organization for bears, we have noticed an unfortunate phenomenon where people are not reporting bear sightings for fear that the Florida Wildlife Commission would allow bear hunting in these areas, and I think that needs to be considered when planning for wildlife crossings. I would rather there be too many wildlife overpasses than there not be enough. Another question I have for you is: would it be helpful for us to start a public petition to advocate for wildlife overpasses? If so, can you give me the information for the contact person we can send petitions to.

**Ralph Bove:** First, I would like to respond to the bear icons on the map, which came from the most recent GIS database dated Feb. 2020. I do understand there may be hesitancy for the public to make those calls when they see black bears, which is why further studies on wildlife movements will be important so we can supplement this database information. We will take everything you say today under consideration, including wildlife overpasses and underpasses. As for your petition question: for now, your concern is well noted, and we will be as responsive as we possibly can as we move forward with this project. No further petition should be necessary.

**Nicole Gough:** I will add that CFX has an Environmental Stewardship Committee that looks at wildlife crossings. The committee hears from groups that advocate for wildlife connectivity, so I believe your concerns are already being heard and considered by CFX.

**Katrina Shadix:** Yes, thank you. I will hold off any calls to action for now, but please let me know if you need that from me in the future.

**Kathy Putnam:** If I may jump in quickly, the presentation before the Environmental Stewardship Committee is posted to the CFX website if you would like to look at it.

**John Puhek, Sierra Club:** We support not going through existing parks and preserves, such as Southport Mitigation Bank, and the Disney Wilderness Preserve, but I am concerned about the upcoming changes that the Kissimmee River Restoration Project will bring. I am concerned about changing water levels and the water flow that feeds into the Everglades. I would like to make sure this project is designed in such a way that minimizes disruptions of water flow from Lake Toho to Cypress Lake feeding the Everglades.

**Ralph Bove:** Just to reinforce what I said earlier, we have a team that will be addressing the stormwater management plan, including water quality. These comments are very important to make sure we are paying attention as we move forward with this project. Thank you.

**Janet Bowman, The Nature Conservancy:** Looking at the map of the Disney Wilderness Preserve, I have a note that the map should include the Red-cockaded Woodpecker and their habitats. If you don't have data on where those are located, we can certainly provide those to you.

**Ralph Bove:** Thank you. If we can't find that information, we will reach out to the Nature Conservancy, thank you.

**Nicole Gough:** If any of you have any GIS coverage for your conservation easements or any other special areas within your land holding that you would like us to take into consideration, please share it with the study group. Thank you.

**Robert Mindick:** A couple of species that you might want to include on the list to look at are the indigo snake and the gopher tortoise, as I know they are present along this study corridor. Also, for those of you who are interested, I am chairman of the CFX Environmental Stewardship Committee, and we have made it one of our priorities to look at wildlife corridors, so we appreciate your support of that. As far as the best route for this roadway, for right now, I think Alternative 200 seems to be the one that would avoid most of the areas I am aware of that have a high environmental sensitivity.

**Nicole Gough:** I know we have some guests on here from Florida's Turnpike Enterprise, and I wanted to get a little input about how the Turnpike is considering the possibility of project phasing, and also any input on the eastern terminus.

**Rax Jung, Florida's Turnpike:** We are always looking at opportunities for a new interchange, and we have been approached by CFX within the last few years for a connection in this area. That said, the main concern we have is the operation because of the proximity of the interchange.

**Nicole Gough:** Thank you. We haven't heard from the Florida Trail Association yet. Jenna, would you like to comment?

**Jenna Taylor, Florida Trail Association:** This corridor affects our western corridor, which is currently a road walk, a little bit north of this map. For future routing options, those overpasses or underpasses are important to provide a safe way for hikers to continue using the scenic trail.

**Nicole Gough:** Could you point out where you're speaking about?

**Jenna Taylor:** It's not visible on this map; we are north of this on the western route.

**Nicole Gough:** Thank you. I am going to ask James Schuette of the South Florida Water Management District. Do you have any comments regarding the management of your Lake Russell property? (Schuette directed the question to his colleague, Ayounga Riddick.)

**Ayounga Riddick, South Florida Water Management District:** We do have gopher tortoises at Lake Russell, though I am sure if there is impact, CFX will mitigate for it. Also, we have fire management at that site. We have existing constraints with Southport Road as well as the neighborhood to the northwest, and it appears the road will be north of that property which would not provide any additional constraints to our current management.

**Nicole Gough:** Thank you. We will wrap up with how you can make additional comments if you need to, thank you for your input.

**Janet Bowman:** Speaking about Lake Russell, any water quality impacts are something we are concerned about.

**Nicole Gough:** Thank you. Robert, I see your hand. Would you like to speak again?

**Robert Mindick:** Yes. For Ayounga and Disney Wilderness folks, the Alternative 300 would have some impact on your ability to do fire management. Alternative 400 would go through some of your property that does have gopher tortoises, and the eastern diamondback rattlesnake. The Alternative 200 would be the best corridor for you, especially as a smoke corridor for fire management. Thank you.

**Ayounga Riddick:** Thanks, you're right, Bob. We will continue to work with CFX as we are with other projects. Currently the fire management on Southport Road is right there, and we are working to make sure we can do our job. As the expressway authority narrows down the alignment for this project, we will continue to work with them on all the details.

**Joshua DeVries, Osceola County:** I wanted to bring up the importance of making sure that as we move through this process, we maintain local traffic connectivity, such as Southport Road, and coordinating that with environmental concerns that were mentioned.

**Nicole Gough:** Thank you. Do you have any comments as far as potential phasing for the project?

**Joshua DeVries:** Not necessarily, however I did want to add that I hope we can work on balancing the different traffic corridors with environmental concerns and can come up with something that works for all parties.

**Nicole Gough:** Welcome, Charles Lee. Would you like to make any comments?

**Charles Lee, Audubon Florida:** Just as an FYI, there was some mix-up in the email you sent out, Kathy. I got an email for the PAG meeting by mistake.

**Kathy Putnam:** I am sorry about that.

**Charles Lee:** In any event, here I am now, and I would like to spend a little bit of time making some comments. Is that all right?

**Nicole Gough:** Absolutely.

**Charles Lee:** Out of everything that CFX has on the table right now with potential new expressway routes in central Florida, in my opinion, and Audubon's opinion, this proposed project is the one that impacts the preservation of the region's major ecological resources. In effect, if this route goes from Pleasant Hill, east to the Florida Turnpike, it will bring an inevitable growth to south Osceola County. For that reason, we believe CFX should take a step back from this route and engage in a much deeper analysis.

Within the envelope of the study area that is in front of me, the only opinion I can offer is that if a road must be built in this area, it should be built as far north as possible, hugging Lake Toho. I think the larger sway of environmental issues in the long run will be affected by the strategic impacts of this road, including the ultimate creation of new interchanges that will lead to further development southward to the Everglades.

Audubon's position is that a new expressway through this segment is unacceptable. We believe this will encourage development of the northern Everglades. This road is not following development; rather, it would be encouraging development, which makes it fundamentally unacceptable.

In the earlier stages of this deliberation, Audubon sent a letter about possible routes that would connect the Poinciana Parkway and the Florida Turnpike. At that time, CFX had a route that would cross Lake Toho and go on to the Florida Turnpike near the current interchange on Kissimmee Park Road. While there are obviously environmental challenges in crossing the lake, I believe that is a better option. We think that a road that would project straight to the east would have the potential for higher traffic flow and would be functionally better for Poinciana residents.

We don't believe that crossing Lake Toho would impact the Everglades, which is why this is the only route we would support. I believe we are faced with a fundamental strategic decision about where to drive growth. Given only a year or so ago, CFX decided to take this route off the table because of failure to perform economically; we are not sure that anything has popped up on the horizon to legitimately change that analysis.

My request is twofold: First, go back to the drawing board to analyze if this road is necessary. Second, we ask if a Turnpike connection in this area is necessary. Those are our comments, we would be interested if anyone has thoughts or responses.

**Nicole Gough:** The two statements that jumped out to me were adding another alternative and the interchanges.

**Ralph Bove:** Charles, there really was a lot of information there and we are interested in working with you and others to work on solutions to environmental issues. As far as interchanges, those are subject to change. We need to continue to coordinate with Osceola County and Lake Toho as we move forward. As we debrief with the team after the meeting, we will consider any other options that are a little further north.

**Charles Lee:** Regarding the South Lake Toho master plan: that was an aspirational document adopted by Osceola County around 10 years ago. I do not know of any interest among landowners to pursue the development of their private property under that plan. Politically, there have been many changes in Osceola County. Because of these changes I think we need to ask if the Lake Toho master plan needs to be reexamined, which may not have support any longer. Do you have any indication of landowners that they have the desire to develop now?

**Ralph Bove:** There has been communication with ranchers and property owners, which showed a mix of feeling on what they are planning to do.

**Charles Lee:** If one were to isolate the landowners west of the Southport Canal, I do not think there will be a mixture of opinion. I think landowners there are not interested in pursuing what is on this map (CF&M Corridors Key Issues: Social).

**Ralph Bove:** We are still trying to get a meeting together with the Southport Ranch landowners and others, who we haven't heard back from.

**Charles Lee:** It has been a year, but I have spoken to representatives from landowners in that area, and my interpretation was they said they did not like the whole project, but above all else, they did not want it on their property.

**Nicole Gough:** The PAG is made up of the landowners, so they will have the opportunity to comment today as well during their meeting. That is something that is being looked at, and with the individual stakeholder meetings, we are seeking that honest input from them.

**Charles Lee:** I will try to get onto that meeting to at least listen, if I can. My request to CFX is to really dig deep and ask if this road is appropriate regarding regional growth patterns, in particular: the very large investment that is being made to conserve the land in the northern Everglades.

I do have one more point: I do not know if the South Lake Toho master plan or your analysis of these routes have taken into consideration the change in water levels that will occur when the Kissimmee Restoration Project begins.

**Ralph Bove:** Dr. Gray mentioned the Kissimmee Restoration and increase in elevation and impact to the surrounding water levels, and he will put us into touch with research, which we will consider as we move forward. Obviously, any proposed development moving forward will have to pay attention to those conditions. Having said that we do appreciate Dr. Gray giving us that information and we look forward to considering that.

**Charles Lee:** I will close and ask a question: Do you have a copy of the Audubon's 2015 letter?

**Ralph Bove:** We received it.

**Charles Lee:** Kathy, could I ask that you distribute that letter to everyone on this call?

**Kathy Putnam:** I will check with that, but it will be included in the stakeholder meeting minutes.

**Charles Lee:** I just want to make sure everyone on this call sees our letter and its complete analysis. Another question I have is, would it be possible for CFX to go back to the current Osceola County Commission and ask if the Lake Toho plan is a goal for the current Osceola County Commission.

**Glenn Pressimone, CFX:** We have not heard anything to the contrary of this plan. I don't know if it's the role of CFX to ask a county about a plan, but we do have people involved that can bring this to the attention of the Commission. Josh, do you have any comments?



**Josh DeVries:** We have coordinated with County Commissioners' staff on this comprehensive South Lake Toho master plan, and there is no indication among them that there is a desire to change that plan. I can reach back out to them to ask.

**Charles Lee:** The concern I have is that there are commissioners who were not there at the time that this plan was adopted. What I am hoping will happen is that they will go back and re-review this plan and see if this is the current Commissioners' desire. I realize it's unusual, but I think it is called for.

**John Wrublik, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service:** A lot of what Charles was saying reflect our original comments about the project. We basically think this project could encourage new development in the area that may not go forth without the presence of a suitable roadway. Also, our original comments were more supportive of the route that was proposed through the lake. Thanks.

**Nicole Gough:** Thank you, John. Any additional comments? If not, please see the contact information. Your input is encouraged. With that, we will close this meeting. Thanks so much for attending.

Meeting Attendees

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Glenn Pressimone	CFX
Brian Hutchings	CFX
Jonathan Williamson	Dewberry
Nicole Gough	Dewberry
Merissa Battle	Dewberry
Ralph Bove	Volkert
Kathy Putnam	Quest
Colleen Shea	Quest
Esteban Meneses	Quest
Brian Barnett	Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
Janet Bowman	Nature Conservancy
Joshua DeVries	Osceola County
Elizabeth Fleming	Defenders of Wildlife
Paul Gray	Audubon Florida
Majorie Holt	Sierra Club
Rax Jung	Florida Turnpike
Charles Lee	Audubon Florida
Robert Mindick	Osceola County
John Puhek	Sierra Club
Ayounga Riddick	South Florida Water Management District
James Schuette	South Florida Water Management District
Katrina Shadix	Bear Warriors United
Jenna Taylor	Florida Trail Association
John Wrublik	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

# **SOUTHPORT CONNECTOR EXPRESSWAY**

PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT STUDY

## **SOUTHPORT CONNECTOR EXPRESSWAY PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT STUDY PROJECT ADVISORY GROUP (PAG) MEETING #1 SUMMARY**

**Date/Time:** December 2, 2020 at 1:30 p.m.

**Location:** Virtual meeting (Microsoft Teams)

**Attendees:** 19 attendees

### **I. Notifications**

Invitation letters were emailed to 44 members of the PAG on November 10, 2020.

### **II. Welcome**

Kathy Putnam, Public Involvement Coordinator with Quest Corporation of America, called the meeting to order at 1:31 p.m. and welcomed everyone. She provided virtual housekeeping information and Title VI information before turning the meeting over to Ralph Bove of Volkert, Inc., the study consultant firm, for the presentation.

### **III. Southport Connector Presentation**

Ralph Bove, Volkert Inc., presented on the following information, including:

- **Project Development Process**

Ralph explained the various stages of project development and shared that this project is currently in the PD&E Study phase which allows for more detailed preliminary engineering and environmental evaluation to identify a recommended preferred alternative that can be advanced to final design. He further explained that the project could be divided into segments for the Design phase in the future.

- **Advisory Group Roles**

There have been two advisory groups created for this study: The Environmental Advisory Group and the Project Advisory Group. Today are the first EAG and PAG meetings; the second EAG and PAG meeting will likely be held in April 2021 and will build upon input received in today's meeting. Then, likely in August in 2021, there will be a third EAG and PAG meeting followed by a public hearing, likely in September 2021, where CFX will present its findings.

- **Project History**

The most recent history of this project dates to 2010 when Osceola County adopted the South Lake Toho Master Plan as part of its Long-Range Comprehensive Land Use Plan. In August 2013, the Osceola County Expressway Authority Master Plan identified this project as part of its future transportation plan, and in 2015, the Florida Department of

Transportation (FDOT) completed its Southport Connector Alternative Corridor Evaluation Report (ACER).

In May 2018, CFX began its Concept, Feasibility, and Mobility Study.

- **Goals and Objectives**

- Improve connections to existing facilities,
- Enhance mobility to accommodate regional growth in population and employment
- Provide opportunities to incorporate transit and other multi-modal modes of transportation
- Promote regional system connectivity

- **PD&E Study Process**

Ralph highlighted that, with all of its regional improvements underway within the past 2.5 years, the CFX Board decided to advance the proposed Southport Connector Expressway to the PD&E Study phase. The study will further examine the results of the Concept Study completed in May 2018 and will investigate the viability of advancing the project in segments or phases.



He also outlined the PD&E Study process, which allows for more detailed blending of preliminary engineering, environmental analysis and public involvement and includes the development of several engineering and environmental documents to support the decision-making process.

- **CF&M Purpose and Need**

Ralph outlined the factors that constitute the project's purpose and need:

- Meeting future travel demand based on projected growth in regional population and employment
- Relieving congestion on existing facilities by providing additional capacity as well as opportunities for multi-modal facilities
- Promoting regional connectivity and enhancing emergency evacuation routes

- **Public Involvement**

Public involvement and stakeholder coordination are an integral to the study and we have already conducted several one-on-one stakeholder meetings that have provided us with important early input.

This effort will continue and multiple opportunities for participation in the form of EAG and PAG, stakeholder, and public meetings as well as various municipal board presentations will be provided.

- **Study Area**

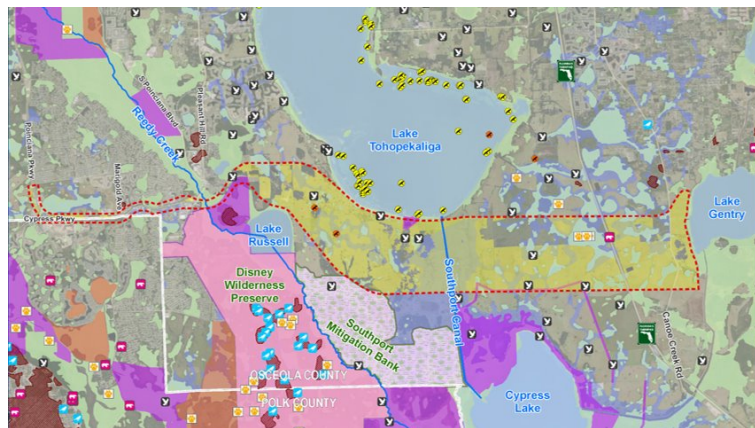
Ralph showed a map of the study area. The Southport Connector expressway is a proposed limited access facility from Poinciana Parkway to Canoe Creek Road, about 15 miles.

The study area limits for the PD&E study were extended to Canoe Creek Road to allow for a more detailed evaluation of traffic and revenue forecasting.



- **Environmental Constraints**

- Wetlands and surface water
- Floodplains
- Public lands and conservation easements
- Large-scale managed lands including the Disney Wilderness Preserve and the Southport Mitigation Bank
- Federal and state listed species and habitats



- **Social Constraints**

Ralph showed a Social Constraints map that included the South Lake Toho Master Plan, major area landowners and ranchers including Kenansville Ranch, Southport Ranch, Bronson's Ranch and Doc Partin Ranch, and other current land uses in the area.

- **CF&M Corridors: Preliminary Alternatives**

The study corridors developed in the CF&M study will be re-examined in the PD&E study. From east of Reedy Creek to Florida's Turnpike, a total of six corridor alternatives were developed in the concept study. Some of these corridors represent the final corridors identified by FDOT in their 2015 Alternative Corridor Evaluation Report (ACER). From Florida's Turnpike to Canoe Creek Road, the corridor alternatives developed for the Northeast Connector Concept, Feasibility, and Mobility Study will be re-examined in the Southport Connector PD&E Study.

The key environmental issues in this CF&M study corridor include avoiding and minimizing impacts to threatened and endangered species and their habitats, the presence of potential

archaeological sites, water quality within Reedy Creek and Lake Russell watersheds, and fire management operations in the area.

The key social constraints as identified by Ralph in this slide deck are avoiding and minimizing impacts to existing and future land use and potential development plans in the South Lake Toho Master Plan.

- **Engineering Analysis**

Ralph described a number of engineering-related aspects of the project that will be taken into account as the PD&E progresses such as interchange configurations and access requirements along the Cypress Parkway segment, updating corridor and alignment geometry to meet current CFX design criteria, and updating project cost estimates.

- **Turnpike Interchange**

CFX will be coordinating with Florida's Turnpike on potential new interchanges and spacing constraints, interchange configurations and future connections to Canoe Creek Road.

- **CF&M Study Results**

Most of the proposed expressway along the existing Cypress Parkway alignment would be elevated within the center of the Cypress Parkway right of way.

The existing and future four-lane Cypress Parkway would have two lanes in each direction located to the outside of the expressway to provide and maintain access to local land uses and community facilities.

- **Cypress Parkway Segment: Key Issues**

The key engineering elements of this project were identified as follows:

- Polk County's widening of Cypress Parkway from west of Poinciana to Marigold
- CFX design-build along Poinciana Parkway north of Cypress Parkway
- Overhead transmission lines along the north and south sides of the existing road

The key social/community issues include:

- Minimizing right-of way impacts
- Maintaining access to local land uses and community facilities (overpasses and U-turns at Laurel Avenue, Solivita Boulevard, Marigold Avenue, Cypress Branch Road, Cypress Drive and Doverplum Avenue) includes emergency services and medical facilities, residential, commercial, and recreational land uses
- Access to and from Cypress Parkway to Southport (interchanges at Poinciana Parkway and Pleasant Hill Road and slip ramps for ingress and egress at select locations)
- Solivita Golf Club – south side
- Vance Harmon Park – outdoor recreational complex – south side
- Neighborhood shopping complex – Pleasant Hill Road to Doverplum Avenue
- Emergency services – hospital/fire station
- Very high percentage of Hispanic residents



- **East of Pleasant Hill Road: Key Issues**

East of Pleasant Hill Road the issues include minimizing impacts to social and environmental resources such as:

- A commercial shopping center and retirement complex just east of Pleasant Hill Road and adjacent to the Reedy Creek watershed
- Crossing Reedy Creek and proximity to the Nature Conservancy's Disney Wilderness Preserve boundary as well as the South Florida Water Management District conservation easement.

- **Typical Sections**

East of Pleasant Hill Road to the terminus of Reedy Creek Bridge, the team will look at opportunities to reduce the overall right-of-way width of the proposed typical section in order to minimize the direct impacts across the Reedy Creek watershed.

East of the proposed Reedy Creek bridge to Canoe Creek Road, the PD&E study will re-examine and evaluate the corridor locations in the CF&M study using the most current standard typical section for a four-lane expressway with an opportunity for expansion as warranted by future travel demand.

- **Study Schedule**

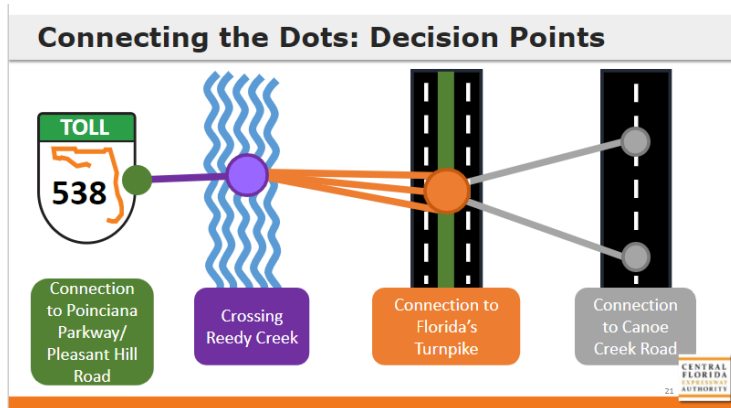
The study schedule will be completed in 15 months. A public kick-off meeting will be held in February 2021 and the next EAG/PAG meetings will be in April 2021. The third EAG/PAG meetings are planned for August of next year with the study to be concluded in December 2021.

At this point, the presentation ended, and the discussion period began.

**Kathy Putnam, Quest:** If anybody has a question or comment on what they heard, please use the hand raised button. Or, if you would like to speak to potential challenges or impacts you might see that the study team should know about, please let us know.

**Keith Laytham, Poinciana Residents for Smart Change:** I like the concept of what you are doing, and I have been involved in this project since the beginning. My question is about phases you described. The first phase, going from Poinciana Parkway to the Reedy Creek bridge. What would be the planned phasing for the segments?

**Ralph Bove:** Essentially, what we will do is work with CFX and see what sections will make sense to advance ahead of others. This graphic (on Slide 21) illustrates how the phasing will be implemented, and it illustrates the unique characteristics this project has. We will be working with CFX to identify the viability and feasibility of advancing certain segments. For example, the Cypress Parkway segment has a big need right now, and we will work with CFX to advance that portion because of the traffic needs in the area.



**Keith Laytham:** It seems to me that there is an immediate need for doing something in that segment. I would hope that as you move forward with the study you can move that Cypress Parkway segment to the front of the line.

**Ralph Bove:** I think Polk County shares your sentiment as well. Over the past year or so they have been working on an alignment study, so they see the need to advance with their segment.

**Kathy Putnam:** Tawny has her hand up.

**Tawny Olore, Osceola County:** We get a lot of comments and complaints about the traffic in this area of Osceola and a lot of requests to look at the timing of the traffic lights out there. Ultimately, the lights are timed correctly, but the problem is that the roads are very saturated. There is a real need in that section in Osceola County. Of all the projects, this is the one that gets questioned a lot from people who live in the area. I look forward to working with you all on this and setting the priorities on phasing so we can get this done.

**Ralph Bove:** Thank you.

**Kathy Putnam:** Thank you. I believe that Beverly Hughes of Osceola Schools cannot speak based on the technology she is using, but she did type a question.

The following question was typed in the Meeting Chat:

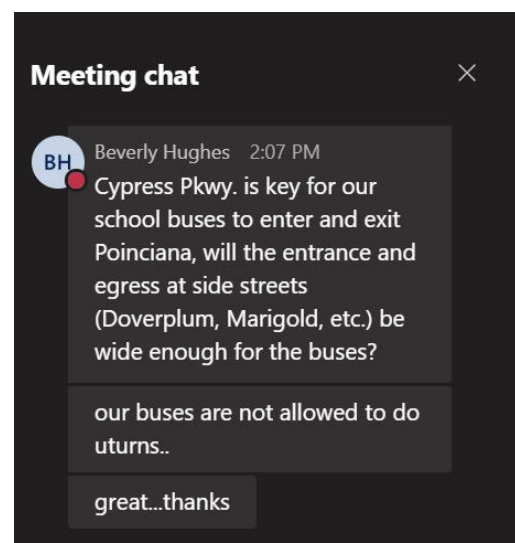
**Beverly Hughes, Osceola County Public Schools:** Cypress Pkwy. is key for our school busses to enter and exit Poinciana, will the entrance and egress at side streets (Doverplum, Marigold, etc.) be wide enough for the busses?

Our busses are not allowed to do U-turns, thank you.

**Ralph Bove:** Yes, I am certain the turning radii for busses and delivery trucks will be considered in the conceptual design, but we will be sure that the most current standards for mobility will be considered.

**Kathy Putnam:** As she explained in the chat, the busses are not allowed to do U-Turns.

**Ralph Bove:** We will work with Osceola County and the school board and their transportation department as we move forward in design.



**Kathy Putnam:** Thanks for your input, Beverly. Anyone else have input for anything else that may be going on in this area?

**Theo Webster, League of Women Voters:** I do not have a lot of input for this project. We have been working on Split Oak, which was a ballot issue. I know this is somewhere in that vicinity, but I am not altogether familiar with this project.

**Kathy Putnam:** Ok. We are glad you were able to join us and learn a little more about this project. Emam Emam with the Florida Turnpike, do you have any input on what you heard through this presentation?

**Emam Emam, Florida's Turnpike:** Can you go to the Typical Section slide? (Slide 37) I see you have 300 feet of right of way with five feet of sidewalk. Have you thought of implementing the use of a multi-use trail, maybe 10 to 12 feet?

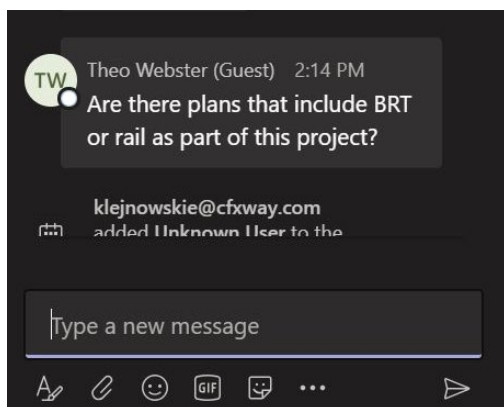
**Ralph Bove:** One of our tasks when we get into the PD&E will be to reevaluate some of these measurements with local jurisdictions on what kind of features that they would like on the roadway. For now, this slide is representative of types of features that could be provided.

**Emam Emam:** Thank you. From a Turnpike perspective, we will be looking closely at the interchange and the proximity of Canoe Creek Service Plaza, and we will work closely once you get to the Turnpike and you start moving forward on the work.

**Kathy Putnam:** I am going to call on Jay Christy Wilson. You are representing one of the larger landowners. Any input on what you have seen or heard during the presentation, or anything you think the study team should know?

**Jay Christy Wilson, Attorney representing Kenansville Ranch:** We are aware of the pressing needs for traffic infrastructure improvements in this area. We are a family ranch that has been around for quite a while, and the ranch is also the family homestead. We are obviously very concerned about impacts to the family homestead. Some of the proposed alignments impact us with greater severity than others, and that will be a concern we will have.

**Kathy Putnam:** Thank you very much. Theo Webster just typed in the Chat Box, "*are there any plans for BRT or rail for this project.*" Ralph?



**Ralph Bove:** I am not aware of any BRT (bus rapid transit) plans on this project. I know LYNX operates surface transit within the study area, which is an important part of the mobility analysis. Certainly, when we get east of Reedy Creek, when we have more right of way to navigate, we would have to coordinate with any plans that Osceola County may have.

**Josh DeVries, Osceola County:** We have coordinated with LYNX on their future transit development plan and they are looking into more routes in the Poinciana area and

Cypress Parkway, but south of Florida's turnpike is not in their 2045 plan right now.

**Kathy Putnam:** Thank you. I did want to reach out to the St. Cloud folks. What should our team be aware of? Do you have any information?

**Cameron Crandell, St. Cloud Utilities:** We do have a force main that goes down Canoe Creek Road to the Turnpike service plaza, but that is it in this area. It looks like the eastern portion of this connector does not enter our service area, so there doesn't seem to be a big impact on St. Cloud utilities here.

**Kathy Putnam:** Nick can you give us your thoughts on purpose and need?

**Nick Lepp, MetroPlan Orlando:** We looked at our 2045 plan, this project is consistent with our plan moving forward. Between the growth in the area and congestion on Pleasant Hill Road up by US 17/92, this is something that will definitely help that connectivity down in south Osceola County.

**Ralph Bove:** Some of the information in the concept study from 2018 included statistics about a possible doubling in employment in the area by the year 2025. I think this will help meet the needs of the area moving forward.

**Kathy Putnam:** Thank you for that. Lauren Peters, of District 1 of FDOT, what might our study team need to know from your area?

**Lauren Peters, FDOT, Dist. 1:** We have some social constraints in our area, and I do not know about outside of that area, and if your area has similar constraints. But we do have some minority and low-income housing in our area, which is something we are keeping in mind for our projects. Other than that, I cannot think of anything right now. In our project, we are within an older roadway system that we are trying to find a way to widen while keeping some of the historical elements as well in place.

**Kathy Putnam:** Thank you. The community and the housing you were speaking about, where is that located?

**Lauren Peters:** The project is on US 17/US 92 in Haines City.

**Kathy Putnam:** OK, that is good to know.

**Ralph Bove:** As far as demographics, you have documented the sociocultural data report as part of the public involvement plan, so we have resources we need to reach out to over and above the traditional public outreach.

**Kathy Putnam:** Yes. Fred Milch. Any input from your area?

**Fred Milch, East Central Florida Regional Planning Council:** Looking at the project I have two thoughts as far as the need goes. It seems there is great need in the western part, but there is not much need on the eastern half which could drive development to that area. On the other hand, Osceola County has a development plan on Lake Toho, which would be divided by these new roadway corridors. Because of that, the alternatives that go to the south part of that plan would probably be better. However, more development could follow the road to the south. Those are my thoughts right now, thank you.

**Kathy Putnam:** Thank you very much.



**Ralph Bove:** This is the social constraints map without the corridors. The alignment in the South Lake Toho Master Plan includes this roadway. I just wanted to acknowledge that.

**Kathy Putnam:** Any other thoughts? Comments?

**Joshua DeVries:** Can you go back to slide 34 (CF&M Corridors Key Issues: Social). This shows well the connectivity that the underpass/overpass interchanges would be laid out. The one location I do not see an expressway connection to is Southport Road, which is currently the only local roadway connection out there. We want to make sure that road is integrated into the overall project.

**Joshua DeVries:** (On the map) you can see on the very edge of the screen that the roadway comes to a 90-degree curve on the right side of this map, so we will need to continue working on that together to make sure that local connection is maintained.

**Ralph Bove:** Remember this is just the study area boundary. This (on the right side) is the part Josh is referring to. We have already started some conceptual alignment to smooth that curve out, and this is Southport Road (on the map).



**Joshua DeVries:** Thank you, I appreciate it.

**Kathy Putnam:** Anything else? Any other comments, questions, or any map or slide that anyone would like to look at one more time?

If you have any other comments or information that the study team should have, please feel free to contact me or Ralph Bove. We also have a study web page on the CFX website, under the Agency Information tab.



### Meeting Attendees

NAME	ORGANIZATION
Glenn Pressimone	CFX
Brian Hutchings	CFX
Jonathan Williamson	Dewberry
Merissa Battle	Dewberry
Ralph Bove	Volkert
Kathy Putnam	Quest
Colleen Shea	Quest
Cameron Crandell	St. Cloud Utilities
Josh DeVries	Osceola County
Emam Emam	Florida's Turnpike
Beverly Hughes	Osceola County Public Schools
Charles Lee	Audubon Florida
Keith Laytham	Poinciana Residents for Smart Change
Nick Lepp	MetroPlan Orlando
Fred Milch	East Central Florida Regional Planning Council
Lauren Peters	Florida Department of Transportation, Dist. 1
Tawny Olore	Osceola County
Theo Webster	League of Women Voters
Jay Christy Wilson	Attorney representing Kenansville Ranch

The Board of County Commissioners of Osceola County, Florida, met on Monday, January 11, 2021, at 1:30 p.m., at the Courthouse-Complex, Kissimmee, Florida. Access to the meeting was also provided via teleconference. This being a properly noticed meeting with all members having been notified, there were present:

COMMISSIONERS	DISTRICT
Peggy Choudhry	1 absent
Viviana Janer, Vice Chair	2
Brandon Arrington, Chair	3
Cheryl L. Grieb	4
Ricky Booth	5

Also present were Don Fisher, County Manager; Andrew Mai, County Attorney; Debra A. Davis, Deputy Clerk of the Board; and Iris Soto, Executive Administrative Assistant.

With a quorum present, Chairman Arrington called the meeting to order at 1:34 p.m.

Moment of Silence  
Pledge of Allegiance

APPROVAL OF AGENDA  
A 00:01:29

Mr. Don Fisher, County Manager, requested item #9 be deleted from the agenda as the contract for that item has expired.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Janer and SECONDED by Commissioner Grieb that the Board approve the agenda, as amended, by deleting Consent Agenda item #9. MOTION carried 4-0. Commissioner Choudhry absent.

PRESENTATION  
A 00:01:50

1. Presentation by Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX) Consultant Project Manager of project update regarding the CFX Southport Connector Expressway Planning, Design, and Environmental (PD and E) Study. Commission Districts 3 and 5.

Mr. Glenn Pressimone, PE, CFX Chief of Infrastructure, introduced Mr. Ralph Bove, of Volkert Incorporated, Consultant Project Manager for the Southport Connector PD and E Study, who will provide information to the Board regarding this project.

Mr. Bove relayed the overview of this presentation will consist of the history of the Southport Connector Expressway project; the CFX Project Development Process; project goals and objectives, the PD and E Study which includes public involvement, engineering analysis, environmental analysis, and study documents; the agency and stakeholder coordination of the Environmental Advisory Group (EAG), the Project Advisory Group (PAG), and the Environmental Stewardship Committee one on one meetings; the PD and E study area map; environmental constraints; the social constraints of Cypress Parkway and South Lake Tohopekaliga Master Plan; preliminary alternatives; Advisory Group input; and revised study areas.

Mr. Bove relayed the project history which dates back to 2010 when the South Lake Tohopekaliga Master Plan was adopted by Osceola County as part of the long range Comprehensive Land Use Plan; the plan was driven by an early alignment study for the Southport Connector incorporated into the Southlake Tohopekaliga Master Plan; that plan forms the blueprint for future land use development and transportation planning; the alignment was further advanced into the Osceola County Expressway Authority Master Plan in August 2013; the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) initiated a PD and E Study for the Southport Connector and went through a very rigorous alternative corridor evaluation process that concluded in October 2015; at the same time, CFX was developing the Visioning +2040 Master Plan which was adopted in May 2016; when CFX took over the jurisdiction for the County, a series of concepts were initiated for feasibility and mobility studies for all the projects that were in the Osceola County Expressway System which concluded in May 2018; and the Southport Connector Expressway PD and E Study was initiated in September 2020.

Mr. Bove explained the project development process is from the conception of the project to the time the project is open to traffic; the PD and E study phase allows for more detail preliminary engineering and environmental evaluation to identify a recommended preferred alternative that can be advanced into the final design phase; the authorized design effort could be divided into individual segments or phases; if a project is moved into the design phase it can be put on hold at any time during project development; the goals and objectives associated with this project translate to the purpose and need of the project including improving connections to existing corridors and enhancing mobility in a growing area of population and employment relieving congestion along Cypress Parkway; it will provide for the incorporation of transit options that are consistent with local, State, and Regional plans; it will require close coordination with future land development; and promoting overall regional connectivity and enhancing evacuation and emergency service.

Mr. Bove reviewed the PD and E Study process allows for more detailed preliminary engineering and environmental analysis coupled with Stakeholder coordination and public involvement; the goal is to take the results of the Concept Feasibility Study from 2018 and advance those corridors and recommendations into the PD and E Study phase; the study process allows for the systematic evaluation of those viable alternatives to help identify a preferred alternative to move forward; Stakeholder input is a very important part of the process; the reexamination of the corridors to develop viable solutions to meet project purpose and need will be review opportunities to minimize impacts to social, natural, cultural, and physical resources; agency and stakeholder coordination includes public meetings and hearings; working with the long-standing advisory groups that CFX has established including the EAG and PAG; and CFX has established the Environmental Stewardship Committee which sets policy for moving forward on environmentally sensitive projects. He further reviewed the study area that begins at the intersection of Cypress Parkway and Poinciana Parkway which extends east to the Florida Turnpike and beyond to Canoe Creek Road; the study area focuses on the Cypress Parkway corridor as well as the Reedy Creek watershed; environmental constraints include wetlands and surface waters, floodplains, public lands, and conservation easements; large scale managed lands include Disney Wilderness Preserve and the Southport Mitigation Bank; Federal and State listed species and habitat include Bald Eagle nests, Snail Kite birds and Crested Caracara, Panther telemetry data, Black Bear sightings, Scrub Jay Birds and Crested Caracara habitats.

Mr. Bove continued social constraints within the study area along the Cypress Parkway segment is the Polk County Fire Station, Poinciana Medical Center, residential, commercial, and recreational facilities such as Vance Harmon Park; the study area east of Pleasant Hill Road and the Reedy Creek watershed consists of major land owners and ranches including Kenansville, Southport, and Bronson and Doc Partin Ranches; the Southport Regional Park is also located on the south shore of Lake Tohopekaliga in this area; this area is part of the Green Island Development Plan which is part of South Lake Tohopekaliga; the different corridors that were identified and evaluated in the concept feasibility and mobility study completed in May 2018; and the CFX Board accepted the results of the concept feasibility and mobility study and will reexamine the alternatives as we move forward with the PD and E Study.

Mr. Bove related the original concept study terminated at the Florida Turnpike; however, at the time that CFX moved from the concept study to the PD and E study some additional traffic analysis were conducted and realized moving to Canoe Creek Road was an opportunity to capture some more travel demands and is one of the reasons why the study area for the PD and E was extended to Canoe Creek Road; this information was provided to the EAG and PAG in December, 2020; the input from the Advisory Groups includes support of advancing the segment along Cypress Parkway; recommendations for wildlife crossings and wildlife corridors; recent hydrologic studies are being completed as part of the Everglades Restoration efforts to improve surface water and ground water flows important for the concept design; there is a

need to minimize or avoid impacts to Disney Wilderness Preserve; overall concerns about the project and cumulative efforts it may have in developing or expanding beyond the Urban Growth Boundary; commentary to reevaluate previous FDOT corridors including corridors across Lake Tohopekaliga; both the EAG and PAG, in order to do that, consider the previous corridors evaluated by FDOT and consider expanding the study area; and the advisory groups wanted a closer look taken at those corridors to consider all of the agency commentary that was previously provided to FDOT relative to those corridors.

Mr. Bove communicated due to the request from the Advisory Groups there will a review to expand the study area; there was a study area identified by FDOT in 2013 and a number of evaluated corridors including new corridors across Lake Tohopekaliga; consider the refinements that were made in our study area to Canoe Creek Road; and there has been a preliminary boundary identified and outlined that represents the expanded study area to reevaluate those corridors of 2015.

The Board and Mr. Bove discussed the various reasons the crossing over the Lake Tohopekaliga was not viable; CFX reevaluated those corridors during the concept feasibility and mobility study; commentary was received by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service that did not necessarily discount all of the corridors across the lake; input from the EAG and PAG would like another review at those comments made by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to reexamine the importance of Snail kite Bird nesting sites and other issues would be associated with that; and it may be cost prohibitive to build a bridge across Lake Tohopekaliga.

Commissioner Booth stated he would not be in favor of constructing a bridge across Lake Tohopekaliga.

Chairman Arrington expressed concern that expanding the corridor study area would slow down the process.

Mr. Bove stated the expansion would not substantially slow down the process; however, it will take additional time to gather more data and to work closely with the EAG and PAG to build consensus for alternatives that avoid the lake crossing or minimize those impacts; there will be some coordination with the Florida Turnpike regarding the proposed interchange that may require more detailed traffic studies; and would not expect a substantial delay in the schedule.

In response to Commissioner Booth, Mr. Bove stated that area has to be reevaluated due to the changes; the corridor along Reaves Road and the vicinity along Kissimmee Park Road continues to develop and improve and those impacts will be reclassified or reevaluated and documented; the study is in a 15 month schedule which is an aggressive tract for a project of this magnitude; being three months into the study and have yet negotiated or discussed the scope of services and schedule; however, are not looking at adding years to the study schedule;



this project is being reviewed to develop in phases; currently the only item in the work program is the PD and E Study; and the funding mechanism is to be worked out and identify the toll viability of the project moving forward.

The Board and those individuals present discussed the various reasons the 2013 study was not completed; there is no data why the study was abandoned; do not want to expend more time and expense on a non-feasible study; possible damage to the lake; effects on wildlife; the study could have been scoped in a different way; PD and E studies are good for a window of time; the areas south and north of Lake Tohopekaliga due to growth warrants a new evaluation based on 2021 data and not 2013 data; review the growth patterns and environment; and a quick review would not slow the process of the PD and E Study.

HEAR THE AUDIENCE

There were no public comments received at this meeting.

CONSENT AGENDA

A 00:23:32

Commissioner Booth requested to remove item #11 for discussion.

A MOTION was made by Commissioner Janer and SECONDED by Commissioner Booth that the Board approve the following Consent Agenda, as amended, by deleting item #9 and removing item #11 for discussion:

County Administration

2. Adoption of Resolution #21-012R, approving the Forty-sixth Extension of the State of Emergency for Osceola County, Florida, due to Coronavirus (COVID-19), effective immediately and shall remain in force for seven days from the date hereof.
3. Approval of the meeting minutes of December 21, 2020, 1:30 p.m.
4. Adoption of a Proclamation declaring January 11, 2021, as Myriam Santiago Day in Osceola County, Florida.
5. Adoption of Resolution #21-007R, for the submission of the annual Section 8 Payment Standards to the United States Housing and Urban Development Jacksonville Field Office for Fiscal Year 2020/2021. Osceola County continues to use 96% of Fair Market Rent (FMRs) as the payment standards for the Section 8 Voucher Program in an effort to keep up with the market rents.

**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** Microsoft Teams Meeting  
+1 618-484-9061  
Conference ID: 539 674 955#

**DATE/TIME:** January 12, 2021, 1:30 p.m.

**Attendees:**

<b>Gary Lee (Southport Ranch)</b>	<b>Kathy Putnam (Quest)</b>
<b>Glenn Pressimone (CFX)</b>	<b>Ralph Bove (Volkert)</b>
<b>Will Hawthorne (CFX)</b>	<b>Will Sloup (Volkert)</b>
<b>Jonathan Williamson (Dewberry)</b>	<b>Kelli Muddle (Volkert)</b>

**Stakeholder Meeting: Southport Ranch**

The following is a summary of the subject stakeholder meeting. Attendees present are in **bold** text.

Will Sloup made introductions and went through the presentation. He then asked Gary Lee for his thoughts.

Gary Lee: Most of these alternatives have been studied. Things change every day. We had designs and goals from an environmental standpoint. With mitigation, some areas have been adversely impacted by the state that eliminate any degree of preservation. We're always reevaluating what the future holds.

Will: Please elaborate on the state impacts.

Gary: As we all know, Reedy Creek and the C-35 Canal are the discharge area for all of Central Florida. Down south those are getting attention for carrying dirty water. Those waters are running over our land are impacting our mitigation bank and our property. The state doesn't want us in the ranching business. They want to see development and aren't really concerned about the environmental issues.

Will: Has that changed your plans for or views on ranching?

Gary: We fight every day for ranching. We have to deal with high waters and mismanagement of waters. Water is always running on our property. Ranching is dying in Osceola County and will die out from Osceola down to Lake Okeechobee.

Will: Do any of these alternatives make a difference to you?

Gary: The purple line on the map was likely generated by me and some advice I'd had years ago from a design standpoint and from an environmental impact standpoint. People who did that had questions, but you guys might be back at a point of reassessing the stuff on the western end. We don't support

anything that's going to segregate our property and impact it. We have an existing mitigation bank there. I believe your south line equates to the Urban Growth Boundary which has created havoc environmentally. There is an existing corridor now. How many roads are going to come into play and where's the corridor for those roads? That's what was originally driving the ship.

Will: You mean new roads coming in as a result of this proposed expressway?

Gary: Sure! Osceola County has two roads they'd love to develop in this area if they found the pot of gold to fund it. The land study they did had two or three roads and they said there might be another one. They run into issues from a standpoint that the Southport Canal, discharge of water, and cost of bridging eliminates them building little dinky roads. That bridge (crossing the canal) has to be high to meet standards for the C-35 discharges. The canal also has to be periodically dredged once every 25 to 30 years.

Will: When was the last time?

Gary: Mid to late '80's. There's a dredging project now far south. According to South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) they've authorized Osceola to dredge it, but that's far south of your project. There's so much runoff from development that maintenance is an everlasting item to contend with.

Will: What kind of wildlife issues do you have out there? Panthers?

Gary: We have in the past, but there's too much activity on the state land to support panther habitat or panther travel. Walker Ranch used to have it, but that ended when the state bought and opened it up.

Will: Do you see bear?

Gary: No. Probably hasn't been bear out there all the way down to SR 60 in many years.

Will: Last month in the Environmental Advisory Group meeting, there was discussion of the need for wildlife crossings as part of this project.

Gary: No, that's not an issue. Largest animal you'll find here is a deer or big gator. Wildlife in past 20 years has been forced elsewhere once the state took over lands. The high-water levels make it very difficult for wildlife.

Will: But plenty of eagles and caracara?

Gary: When all this started, caracara was such a concern, but we haven't seen one along Southport in 16-18 months. We have plenty of eagles and a new wood stork rookery has taken up close to the southwest end of the Urban Growth Boundary.

Ralph: You indicate you had a hand in the purple line to minimize direct impacts to Southport Ranch. Are you still of the opinion that you would support an alternative that doesn't cut through, but hits the edge of the ranch? And what is your general feeling of the county's South Lake Toho development plan?

Gary: It's inevitable that a road is coming through here. This was initially laid out so Poinciana could develop in late 70's/80's. My position is simple. There's an existing corridor that is significantly impacted. I'm dumfounded by the amount of traffic that goes to end of Southport Road. Anything on the north end to preserve the character of the property would be far more supported than something that adversely impacts the property. As far as the Osceola County plan, there's very little viability. I was told in recent years that the Southport property was supposed to be the next great city of the county.

Ralph: It appears that the county drafted the plan as a blueprint to guide future development.

Will: With the proximity of the property near the Nature Conservancy's Disney Wilderness Preserve, what happens with their burns? Does smoke shed across the ranch lands? Is this something to be concerned about with the road?

Gary: Osceola approved mitigation bank along Neptune between Kissimmee and St. Cloud, and we were told smoke could always be controlled and the county and state bit on that. Disney burns all the time. The state burns pretty regular, maybe more than Disney. The issue is all about wind.

Glenn: We appreciate the candid conversation. Very insightful. We'd love your participation in the next Project Advisory Group. The next round will be late spring or early summer likely.

Gary: Anything south of the purple line will impact gopher tortoise habitat and sawgrass marshes, which is special there. The orange line goes right through that sawgrass marsh, which we want to stay away from. The rumor was that Charles Lee (Audubon Florida), and I were trying to uproot those folks by getting CFX to come along and move through all those houses. Did you get any feedback from Osceola County? Charles asked for a meeting with Osceola County, and they were supposed to meet 12/18/20. Charles wants it going across Lake Toho and tying into Kissimmee Park Road.

Glenn: Ralph and I presented to the Osceola County Commission yesterday. Commissioner Ricky Booth said no way could he support any crossing of the lake. Two other commissioners (Brandon Arrington and Viviana Janer) also said they wouldn't support lake crossings. They wanted to know why we're including it in our study if the lake crossings were previously dropped. We haven't studied this previously. Charles and USFWS have given the green light to look across the lake.

Gary: I wasn't available to meet with Charles and the county. I told Charles that I thought the north end was inevitable. How would the road run west once you got to Kissimmee Park Road? Long ago that used to be part of the Northeast Connector. I live in Okeechobee and I drive that road every day and the traffic is unreal.

Glenn: We show there is a demand to get from the Turnpike over to I-4. There's no way to cut across in there. Traffic models show demand traveling north, up SR 60 and using this east-west connection to get to I-4 and over toward Lakeland somehow. There's an attraction from there to Lakeland and the warehouses, maybe trucking. Charles paints it as solely serving Poinciana. That's one element, but not the majority of the trips we see. Sounds like you see some of the same cross-state traffic.

Gary: St. Cloud south is busting at the seams. The traffic is crazy. The turnpike authority is likely going to change Kissimmee Park Road to Nolte Road, because that's where the need is. I'm shocked at the Polk

County warehouses and the jobs it creates. People work in Polk County and live in Osceola County. It's shoulder to shoulder traffic.

Glenn: I think the lake crossing will be expensive. As far as environmental impacts, I'm not sure how that is going to come out.

Gary: Charles told me he had a window to get the road across the lake before development closes it off. The state of Florida is going to beat the drums to continue to bring people here. Drinking water is the big issue. If that doesn't blow up, we'll continue to have development.

This concludes the summary of the subject stakeholder meeting with Southport Ranch. Please contact Ralph Bove at [ralph.bove@volkert.com](mailto:ralph.bove@volkert.com) if there are any questions or clarifications on the information provided above.

End of Summary

# News

## BoCC Agenda Review Meeting Friday, January 15th

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 Published on Jan 13, 2021

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**Bartow, Fla. (January 13, 2021)** — The Polk County Board of County Commissioners Agenda Review Meeting will be at 9:00 a.m. on Friday, January 15, 2021. The meeting will be held in the County Commission Boardroom at the Polk County Administration Building, 330 W. Church Street, Bartow. Friday's Agenda Review will be televised live on PGTv and live-streamed on our website at [www.polk-county.net](http://www.polk-county.net).

### AGENDA

- I. Welcome – Commissioner Wilson, Chairman
- II. Review upcoming Board Meeting Agenda - January 19, 2021
- III. Other topics to be discussed – County Manager/County Attorney
  - a. CFX Southport Connector Project (PD&E Study Presentation)
  - b. Florida Department of Health/Polk County (COVID-19 Vaccine Update)
  - c. 2021 Polk County Day
- IV. Adjournment





Polk County Board of County Commissioners  
Agenda Briefing  
January 15, 2021

The Board of County Commissioners of Polk County, Florida, held an Agenda Briefing at the Administration Building, on Monday January 15, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. with the following members present: Commissioner George Lindsey, District 1, Commissioner Rick Wilson, District 2, Commissioner Bill Braswell, District 3, and Commissioner Martha Santiago, District 4 and Commissioner Neil Combee, District 5. Also present: County Manager Bill Beasley, County Attorney Michael Craig, and Deputy Clerk Alison Holland represented the Clerk's Office.

Chairman Wilson called the meeting to order at 9:00 a.m.

Mr. Beasley discussed the Agenda and gave opening comments.

Roads and Drainage Director Jay Jarvis gave background information on the CFX Southport Connector Project. (PD & E) He said the Southport Connector Expressway has been talked about back when the Poinciana Parkway was being looked at. He said it was found at the time not to be cost feasible. He said the Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX) is starting to look at the project again. He said the Southport connector is a connection between the southern end of the Poinciana Parkway and the Turnpike. He said the presentation today is a prelude to the public outreach CFX will be doing regarding the project.

Glenn Pressimone, PE CFX Chief of Infrastructure, said that CFX began in the 1960's and their jurisdiction was concentrated in Orange County only. He said in 2014 the legislature expanded their jurisdiction. He said one of the first things they did was begin a conversation with Osceola County Expressway Authority (OCX). He discussed the concepts studies that were done. He said they acquired the Poinciana Parkway and they are in the process of widening the road. He discussed the other upcoming projects to this area. He thanked the Board for allowing them to come today and speak to them.

Ralph Bove, Volkert, Inc., showed slides and gave background information on this project. He reviewed the project history timeline, the project development process, and their goals and objectives. He discussed the PD&E study process. He said they will be holding public meetings and are in the process of scheduling the public kickoff meeting. He said CFCX has long standing relationships with two advisory groups that will be joining them in the progress meetings. He said they will also be available for one on one meetings with any of their stakeholders. He reviewed the study area map and the area for the connection. He discussed the environmental and social constraints. He reviewed the CF & M preliminary alternatives. He said the advisory group input has been very important. He discussed the proposed new study area versus the current study area.

Upon question, Mr. Bove said they have not held any public meetings as to date. He said they are getting ready to go out to the general public. He said the public meeting will be held within the next couple of months. He said the study will take 15 months which is very aggressive; he said they are in discussions to extend the study.

Commissioner Lindsey discussed the Polk Parkway and the alignment near Drainfield Road. He said anything that encourages a bigger circumference probably make more sense.

Upon question, Mr. Bove said the normal production process is 7-8 years.

Polk County Board of County Commissioners  
Agenda Briefing  
January 15, 2021

Mr. Pressimone discussed the PD & E study and said they will have a viability analysis with their Board. He said this project could take longer to permit due to Reedy Creek; he said a good estimate is around 5-6 years to begin this project.

Mr. Beasley introduced the next Agenda item.

Dr. Joy Jackson, Health Department, discussed the vaccines and said this is a monumental task and the largest she has ever seen. She discussed the infrastructure coordination and collaboration that is happening with public and private partners and intense communication with their constituents. She said she speaks with Paul Womble, Emergency Management Director, 6-7 times a day. She discussed the issues her department has been facing with the call center. She said Mr. Beasley and Todd Bond were able to help the Health Department to get where they are now. She said collaboration with the local vaccine partners has created the ability to put a lot of vaccines in arms quickly. She said to date the county has received 17,000 COVID vaccines; she discussed where these vaccines have been allocated to. She said by the end of the third vaccine event today they will be completely out of vaccines. She discussed their guiding principles. She said she is not aware of the number of vaccines the county will be receiving next week; she said they will not schedule any events until she knows the number of vaccines Polk County will receive. She discussed the issues with people scheduling their vaccines or adding their name to a wait list. She said they will have mobile assets to get into communities. She said they must use vaccination partners; she said they have 20 registered nurses that can vaccinate and she said that is not enough. She said they have a plan for when they receive the vaccines to get them out to the community. She said they must always plan for the second dose of vaccine. She said going forward she has heard that vaccine allocation will be based on the population. She said Polk has not received the number of vaccines that is comparable to its' population. She said overtime as vaccines become more available they will see availability by other partners.

Upon question, Dr. Jackson said that she does not have the second dose of vaccine for those that have already been vaccinated. She said right now they are focused on the 150,000 65 and over population. She said they need more than 40% vaccinated to help with herd immunity. She said the single dose vaccine is still in trials and has not been presented to the FDA.

Commissioner Combee stated that he heard that the single dose vaccine has asked for emergency authorization.

Upon question, Dr. Jackson discussed her onsite vaccine mobile units. She said they have a list of communities that are requesting onsite vaccine mobile units. She discussed the communities that were picked to receive the vaccine first; she said they had training to become an Emergency Response Partner. She said she only had to send a couple of staff members to support them. She said this is an opportunity that is available to any community.

Commissioner Braswell said people are going to have to be patient and said the county needs to get this message out.

Commissioner Santiago said that she visited the Polk State College vaccination event. She said it was very well organized and said it took 38 minutes from the beginning to end of the process.

Upon question, Dr. Jackson said that she hopes to be told today when and how many vaccines she will receive. She said there are a number of vaccine events scheduled next week if they received the

**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)  
[1-618-484-9061](#)  
Conference ID: 352 688 300#

**DATE/TIME:** January 19, 2021, 1:00 p.m.

**Invitees/Attendees:** Dr. Daniel Smith  
Will Sloup (Volkert)  
Ralph Bove (Volkert)  
Kelli Muddle (Volkert)

#### Meeting with Dr. Daniel Smith

The following is a summary of the subject stakeholder coordination meeting. Attendees present are in **bold** text. Agenda items are in *italics*.

1. *Introductions/Meeting Purpose:* Following self-introductions, Will stated the purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the Southport Connector Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study and receive input from Dan regarding any potential wildlife corridor impacts.
2. *Dan's input:*
  - a. The South Lake Toho Master Plan does not seem to take into consideration wildlife corridor impacts. Representative of male searching for female.
  - b. Panther habitat
    - i.* GIS panther telemetry points are from one panther (No. 62) and are most likely several years old.
    - ii.* Greater Green Swamp contains large habitat for panthers
    - iii.* One female panther was found north of the Caloosahatchee river. All other females documented south of the river.
    - iv.* Goal of panther support groups is to provide a healthy wildlife corridor connecting the southern population to the Ocala Forest and the Disney Wilderness Preserve to Lake Louisa.
    - v.* The change in hydraulics associated with the Kissimmee Restoration Project is a concern for panther movement since cats will not cross flooded areas.

c. Study Area

i. Study area is currently a corridor for local wildlife rather than regional. Local wildlife such as:

1. Deer
2. Otters
3. Bobcat
4. Muskrat
5. Wetland dependent species
6. Several reptiles and amphibians (see Lake Jackson study on Herpetofauna – *saved to meeting folder*)

d. Wildlife crossings

- i. Suggest researching wildlife crossings considered for the Lake Orange Connector (under US 27) which may be compatible for this study.
- ii. Suggest reviewing SR 200 design project in Marion County for use of culverts as wildlife crossings from edge of wetland to deep end of the wetland in Ross Prairie.

e. Concerns

- i. Reedy Creek impacts particularly pertaining to its use as a wildlife corridor.
- ii. The Southport Connector attracting sprawl adjacent to conservation areas.
- iii. Impacts to the Greater St. Johns River Basin which is the last remaining wildlife corridor connecting south and north Florida.

f. Miscellaneous

i. Useful resources:

1. Federal database: [Bison.usgs.gov](https://bison.usgs.gov)
2. [www.inaturalist.org](https://www.inaturalist.org)

ii. Important to have ranchers as allies as they are conservationists protecting large tracts of land.

3. Adjourn: The meeting ended at approximately 2:00 p.m.

**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** [Join Microsoft Teams Meeting](#)  
[+1 407-630-7039](#)  
Conference ID: 900 102 311#

**DATE/TIME:** January 19, 2021, 10:00 a.m.

<b>Invitees/Attendees:</b>	<b>Martin Bridges (USCG)</b>	<b>Colleen Shae (Quest)</b>
	Randall Overton (USCG)	<b>Ralph Bove (Volkert)</b>
	Will Hawthorne (CFX)	<b>Will Sloup (Volkert)</b>
	<b>Jonathan Williamson (Dewberry)</b>	<b>Kelli Muddle (Volkert)</b>
	Merissa Battle (Dewberry)	

#### Meeting with United States Coast Guard (USCG): Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study

The following is a summary of the subject stakeholder coordination meeting. Attendees present are in **bold** text. Agenda items are in *italics*. A copy of the project presentation is attached for reference.

1. *Introductions/Meeting Purpose:* Following self-introductions, Ralph stated the purpose of the meeting was to provide an overview of the Southport Connector Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study to USCG staff (Martin Bridges).
2. *Project Overview:* Ralph provided a brief overview of the project while presenting the current study area boundary. Project goals include meeting the demands of Osceola County's projected growth, relieving congestion on local roads, promoting regional connectivity and enhancement of emergency evacuation routes.

Potential challenges include the study area's proximity to the Disney Wilderness Preserve, archaeological sites, ranch lands, residential properties, and minimizing impacts to Reedy Creek, planned developments and natural resources.

Ralph reviewed the project background and briefly discussed the recent project history beginning with the development of the South Lake Toho Master Plan by Osceola County (2010) and the inclusion of the Southport Connector in the Osceola County Expressway Master Plan (2013). In 2015, FDOT completed an Alternative Corridor Evaluation Report for the Southport Connector and in May 2018, CFX completed the Concept, Feasibility and Mobility (CF&M) study for the project. When the project was advanced to the PD&E phase by CFX, the project limits were expanded on the east end to terminate at Canoe Creek Road. The Southport Canal, which connects Lake Toho and Cypress Lake, is within the study area and may be considered a navigable waterway.

3. *Overview of the PD&E Study:* Ralph reviewed a map of the current study corridors and stated the results of the CF&M Study have been advanced into the PD&E study phase. A general overview of the PD&E study scope of services and schedule was provided, as follows:

General Scope of Services: The PD&E study will focus on a more detailed level of engineering and environmental analysis with the goal of identifying a preferred build alternative to advance into the design phase. The PD&E study is currently the only phase funded by CFX. Public involvement and stakeholder coordination are important aspects of the PD&E study phase. The results of the PD&E study will be documented in a series of engineering and environmental reports and presented to the CFX Board for approval.

Project Schedule: The PD&E study started in September 2020 and is expected to be completed in December 2021, a duration of approximately 15 months.

4. EAG/PAG input: Project kickoff meetings were held in December 2020 with the PD&E study Environmental Advisory Group (EAG) and Project Advisory Group (PAG). Environmental concerns expressed during the meetings included potential impacts to the Everglades headwaters and Disney Wilderness Preserve. There was also concern that constructing a limited access expressway will trigger development beyond the existing Urban Growth Boundary. The Study team was asked by the advisory groups to consider crossing Lake Toho which would involve expanding the study area.
5. USCG input: Martin Bridges asked if there has been a vessel survey to determine the type and number of vessels that utilize Lake Toho and the Southport Canal. Ralph responded that a vessel survey has not been completed this early in the study process, however, Volkert is researching previous documentation and will likely also conduct some public outreach to gain an understanding of vessel movement on these waterways. It is likely that the majority of vessels utilizing Lake Toho and the canal are recreational.

Martin explained if the canal is not a major thoroughway for vessel traffic, the USCG process could be expedited and would generally consist of reaching out to local marinas and posting a public notice in the local newspaper about the project. If it is determined that a permit is needed (i.e. commerce vessels using the canal, impacts to social conditions) the process would be more extensive. Ralph mentioned that during the multiple public meetings to be held during the PD&E study, we have an opportunity to garner the types of vessels using this facility. The FDOT Bridge Questionnaire Form can also be used to determine the level of involvement needed from the USCG. Once that is determined, the team will move forward with identifying the appropriate USCG permitting process to be considered in subsequent project development (i.e.: design and permitting).

Ralph informed Martin of the project kickoff notification package that was sent to state, federal, regional, and local governmental authorities in November 2020. The package provides more detail about the project itself and was provided to Martin following this meeting.

Martin stated he would like to be informed of the canal bridge measurements when a typical section is recommended.

6. Adjourn: The meeting ended at approximately 10:32 a.m.



**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** Bronson Ranch: 316 Church Street, Kissimmee; and  
Microsoft Teams Meeting (virtual option)

**DATE/TIME:** January 25, 2021, 10:00 a.m.

**Invitees/Attendees:**

Haley Bronson (Bronson Ranch)	Jonathan Williamson (Dewberry)
Dan Lackey (Bronson Ranch)	Kathy Putnam (Quest)
John Adams (Bronson Ranch)	Ralph Bove (Volkert)
Kristin Salisbury (Bronson Ranch)	Will Sloup (Volkert)
Rob Whidden (RJ Whidden and Associates)	Kelli Muddle (Volkert)

**Meeting with Bronson Ranch: Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study**

Following introductions Ralph Bove presented a brief project overview of the Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX) Southport Connector Expressway Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study including a series of displays. Following his presentation, Ralph initiated discussions and requested feedback from the owners of Bronson Ranch.

Displaying a map of the current PD&E alternatives, Ralph explained that an alternative crossing Lake Tohopekaliga (Toho) was added at the request of the Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Environmental Advisory Group (EAG). Dan Lackey commented that the biggest challenge with regard to building the Southport Connector Expressway across Lake Toho is not necessarily building a bridge over the lake, but rather the matter of not having an opportunity to extend the expressway further eastward once the alignment crosses the lake. Particularly since the area included in the East Lake Toho Master Plan will become densely populated.

Dan reported that since 1969 there has been a planned interchange at the Florida's Turnpike located north of the Canoe Creek service plaza as shown on the map displayed. Ralph agreed and added it is a planned interchange between the Turnpike and CFX to service the Southport Connector Expressway as part of CFX's overall Master Plan.

Dan asked the project team if there is a preference to orient the Southport Connector Turnpike interchange to continue north or south of Lake Gentry. Ralph responded that currently there is no preference; however, as part of the PD&E study process, a high-level corridor analysis will be performed to determine the best orientation around Lake Gentry.

Dan pointed out the alignment that represents the limited access facility included in the Osceola County South Lake Toho Master Plan (Alternative 7000) and commented that they always understood that alignment would become the Southport Connector Expressway. He stated his appreciation that Alternative 7000 sets a boundary and that he recalls learning Osceola County is not in favor of the area being developed until it is necessary.

Ralph asked the group if they expect an expressway traveling along the growth boundary line will define and contain growth rather than encourage it. He added that members of the EAG have commented Alternative 7000 would likely encourage more growth and development to the south of the growth boundary line; therefore, those members are in favor of a more northern alignment. Dan responded that moving the proposed expressway to the north will not stop growth from occurring.

Ralph reported that it is Volkert's intent to keep the local access facility, Southport Road, as intact as possible; however, that area is still planned for development. He asked if the Bronson Ranch has any new or upcoming development plans at this time. Dan responded currently there are no plans for development.

Will Sloup mentioned he read notes from previous meetings and inquired about details included in a meeting summary from May 2017 pertaining to the installation of a new water well on the ranch property. Dan responded that the Toho Water Authority (TWA) would like to build a water treatment plant on the property near Canoe Creek Road. The ranch has signed an agreement with TWA for the development of the plant and further arrangements are being processed.

Ralph reported commentary received from the EAG to consider wildlife corridors and crossings in the development of the expressway. Members directed the project team to ongoing research and studies which evaluate Florida panther movements. A meeting was held with Dr. Daniel Smith of UCF on January 19, 2021 to gather details on his study of wildlife movement in the area. Further details and data collection for wildlife movement within the study area including the Reedy Creek Corridor is ongoing. Ralph asked ranch representatives if they are aware of any bear and/or Florida panther occurring on their property. Dan responded they are only aware of bear and Florida panther sightings in the Southport Ranch Mitigation Bank conservation area and Disney Wildlife Preserve. He stated wildlife crossings beneath an elevated expressway should be a consideration, particularly for the northern alignments closer to Lake Toho. Dan added that the further the alignment is from the lake; the fewer wildlife crossings will be needed.

Upon further discussion and evaluation of each alignment location, it was determined the Bronson Ranch owners prefer Alternative 7000 which is the southernmost alignment in the study area representative of the limited access facility included in the Osceola County South Lake Toho Master Plan.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:25 a.m.

**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

**DATE/TIME:** January 28, 2021, 4:00 p.m.

**Attendees:**

Ricky Booth (Doc Partin Ranch)	Jonathan Williamson (Dewberry)	Will Sloup (Volkert)
Glenn Pressimone (CFX)	Kathy Putnam, (Quest)	Kelli Muddle (Volkert)
Will Hawthorne (CFX)	Ralph Bove (Volkert)	

**Meeting with Doc Partin Ranch: Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study**

Following introductions Ralph Bove confirmed with Ricky Booth that he will be participating in the meeting as a representative for Doc Partin Ranch and not in his capacity as an elected official. Ricky agreed he will participate as a representative and works at the ranch but is not the ranch manager. He added that any decisions regarding the land on Doc Partin Ranch would be a Partin family decision.

Ralph presented a brief project overview of the Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX) Southport Connector Expressway Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study. Displaying a map of the current PD&E alternatives, Ralph explained that an alternative crossing Lake Tohopekaliga (Toho) will be added at the request of the Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Environmental Advisory Group (EAG). Following his presentation, Ralph asked Ricky if he is familiar with the Southport Connector.

Ricky reported he attended public meetings for the project several years ago and when his uncle served on the commission in the 1960's there were discussions about the Southport Connector back then. He reiterated his position stated at the recent County Commission meeting that he is against an alternative crossing Lake Toho.

Ralph explained the expressway will travel to Florida's Turnpike and continue to Canoe Creek Road. The CFX Concept, Feasibility, and Mobility (CF&M) study for the Northeast Connector looked at a connection from the Turnpike around Lake Gentry to Canoe Creek Road. As part of the PD&E study process, a high-level corridor analysis will be performed to determine the best orientation around Lake Gentry. Ralph asked Ricky if he can comment on ranch operations and his view on potential impacts from this project particularly around Lake Gentry.

Ricky stated that it has always been the Partin family's understanding the road would travel either north or south of Lake Gentry. As far back as twenty years ago Doc Partin Ranch hoped the road wouldn't happen; however, the family likely prefers that the road travel south of Lake Gentry since going north of the lake will require impacting homes. Ricky pointed out where his residence is located on the ranch

(just east of Canoe Creek Road south of Lake Gentry outside the study area) and mentioned he planned to build further north near Lake Gentry; however, he was denied access to cross the Southport Canal. Ricky informed the group the ranch property extends another 1,100 acres on the eastern border, adding that his grandparents moved to Doc Partin ranch in the 1970's due to very heavy traffic on US 192. He stated his disdain for going across Lake Toho.

Ralph explained the location of the Turnpike interchange has been determined by the CF&M study and agreed going north of Lake Gentry will have more impacts compared to going south which has fewer landowners. Detailed results of an impact analysis will be documented during this PD&E study.

Ricky stated that 15 years ago it was reported the road would be built in 10 years, but that schedule slowed down after 2008. Referring to the alternatives on the map he stated as a landowner for his kids, he would advocate for the expressway traveling south of Lake Gentry. He would advocate against building a bridge across Lake Toho, adding the Osceola County South Lake Toho Master Plan would likely not be developed if the expressway travels across the lake.

Glenn Pressimone stated that for the good of the study, the lake crossing needs to be evaluated; however, that alternative does not satisfy the connectivity purpose in this study.

Ricky mentioned that although an expressway crossing Lake Toho would reduce his commute to Tampa by 30 minutes, he needs to be on the record that he is against that alternative. He inquired if the Northeast Connector would continue east from the Southport Connector's eastern terminus, traveling to the Harmony area, Sunbridge and Medical City. He also asked if the Northeast Connector has slowed down to focus on the Southport Connector.

Glenn responded that an economist was consulted when CFX took over the Osceola County Expressway Authority (OCX) master plan plus the result of the CF&M study showed that developing the entire beltway all at once was improbable. In terms of demand, it was apparent the Poinciana Parkway Extension should be first along with the Osceola Parkway Extension which will service the Northeast District. When evaluating beyond a connection to the Northeast District there are unknowns regarding the timing of new development. For instance, the North Ranch Sector Plan has a 2060-2080 timeframe for buildout. CFX decided to move forward with studying the Southport Connector, extending it to Canoe Creek Road, and monitoring the need for the Northeast Connector as development conditions in the area change. Glenn asked Ricky if he is aware of any development plans for the Doc Partin ranch property.

Ricky explained that approximately 95 percent of the ranch land is outside the Urban Growth Boundary. Only a small percentage of ranch land near Lake Gentry is within the Urban Growth Boundary. Ricky mentioned he and the Partin family live in one of the greatest places of the world where they can operate the ranch and still have access to one of busiest airports in the world. With the expressway, a trip to the airport would take approximately 35 minutes. There is a desperate need for transportation in this area. Ricky relayed his strong opinion about moving forward with development without a transportation plan and the need for employment centers and transportation. The roadway would

benefit the school district and allow for the advancement of the community. He added the area is a blank canvas and can become a great, diverse community if there is a good balance of development.

Ricky reported (Osceola County Commission Chairman and CFX Board Member) Brandon Arrington will keep him informed of the PD&E study progress and requested the project team contact him if a decision is made to travel the expressway north of Lake Gentry instead of south. The ranch will have no opposition to a corridor coming across the south side of Lake Gentry. Ricky expressed he would like to be part of the Project Advisory Group (PAG).

Glenn informed Ricky that CFX also has an Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC) that reports to the CFX Board and makes recommendations. The Osceola County representative and ESC Chair is Bob Mindick. Ralph will be giving an update to the ESC on this PD&E study February 18, 2021.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:30 p.m.

**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

**DATE/TIME:** January 28, 2021, 9:00 a.m.

**Invitees/Attendees:**

Jason Perryman (USACE)  
Glenn Pressimone (CFX)  
Will Hawthorne (CFX)  
Jonathan Williamson (Dewberry)

Kathy Putnam (Quest)  
Ralph Bove (Volkert)  
Will Sloup (Volkert)  
Kelli Muddle (Volkert)

**Meeting with US Army Corps of Engineers: Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study**

Following introductions Ralph Bove presented a brief project overview of the Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX) Southport Connector Expressway Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study including a series of displays. Following his presentation, Ralph initiated discussions and requested feedback from the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) representative, Jason Perryman.

Displaying a map of the current PD&E alternatives, Ralph explained that an alternative crossing Lake Tohopekaliga (Toho) was added at the request of the Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Environmental Advisory Group (EAG). He added that as part of the PD&E process, the project team reviewed comments on the preliminary alternatives of the Southport Connector Expressway project provided by regulatory agencies, including the USACE, during the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process performed by Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) in 2015. Ralph noted that the CFX Concept Feasibility and Mobility Study for the Southport Connector, completed in 2018, did not include an alternative crossing Lake Toho since it was not fully supported during the ETDM process.

Jason commented that he is unsure what the benefit would be to run the expressway over Lake Toho as opposed to building it south of Lake Toho where the South Lake Toho Master Plan will be developed.

Ralph shared that an evaluation of the alternatives was performed to determine if each alignment satisfies the purpose and need of the project. The result of the evaluation showed that the alternative crossing Lake Toho does not meet the project purpose and need since it would terminate at the Florida's Turnpike in a location restricting any extension eastward. The alternative would not provide a direct connection to I-4, the proposed Northeast Connector or any other future CFX facility included in their Master Plan. Ralph added there would likely be significant impacts to existing and proposed socio economic and residential communities as a result of the alternative crossing Lake Toho.



Ralph mentioned the next steps will be to analyze and refine the current six alternatives down to three which will be presented at a Public Alternatives meeting later in 2021. Following the Public Alternatives meeting, the goal of the PD&E study will be to determine a preferred alternative which will be presented at a public hearing.

Jason conveyed to the group that developing an alignment south of Lake Toho to the Florida's Turnpike will require crossing the federally owned Southport Canal and will require a 408 Authorization from the Army Corps Engineering division and added the authorization can be obtained through the permitting process. Ralph informed Jason that the project team met with the US Coast Guard (USCG) prior to this meeting to discuss permitting requirements to cross the Southport Canal. The project team is also aware that the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) will have requirements to bridge the canal. The group agreed it is necessary to continue to coordinate with all associated agencies throughout the PD&E study process.

Jason mentioned there will likely be wildlife issues that will need to be addressed as part of the PD&E study. He noted the area south of Lake Toho provides habitat for Caracara and several bald eagle nests occur in that area. Ralph agreed and stated that as part of the PD&E study process, several support documents compliant with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) will be produced including a Natural Resources Evaluation (NRE) and Cultural Resources Assessment Survey (CRAS). The team will coordinate with the appropriate regulatory agencies during review of the NRE and the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) for the CRAS.

Will Sloup reported that the team was made aware of the Kissimmee River restoration project that will begin in 2022. As part of the restoration of the Kissimmee River, it was mentioned that Lake Cypress will need to accommodate a rise in water elevation which will subsequently affect stormwater and roadway designs. Will asked Jason if he was aware of this action and if so, could he provide more details to the team. Jason responded he was not aware of the action to implement a control in water elevation but will look into the matter.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:15 a.m.

**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

**DATE/TIME:** February 2, 2021, 11:30 a.m.

**Invitees/Attendees:**

James Blush (SFWMD)	Glenn Pressimone (CFX)	Ralph Bove (Volkert)
Ayounga Riddick (SFWMD)	Will Hawthorne (CFX)	Will Sloup (Volkert)
Marc Ady (SFWMD) <i>absent</i>	Jonathan Williamson (Dewberry)	Kelli Muddle (Volkert)
William Graf (SFWMD)	Nicole Gough (Dewberry)	
James Schuette (SFWMD)	Kathy Putnam (Quest)	

**Meeting with SFWMD Land Stewardship Staff: Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study**

Following introductions Ralph Bove presented a brief project overview of the CFX Southport Connector Expressway Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study.

During his presentation, Ralph displayed a map of the current Southport Connector Expressway PD&E potential alternatives and stated the alignment east of Reedy Creek will include a 330-foot right of way for the standard typical section. This typical section would allow for expansion of the planned expressway in the future. Ralph mentioned there are opportunities to narrow the typical section to 200-feet in environmentally sensitive areas and still allow for six lanes. The bridge over the Reedy Creek watershed would be 3,400-feet long and could serve as a wildlife crossing.

James Blush (Jim) pointed out the Osceola School District Environmental Center (OSDEC) located on the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) property within the study area. During alternative refinements, avoiding impacts to the OSDEC and access to the facility should be considered. He added the SFWMD will need continued access to conservation areas managed by the SFWMD including uplands managed with prescribed burns and exotic plant control in the wetlands. Another concern for the SFWMD is avoidance of impacts to their weather station located south of Southport Road near the northeast corner of their property. Ralph stated it appears the current alternatives will avoid impacting the weather station; however, Volkert will confirm the location of the station to be certain.

Jim noted the portion of SFWMD land within the study area (the Lake Russell Tract) is comprised of mesic and scrubby flatwoods which is prime habitat for gopher tortoises. The study team acknowledged gopher tortoise and other listed species habitat will be considered throughout the study.

Ralph asked if the SFWMD has a Fire Management Plan for their land management program they can share with the project team to be used as a resource during the PD&E study. Jim responded they have a plan for the entire Land Stewardship Program as well as a plan specific for the Reedy Creek management

area which includes the Lake Russell Tract. The plan contains specific fire management details including fire return intervals and the frequency of prescribed burns for each individual area of the Lake Russell Tract. Jim agreed it would be beneficial to share the plan with Volkert. Following this meeting Jim emailed the SFWMD Fire Management Plan with corresponding graphics, a shapefile showing the location of the weather station and contact information for the OSDEC to Volkert.

Ralph inquired about SFWMD's involvement in the Everglades Restoration Project. SFWMD responded their recent effort for the project is making changes to the regulation schedule in areas south of the Southport Connector study area.

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*A regulation schedule is a tool used to manage the water levels in a lake or reservoir and typically have water level thresholds which vary with time of year and trigger discharges. Regulatory discharges are made primarily to protect the integrity of the surrounding levees and developed areas and are also made to lower water levels in preparation for wet season inflows.*

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Jim recalled discussions at the recent Environmental Advisory Group (EAG) meeting involving concerns for water level rise and flooding as a result of the restoration project that could be a factor in the planning of the expressway. He added that the regulation schedule will affect water levels south of the study area and should not have an impact on the proposed expressway. William Graf (Bill) mentioned the Central Florida Water Initiative which monitors ground water is active in the general area; however, it appears the location of the proposed expressway would not impact that effort. SFWMD suggested contacting Stephen Bousquin within the SFWMD who is familiar and knowledgeable on details for the restoration project and issues in the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes (KCOL).

Bill reported the structure (S-61) used to regulate the water level for the Southport Canal (C-35) will close when the water level is at or below the regulation schedule. The regulation schedule elevation for C-35 is currently 53.5 – 55 ft National Geodetic Vertical Datum (NGVD) and is not anticipated to change.

Nicole Gough asked SFWMD if C-35 has any special restrictions the project team should be aware of when considering the expressway crossing the canal. Bill responded that the Right-of-Way permitting staff should be consulted to discuss requirements for not obstructing water flow when crossing the canal. Ralph informed the group that Volkert has the Right-of-Way maintenance handbook listing the horizontal and vertical criteria for crossing the canal. The Balmoral Group is the sub consultant on the project that will be reviewing and documenting the required criteria for crossing over the waterway and the maintenance berm for the canal. Ralph noted the project team met with the US Coast Guard in late January who acknowledged the canal is primarily used by recreation vessels and is rarely being utilized for intra state commerce. Bill agreed stating that although C-35 is designated as a federal navigable waterway, 99 percent of the vessels using the canal are recreational.

Will Sloup asked if SFWMD anticipates any changes in groundwater levels between Lake Tohopekaliga (Toho) and Lake Cypress. As part of the hydrology plan for the expressway, stormwater ponds will be installed so it will be necessary to understand percolation rates in the surrounding land. Bill responded that since the regulatory structure for C-35 and Cypress Lake is on the south end of Lake Toho, the water level on C-35 will rise with Cypress Lake which could potentially cause groundwater fluctuations in the study area. Bill directed Will Sloup to contact Stephen Bousquin for confirmation and more technical information on the overall effects from changes in the regulation schedule.

Will Sloup asked the SFWMD to provide details on their management of Lake Toho, along with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) to control the water level for maximizing the nesting habitat and foraging for the Everglades Snail Kite. Bill responded that when it was observed Lake Toho had become a nesting area for snail kites, a change was made to the regulation schedule to prevent abrupt drops in the water level. He explained that when water levels drop, the birds and their nests are vulnerable to predation. Specifically, the regulation schedule was changed to provide a gentler pace of water level fluctuation so the birds can adapt and better thrive. Bill added that they do not anticipated a change or impact to the snail kite population on Lake Toho as a result of the Kissimmee Restoration Project.

Will Sloup inquired about the affiliation between the SFWMD and the USACE to manage Lake Toho. Bill explained that the USACE mandates the regulation schedules and the SFWMD water managers are bound to comply with the USACE's rules and regulations set forth in the regulation schedule when operating and maintaining the structures. Essentially, the SFWMD is the local sponsor to operate and maintain the structures for the USACE's federal mandated effort.

Jim asked the project team if any of the proposed alternatives will impact SFWMD land. Ralph displayed a map showing the current alternatives that have a potential to impact SFWMD's property and mentioned the team will continue to coordinate with the SFWMD throughout the study process.

Will Sloup mentioned the project will require the construction of water retention ponds as part of the hydrology plan. He asked the SFWMD if there is any potential interest in sharing stormwater ponds to hold and treat water or allowing the release of water onto SFWMD property to benefit the restoration effort. Bill replied that it is a possibility and added the Toho Water Authority (TWA) is very innovative in capturing, treating and reusing stormwater. Bill suggested reaching out to Todd Swingle who is the Director of TWA and has expertise in dealing with water supply issues.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:25 p.m.

# CENTRAL FLORIDA EXPRESSWAY AUTHORITY

## MINUTES CENTRAL FLORIDA EXPRESSWAY AUTHORITY ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING February 18, 2021

### Location: Virtual

Zoom Webinar by calling the toll-free number (877) 853-5257 and entering the webinar ID:  
917 2353 2091 or viewed by using the link,

[https://cfxway.zoom.us/Environmental Stewardship Committee/02.18.21](https://cfxway.zoom.us/Environmental_Stewardship_Committee/02.18.21)

and entering the passcode: 714412

### Committee Members Appearing Virtually:

Robert Mindick, Osceola County Representative, Committee Chairman  
Jim Barfield, Brevard County Representative  
Richard Durr, Seminole County Representative  
Beth Jackson, Orange County Representative  
Charles Lee, Citizen Representative  
Brittany Sellers, City of Orlando Representative

### Committee Member Not Present:

Timothee Sallin, Lake County Representative

### Others Appearing Virtually:

Laura Kelley, Executive Director  
Michelle Maikisch, Chief of Staff/Public Affairs Officer  
Rita Moore, Recording Secretary/Executive Assistant  
Laura Newlin Kelly, Associate General Counsel  
Glenn Pressimone, Chief of Infrastructure  
Ralph Bove, Volkert, Inc.  
Dan Kristoff, RS&H, Inc.  
Clif Tate, Kimley-Horn and Associates

## **A. CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at approximately 10:01 am by Chairman Mindick.

Recording Secretary, Rita Moore called the roll and announced there was a quorum with six (6) Committee Members present.

**B. PUBLIC COMMENT**

Ms. Rita Moore, Recording Secretary announced there were no public comments.

**C. REVIEW OF THE OCTOBER 22, 2020 MINUTES**

Discussion ensued regarding the detail level of the minutes.

Ms. Laura Kelley, Executive Director explained that the Board approved the motion-based style of minutes.

A recommendation was made to include a link to the recording of the meeting for anyone requiring more detail around the agenda items.

**D. AGENDA ITEMS**

**1. OSCEOLA/BREVARD COUNTY CONNECTOR CONCEPT, FEASIBILITY AND MOBILITY (CF&M) STUDY**

Mr. Clif Tate of Kimley-Horn and Associates presented the Osceola/Brevard County Connector Concept, Feasibility and Mobility (CF&M) Study. He described the study objective & methodology as well as the previous Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC), Environmental Advisory Group (EAG) & Project Advisory Group (PAG) input and the alternatives identified based on the input.

The Committee Members asked questions which were answered by Mr. Tate.

(This item was presented for information only. No committee action was taken.)

**2. NORTHEAST CONNECTOR EXPRESSWAY PHASE 1 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT (PD&E) STUDY**

Mr. Dan Kristoff of RS&H, Inc. presented the Northeast Connector Expressway Phase 1 Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study. He described the projects goals & objectives. He outlined the advisory groups input and how the input was being utilized as well as the study area & corridor revisions.

The Committee Members asked questions which were answered by Mr. Kristoff.

(This item was presented for information only. No committee action was taken.)



### **3. SOUTHPORT CONNECTOR PROJECT DEVELOPMENT AND ENVIRONMENT (PD&E) STUDY**

Mr. Ralph Bove of Volkert, Inc. presented the Southport Connector Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study. He described the projects goals & objectives. He outlined the advisory groups input and how the input was being utilized as well as the study area & corridor revisions.

The Committee Members asked questions which were answered by Mr. Bove.

(This item was presented for information only. No committee action was taken.)

### **4. WILDLIFE CORRIDOR DISCUSSION**

Chairman Mindick discussed the importance of wildlife corridors for the future of road design and construction. He recommended several books to the Committee Members on the topic of Wildlife Corridors.

(This item was presented for information only. No committee action was taken.)

### **E. OTHER BUSINESS**

Chairman Mindick stated, per the charter, today's meeting would be his last as the Environmental Stewardship Committee Chairman and the new Environmental Stewardship Committee Chairman would be Timothee Sallin (Lake County Representative).

### **F. ADJOURNMENT**

Chairman Mindick adjourned the meeting at approximately 12:10 p.m.

Minutes approved on June 17, 2021.

*Pursuant to the Florida Public Records Law and CFX Records Management Policy, audio tapes of all Board and applicable Committee meetings are maintained and available upon request to the Records Management Liaison Officer at [publicrecords@CFXway.com](mailto:publicrecords@CFXway.com) or 4974 ORL Tower Road, Orlando, FL 32807.*

**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** Osceola Schools Education Study Center

**DATE/TIME:** March 17, 2021, 1:30 p.m.

**Invitees/Attendees:**

David Snedeker (Osceola Schools)  
Ralph Bove (Volkert)  
Will Sloup (Volkert)

**Meeting with Osceola Schools Environmental Study Center**

On March 17, 2021, Ralph Bove and Will Sloup met on site with Mr. David Snedeker, Administrator of the Osceola School District Environmental Center (OSDEC). Mr. Snedeker has been in his position at the OSDEC for a little over 20 years. The OSDEC is located on 19 acres owned by the Osceola school district along the east side of Reedy Creek between Lake Russell and Southport Road. The mission of the OSDEC is to provide students, specifically fifth grade students, the opportunity to observe and learn about local wildlife, the ecosystems where they live and the principles of conservation.

After a brief tour of the OSDEC complex, Ralph and Will gave David a summary of the Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study displaying a roll plot aerial map of the study area that included overlays of the proposed four alternative corridors under evaluation. David stated he was very interested in the proximity of the OSDEC to the proposed expressway. Discussion was held regarding the need to consider providing new access into the complex when evaluating the alternatives. The group agreed that after further refining the details of the alternatives, a second meeting be scheduled with David for more discussion. David observed that the expressway did not directly impact any of the complex buildings and agreed that the potential locations being considered for the expressway, along the outer west and north boundaries of the parcel, minimized impacts to the property.

Ralph mentioned that a desktop review of potential archeological and/or historic sites within the study area revealed a recorded cultural resources site north of the OSDEC called the Brown's Landing Mound C (80S00023). It is believed that this site had minor archeological testing performed in the past where no human remains were found; however, more extensive testing is required for this project. David stated he has walked the site many times and found no surface evidence to suggest anything of significance occurs at the site. He added that he has heard stories there may have been earth works in that area to include possible trenching by soldiers during the Seminole Indian Wars; however, he has not personally observed evidence of such.

The group traveled down a local dirt road through forested scrub and swamp to the shore of Lake Russell where a picnic table, canoe landing and a short dock exists. A controlled burn was observed taking place across Lake Russell on the Disney Wilderness Preserve property. The smoke rose in a column and drifted to the northeast. The smoke did not reach the area where the group stood nor was any smell detected at that location.

The meeting ended with David extending an invitation to Ralph and Will to return to the OSDEC facilities for any project-related meetings that may need to be conducted.

**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

**DATE/TIME:** March 19, 2021, 9:00 a.m.

**Invitees/Attendees:**

Deb Beatty (Toho Water Authority)

Eric Ratliff (Toho Water Authority)

Jon Fox (Osceola County Solid Waste Department)

Ralph Bove (Volkert)

Will Sloup (Volkert)

Kelli Muddle (Volkert)

**Meeting with Toho Water Authority: Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study**

Ralph Bove presented a brief project overview of the CFX Southport Connector Expressway Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study including a series of displays. Following his presentation, Ralph initiated discussions and requested feedback from the Toho Water Authority (TWA) attendees.

Deb Beatty reported the Cypress Lake Water Treatment Plant (WTP), is a regional water supply project serving St. Cloud, Reedy Creek, Orange County, Polk County, and Osceola County. Deb inquired about the timing for selecting a preferred alternative for the project so she can best assess the location of existing and planned TWA facilities within the project area.

Ralph responded that a preferred alternative was originally scheduled to be identified by the end of 2021; however, an expansion of the study area was made to add an alternative crossing Lake Toho which consequently extended the schedule to summer 2022. It is anticipated that an Alternatives Workshop will be scheduled in October 2021 and a Public Hearing in spring 2022. Ralph added the team is coordinating with the team conducting the PD&E Study for the Northeast Connector Expressway, which would connect to Deseret Ranches land and the Harmony area.

Ralph reported there is currently no funding for design or construction; however, funding could be made available based on the need for a limited access facility in the area. The Southport Connector project would likely be designed and developed in phases beginning with the Cypress Parkway segment.

Deb asked about the likelihood of the Southport Connector segment east of Reedy Creek being developed within 10 years. Jonathan Williamson explained that timing for construction depends on the growth rate in that area. Determining factors could include traffic needs associated with the build-out of Green Island and/or the South Lake Toho Master Plan, and/or Florida's Turnpike moving forward with the extension of Poinciana Parkway to connect with I-4. These factors would create more viability for the project east of Reedy Creek. The goal of the PD&E is to establish a single alternative and document the future location of the Southport Connector which can benefit agencies during their planning process.

Referring to a display of the TWA Cypress Lake WTP facility locations (attached), Deb pointed out the location of the proposed WTP. The plant will be located on the south side of Lake Cypress Road with the wellfield just north of the plant along Canoe Creek Road. Deb noted that the planned WTP facilities are not located within the study area; however, a water main could be installed on Bronson's Ranch property within the corridor located directly north of the proposed WTP.

Jon Fox displayed a map showing the preliminary water wheeling plan (attached). He pointed out the water route travels through Bronson's Ranch, along the east side of Southport Canal to south of Lake Toho then crosses the canal to Southport Road. There will be an extension going to the northeast, potentially to Canoe Creek Road into St. Cloud; however, that alignment has not yet been determined. Jon explained that before the project can begin, the TWA needs to overcome funding issues with participating members so finalizing the water route may occur after the completion of the Southport Connector PD&E study. The purpose for TWA creating the water wheeling map was to present to Bronson's Ranch so they can determine easement requirements. The group agreed the PD&E project team and TWA will continue coordinating throughout the study.

Ralph reported that the team has met with all major landowners within the study area as well as the United States Coast Guard (USCG) and Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). He explained that further along in the study, the team will evaluate a grade separation over Southport Canal and will want to consider any maintenance easements TWA will require to cross the canal. Deb responded that they have not yet decided whether they will cross over or under the canal. Jon added they have flexibility on location and will coordinate with the PD&E team as decisions are made.

Discussion was held regarding the location of existing and planned TWA facilities along the Cypress Parkway segment of the project.

Eric Ratliff reported there are several existing facilities that would be affected along Cypress Parkway including force mains, reclaim mains and water mains. These facilities are mostly located from Marigold Avenue heading east. Currently, there are no improvements planned along Cypress Parkway; however, there are preliminary plans to run pipes along Marigold Avenue. Those pipes are contingent on the consensus of other project team members and the Cypress Lake WTP going online. The installation of those pipes will not occur for 5-7 years at the earliest. Deb added southerly pipelines in the Southport area would be the most critical to the Cypress Lake WTP project since they are needed to get the water into their system. TWA may be able to provide the detailed locations of their proposed water mains.

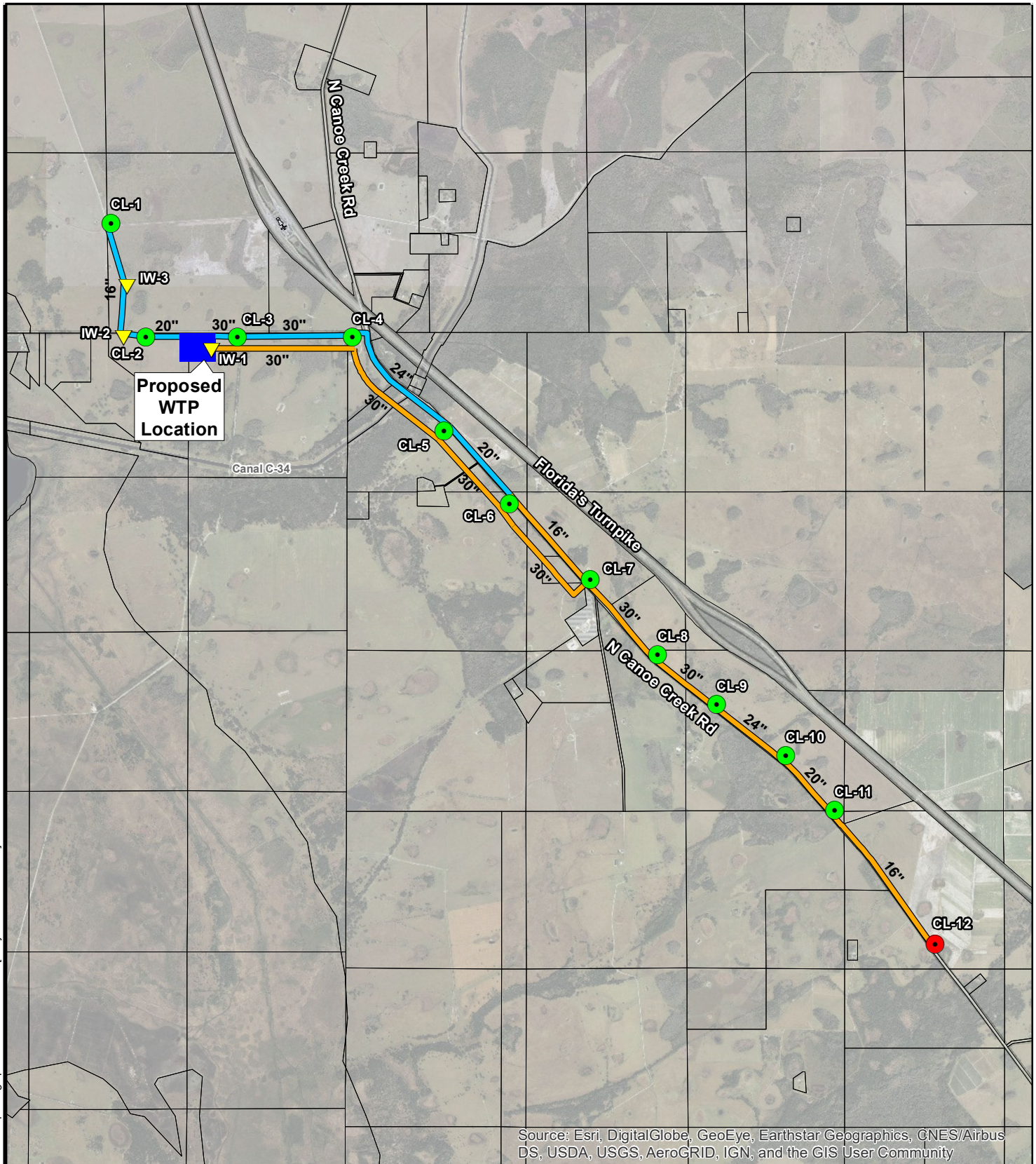
Ralph mentioned that Dan Angel from Volkert's utility consultant, WBQ, will be contacting TWA regarding a utility conflict assessment.

Will Sloup mentioned that during discussions with the USACE, it was reported that within the study area ground and surface water levels rise and fluctuate. He asked TWA if those fluctuations affect their current work and/or if they anticipate those conditions will influence their future plans. TWA responded that they are not aware of any ground or surface water level fluctuations; however, the plant is being built in a low area so it will have to be built up regardless. The mains can be in groundwater.

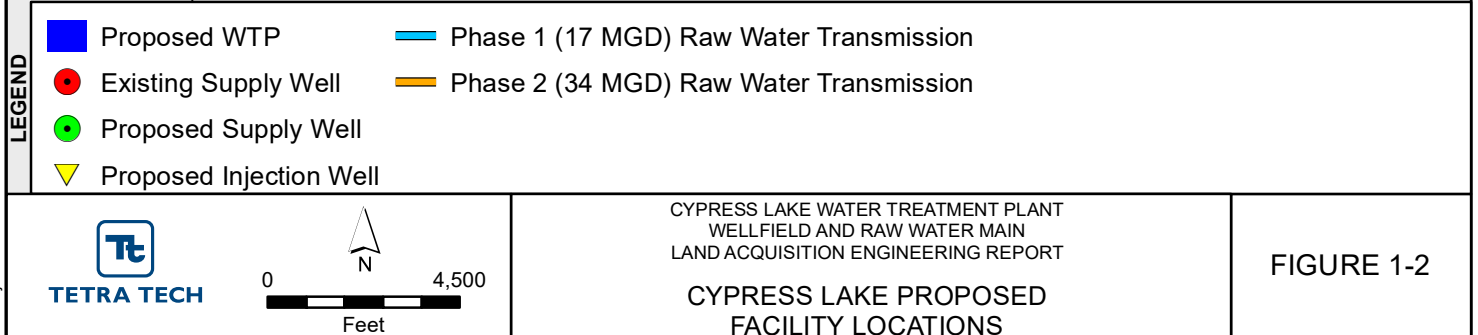
The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:45 a.m.



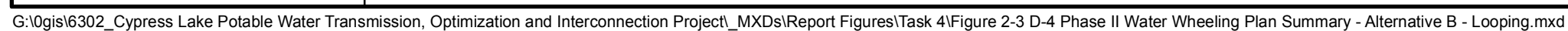
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Source: Water Cooperative of Central Florida









# CENTRAL FLORIDA EXPRESSWAY AUTHORITY

April 16, 2021

SUBJECT: Project Kickoff Notification  
Southport Connector Expressway  
Poinciana Parkway to Canoe Creek Road  
Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project No.: 599-233  
Osceola and Polk counties, Florida

Dear Sir/Madam:

The attached Updated Project Kickoff Notification document for the Southport Connector Expressway is hereby submitted to your office for review and comment. This is a revision of the Project Kickoff Notification document sent to your office on November 20, 2020. This revision is the result of important feedback collected early in the study from the Environmental and Project Advisory Groups and the CFX Environmental Stewardship Committee. These groups and CFX mutually agreed to expand the study area to allow for the evaluation of an additional alternative crossing Lake Tohopekaliga north of the original study area boundary. The enclosed document has been revised to include existing conditions and project details for the expanded study boundary. This is a non-federal action and the Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX) will determine what degree of environmental documentation will be necessary. This determination will be based upon in-house environmental evaluations and comments received through coordination with other agencies.

Please review this project's consistency, to the maximum extent feasible, with the requirements of Chapter 163 of the Florida Statutes. A consistency review in accordance with 15 CFR 930 is not required because this is a non-federal action.

Reviewers have 45 days from the date of this Project Kickoff Notification (Monday May 31, 2021) to provide their comments. If you need more review time, please send a written request for an extension of 15 days to our office within the initial 45-day comment period.

An improvement alternative which includes this project (as well as other alternatives which are no longer under study) was previously reviewed by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) through the Environmental Screening Tool as part of the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) Programming Screen. The previous FDOT project is listed as ETDM #13961 – Poinciana Parkway Southport Connector. The Programming Screen Summary Report was published in July 2016. The Environmental Technical Advisory Team (ETAT) agency members may review that report on the ETDM website. Non-ETAT agencies may review that report on the public access website located at: <http://etdmpub.flh-etat.org>.

Your comments and requests should be submitted to Will Hawthorne, P.E. via mail or e-mail at:

Will Hawthorne, P.E.  
Central Florida Expressway Authority  
4974 ORL Tower Road  
Orlando, FL 32807  
[Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com](mailto:Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com)

Sincerely,

*Glenn Pressimone*

Glenn Pressimone (Apr 14, 2021 14:40 EDT)

Glenn M. Pressimone, P.E.

Chief of Infrastructure

Central Florida Expressway Authority

Attachments

4974 ORL TOWER RD. ORLANDO, FL 32807 | PHONE: (407) 690-5000 | FAX: (407) 690-5011

[WWW.CFXway.com](http://WWW.CFXway.com)

**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

**DATE/TIME:** June 8, 2021, 1:00 p.m.

**Attendees:**

Will Hawthorne (CFX)	Henry Pinzon (FTE)	Ralph Bove (Volkert)
Jonathan Williamson (Dewberry)	Rax Jung (FTE)	Will Sloup (Volkert)
Kathy Putnam (Quest)	Andrew Velasquez (FTE)	Kelli Muddle (Volkert)
	Emam Emam (FTE)	

**Meeting with Florida's Turnpike Enterprise (FTE): Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study**

The following is a summary of the subject stakeholder coordination meeting.

Ralph Bove displayed a map of the revised Southport Connector Expressway alternative corridors including an alternative that crosses Lake Tohopekaliga (Toho), Alternative 2000, and the proposed interchanges at the Turnpike. Ralph explained that Alternative 2000 will be evaluated using the same 3-step comparative analysis process as the alternatives located south of Lake Toho (3000, 4000 and 7000). From a systems continuity standpoint, Alternative 2000 should terminate at the same logical termini as all the other alternatives; therefore, it is necessary for Alternative 2000 to utilize a segment of the Turnpike mainline for approximately 5 miles from the eastern terminus of the corridor to the systems interchange common to Alternatives 3000, 4000 and 7000. Ralph asked the FTE team their thoughts about the Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX) using that portion of the Turnpike for operational purposes similar to SR 408/SR 429 where the Turnpike is used as the connection.

Henry Pinzon stated they are trying to fix the problem between SR 408/SR 429 which is complex and becoming very expensive as the region grows. Henry added the better option will be to have an alignment that will address future needs. Having two major roadways at the intersection on the eastern end of Alternative 2000 doesn't help regional needs. It's not foreseeable that Alternative 2000 would have a frontage road and using the Turnpike for a short distance will likely not work. The FTE would have to address the capacity between two systems.

Ralph explained the project team will be using a weighted matrix like that used for the Lake/Orange Connector PD&E which will reflect the complexity of mixing the two systems together. The matrix includes a set of key criteria and one criterion will be negative impacts on the Turnpike. Each key criterion will be assigned a weighted value that will be used to perform a quantitative and qualitative assessment of each alternative. At the conclusion of the assessment, alternative corridors will be compared and ranked. The team agreed Alternative 2000 will likely not score well during the comparative analysis process.

Following the evaluation of satisfying purpose and need, impacts, cost and scoring, non-feasible alternatives will be eliminated, and the project team can move to a more detailed assessment and ultimately recommend a preferred alternative corridor.

Henry stated the area around the Turnpike is growing at a fast rate and Osceola County is trying to get another interchange in the area. Adding another interchange or two from developments on the east side of the Turnpike could create an unfavorable condition. Andrew Velasquez confirmed the County's request for a Friars Cove Road interchange, near the Three Lakes Toll Plaza and suggested the team consider this during the comparative analysis.

Ralph mentioned the interchange access request Methodology Letter of Understanding (MLOU) for this project is on hold until we get more information in this study area. Emam Emam stated the FTE generally waits for a MLOU until there's a preferred alignment. Ralph responded that in this case, the MLOU will only show the shaded area where alternative corridors are being evaluated. The goal is to advance the interchange access request so it can be completed within the remainder of the PD&E study.

Henry stated they are using this same process with their projects so by the time a preferred alignment is determined the team can move forward on the interchange access request. Canoe Creek is going through a lot of growth and there's not enough capacity in that area to move traffic north. Henry noted that approximately 500 feet north of this project's connection to the Turnpike the FTE is reviewing another connection to relieve traffic going to Canoe Creek. This connection would be in addition to an interchange the County is requesting.

Ralph asked if Volkert should estimate the cost of widening the segment of the Turnpike Alternative 2000 would need to utilize or estimate costs to construct a separate system. Andrew directed Ralph to estimate the cost to widen the Turnpike from its current four lanes to eight lanes. The FTE has 300 feet of ROW.

The team agreed Volkert will coordinate with the FTE when conducting a planning level cost estimate to give FTE the opportunity to point out potential issues. The FTE will share a cost per mile based on their recent concept for widening the Turnpike from Ft. Pierce to Yeehaw Junction from four to six lanes. The FTE requested they be informed of any other interchange that has a potential to be impacted.

Will Hawthorne agreed that all four corridors should have similar logical termini so the study team should move forward using the logical termini shared by Alternatives 3000, 4000 and 7000 displayed on the current alternatives map. He asked FTE if calculating traffic numbers will help advance the MLOU. Emam responded that traffic information does not need to be presented in the MLOU, only the traffic forecasting model that will be used.

Ralph clarified that the segment from the Canoe Creek Service Plaza up to the new Nolte Road interchange would be the area of influence for the MLOU. Andrew recommended adding language that due to the long distance, the area of influence will not include Yeehaw Junction at SR 60. Andrew suggested meeting to discuss the MLOU prior to the Alternatives Public Meeting.

Adjourn: The meeting ended at approximately 2:00 p.m.

**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

**DATE/TIME:** August 27, 2021, 11:30 a.m.

**Invitees/Attendees:**

Stephen Collins (SFWMD)	Jonathan Williamson (Dewberry)	Ralph Bove (Volkert)
Ray Palmer (SFWMD)	Nicole Gough (Dewberry)	Will Sloup (Volkert)
Will Hawthorne (CFX) <i>absent</i>	Kathy Putnam (Quest)	Kelli Muddle (Volkert)

**Meeting with SFWMD: Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study**

Ralph Bove presented a brief project overview of the CFX Southport Connector Expressway Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study.

During his presentation, Ralph reviewed relevant stakeholder meetings to-date including the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) in February 2021 and a meeting with David Snedeker, the Director of the Osceola Schools Environmental Study Center, in March 2021. Ralph displayed a map of the Southport Connector Expressway potential alternatives and stated the alignment will include a 330-foot right of way for the standard typical section. This typical section would allow for expansion of the planned expressway in the future. Ralph mentioned there are opportunities to narrow the typical section to 200-feet in environmentally sensitive areas and still allow for six lanes. The bridge over the Reedy Creek watershed would be 3,400-feet long and could serve as a wildlife crossing.

Ralph showed the commonality among the four potential alternatives east of Cypress Parkway. Heading east from Pleasant Hill Road, county-owned right of way allows for the crossing over Reedy Creek. Due to the geometric requirements of the alternatives near Southport Road, there is a potential for impacting the northern edge of the Lake Russell tract. One potential impact in this area would be to a recorded cultural resources site referred to as Brown's Landing Mound C (#OS00023). For this reason, the study team would like to perform the required archeological review on this cultural resources site as soon as possible.

On behalf of the Volkert study team, Southeastern Archaeological Research Inc. (SEARCH) submitted a Right of Entry permit to allow their field crew access on the SFWMD property. SEARCH received notification that the permit was denied. Ralph stated the purpose of this meeting is to receive SFWMD's perspective on the denial. Ralph explained it was the study team's desire to avoid the SFWMD property completely; however, as shown on the map, there is very limited land area for the placement of this roadway. Ralph stated that an appropriate mitigation plan will be developed for this project including mitigation for any impacts to the Lake Russell tract.

When questioned, Ralph stated concepts are in place to handle the driveway located in the area which includes a bridge structure.

Jonathan Williamson mentioned Volkert is working on avoidance and minimization alternatives, but it would still be beneficial to perform the archeological review. Ralph explained the avoidance alternatives would come out of the east side of Reedy Creek with more of a tangent which create constraints with the Osceola County landfill and residents to the north.

The team referred to a map and reviewed potential residential impacts for both the current refined alternatives and ones associated with the preliminary avoidance alternatives. It was observed that potential residential parcel impacts could occur for both sets of alternatives; however, Volkert is focused on making efforts to avoid homesteads and significant structures.

Ray Palmer asked for more details regarding impacts to wetlands located near the Osceola County landfill if the alignments stayed within existing right of way. Ralph explained there are stormwater ponds servicing the closed landfill and a remediation plan would be developed to mitigate for any impacts.

Stephen Collins stated as Florida approaches buildout there is more pressure to install infrastructure on green space resulting in SFWMD receiving Right of Entry requests throughout their service area. While the SFWMD doesn't necessarily oppose the Cultural Resources Assessment Survey (CRAS), they oppose the alignment that touches their land. The SFWMD considers the permit denial as saving the study team money on the survey now rather than saying yes to the CRAS and not supporting the alignment later. Ralph explained that regardless of the SFWMD's concerns, a CRAS will need to be done since it's a requirement of the PD&E study. A CRAS is developed to address federal permits that will be required to move forward with the project. The process is an FDOT methodology that CFX also uses to record potential impacts/effects on resources within the study area. Results are documented in the CRAS, submitted to the state department and coordinated with the native tribes. The CRAS is done irrespective of where the preferred alternative is located.

Ralph reviewed the project schedule which includes a Public Information Meeting in October followed by an Alternatives Workshop in early 2022 to present to the public a detailed comparison of the alternatives with the goal of identifying a preferred alternative. The study will conclude after a Public Hearing and presentation to the CFX Board which is currently scheduled for the fall of 2022. Given the study schedule, there are a limited number of months between public meetings to develop the project reports including the CRAS.

Mr. Palmer asked if the team has any reason to believe there are remains on the cultural resources site. Ralph responded that more detailed research of the historic records needs to be performed. SEARCH, the subconsultant responsible for the CRAS, may have more information.

Nicole Gough explained CFX operates like FDOT in the process of reporting on cultural resources; however, CFX operates in a more in-person fashion through the Environmental Advisory Group and Project Advisory Group. Nicole reported that there was representation from SFWMD, including Land



Stewardship, during the Advisory Group meeting on August 24, 2021, and did not comment or raise concerns about how the study is progressing.

Mr. Collins stated he will take the information and Right of Entry request back to management to find out what next steps should occur. He requested Volkert send a map of the avoidance and minimization alternatives so he can share them with management.

Ralph responded the team should be able to send the requested materials within two weeks and expressed his appreciation to SFWMD for their input and having further discussions with their management.

**Project:** Southport Connector Expressway  
Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project # 599-233  
Contract # 001632

**LOCATION:** Microsoft Teams Meeting

**DATE/TIME:** December 9, 2021, 11:30 a.m.

**Invitees/Attendees:**

Danielle Slaterpryce (Osceola County Public Works)	Ralph Bove (Volkert)
Eddy Robbins (Osceola County Solid Waste Department)	Will Sloup (Volkert)
Danny Sheaffer (Osceola County Solid Waste Department)	Kelli Muddle (Volkert)

**Meeting with Osceola County Public Works: Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study**

Following a brief project overview of the CFX Southport Connector Expressway Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study, Ralph Bove explained the challenges associated with the location of the Southport Connector Expressway preliminary alignments in the vicinity of the Osceola County landfill. Displaying a map of the current potential alignments, Ralph pointed out project related impacts to a portion of South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) land. He added that the SFWMD's current position is in opposition to any impacts to their land.

As a result of discussions with SFWMD and their stance on the alignment impacts, the Volkert team developed alternatives that avoid impacting SFWMD land. Ralph displayed the avoidance alternatives which show direct impacts to the water retention ponds serving the Osceola County landfill. The group then discussed the potential requirements to compensate for impacts to the water retention ponds.

Danielle Slaterpryce reported that the landfill was closed in 2004 and is permitted with the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) for long-term closure. To satisfy the permit, the landfill is monitored and remains in long-term closure for another 14 years for a total duration of 30 years. After 30 years in long-term closure, the landfill will be in full closure. Danielle added that the water retention ponds servicing the landfill are used to treat surface water runoff prior to draining into nearby wetlands and ultimately into Lake Russell. Eddy Robbins added there are approximately six monitoring wells on the landfill parcel that occur within the avoidance alternative alignment.

Danielle explained that impacting the landfill would require Public Works to re-permit the landfill with the DEP which takes 18-24 months for approval and would reset the long-term closure status and monitoring to the start of the required 30 year duration. She also mentioned their existing parcel has no excess property to relocate the water retention ponds. For a more detailed breakdown of compensatory requirements resulting from project related impacts to the water retention ponds, Danielle will confer with their landfill consultant, Jones Edmunds. Danielle will then setup a meeting with Jones Edmunds and the project team in mid to late January to discuss the impact assessment. Public Works staff will

need to open a task order to begin consulting with Jones Edmonds to request a detailed assessment of consequences and mitigation requirements for impacts resulting from the avoidance alternatives.

Danny Shaeffer mentioned there is an Indian burial ground near the northwest corner of the western water retention pond that is fenced with a locked gate that Public Works staff is not allowed access to.

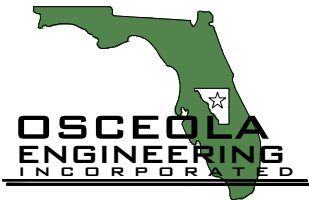
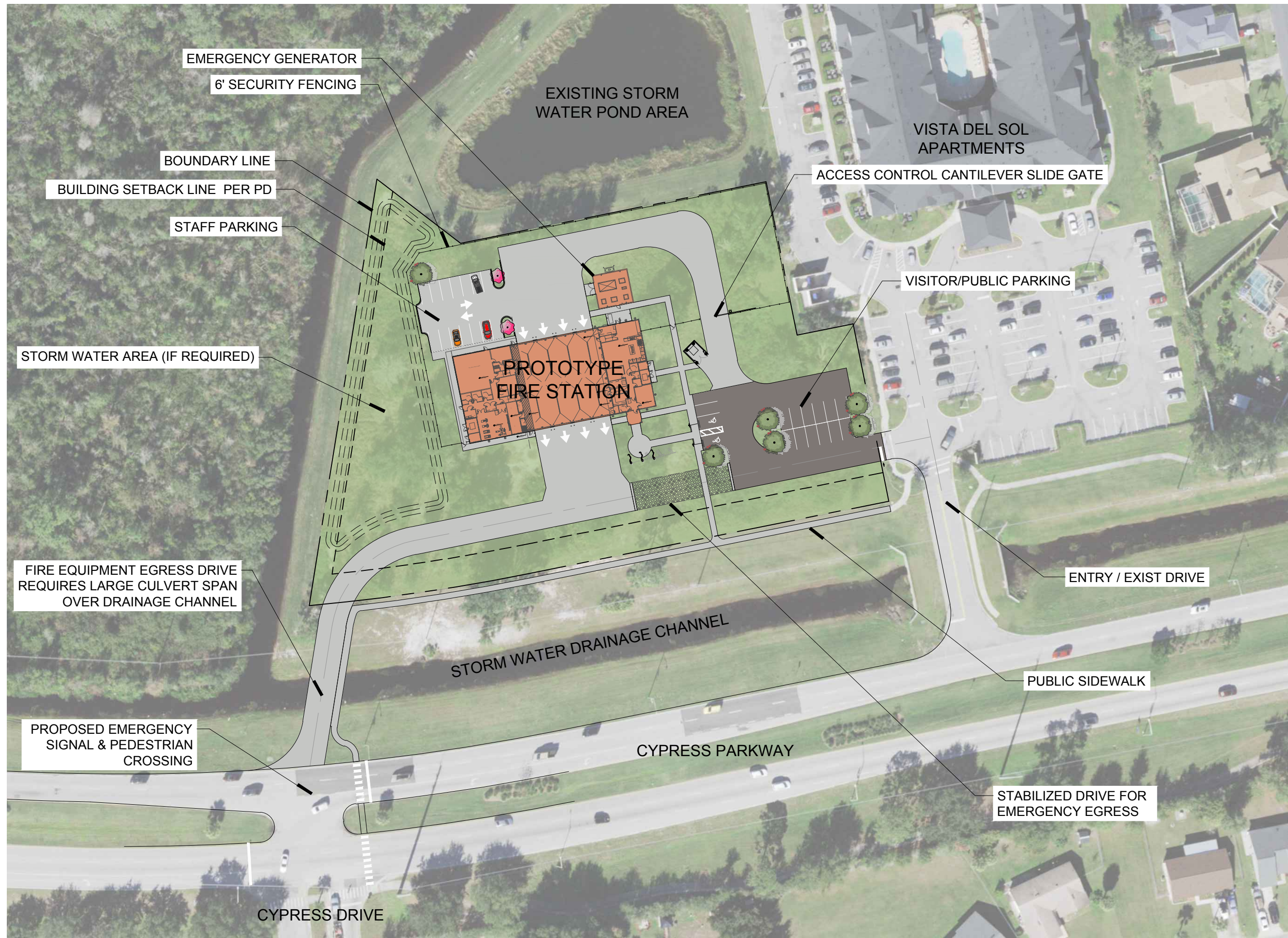
Danielle reported that Public Works is currently working on a proposed acquisition of a parcel located adjacent to the Cypress Parkway segment of the project for the construction of a new fire station. Via Carol Platt of the Public Works Department, Danielle will send the parcel location and conceptual site master plan to Volkert so the team can evaluate any potential project related impacts to the parcel.

\*Parcel information was received by Volkert following the meeting and is provided as an attachment.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:35 pm.

Attachment





civil engineers  
environmental engineers  
landscape architects  
& land planners

address:  
osceola engineering incorporated  
certificate of authorization  
number# 00026265  
1003 florida avenue  
city of saint cloud  
florida 34769  
telephone: (407) 891-0452  
facsimile: (407) 891-9173

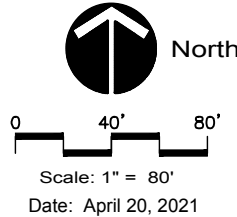
project:

**Fire Station  
#65**

drawing:

**Conceptual  
Site Master  
Plan**

location:  
751 Cypress Parkway  
Sections 25  
Township 26 S.,  
Ranges 28 E.  
Kissimmee, Florida



sheet:  
**FIGURE 1**

file: M:\2021\21-023 Poinciana Fire Station  
#65\Cadd\Concept\21-023 FS 65 Concept.dwg

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## APPENDIX D

### Project Kickoff Notification Stakeholder Comments

# CENTRAL FLORIDA EXPRESSWAY AUTHORITY

April 16, 2021

SUBJECT: Project Kickoff Notification  
Southport Connector Expressway  
Poinciana Parkway to Canoe Creek Road  
Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project No.: 599-233  
Osceola and Polk counties, Florida

Dear Sir/Madam:

The attached Updated Project Kickoff Notification document for the Southport Connector Expressway is hereby submitted to your office for review and comment. This is a revision of the Project Kickoff Notification document sent to your office on November 20, 2020. This revision is the result of important feedback collected early in the study from the Environmental and Project Advisory Groups and the CFX Environmental Stewardship Committee. These groups and CFX mutually agreed to expand the study area to allow for the evaluation of an additional alternative crossing Lake Tohopekaliga north of the original study area boundary. The enclosed document has been revised to include existing conditions and project details for the expanded study boundary. This is a non-federal action and the Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX) will determine what degree of environmental documentation will be necessary. This determination will be based upon in-house environmental evaluations and comments received through coordination with other agencies.

Please review this project's consistency, to the maximum extent feasible, with the requirements of Chapter 163 of the Florida Statutes. A consistency review in accordance with 15 CFR 930 is not required because this is a non-federal action.

Reviewers have 45 days from the date of this Project Kickoff Notification (Monday May 31, 2021) to provide their comments. If you need more review time, please send a written request for an extension of 15 days to our office within the initial 45-day comment period.

An improvement alternative which includes this project (as well as other alternatives which are no longer under study) was previously reviewed by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) through the Environmental Screening Tool as part of the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) Programming Screen. The previous FDOT project is listed as ETDM #13961 – Poinciana Parkway Southport Connector. The Programming Screen Summary Report was published in July 2016. The Environmental Technical Advisory Team (ETAT) agency members may review that report on the ETDM website. Non-ETAT agencies may review that report on the public access website located at: <http://etdmpub.flh-etat.org>.

Your comments and requests should be submitted to Will Hawthorne, P.E. via mail or e-mail at:  
Will Hawthorne, P.E.  
Central Florida Expressway Authority  
4974 ORL Tower Road  
Orlando, FL 32807  
[Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com](mailto:Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com)

Sincerely,

*Glenn Pressimone*

Glenn Pressimone (Apr 14, 2021 14:40 EDT)

Glenn M. Pressimone, P.E.  
Chief of Infrastructure  
Central Florida Expressway Authority

Attachments

4974 ORL TOWER RD. ORLANDO, FL 32807 | PHONE: (407) 690-5000 | FAX: (407) 690-5011  
[WWW.CFXway.com](http://WWW.CFXway.com)

Kelli Muddle  
Senior Planner

**VOLKERT**



2300 Maitland Center Parkway, Suite 122  
Maitland, FL 32751



**From:** Will Hawthorne <Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com>

**Sent:** Wednesday, April 21, 2021 9:45 AM

**To:** Kathy Putnam Contact <kathy.putnam@qcausa.com>; Bove, Ralph <ralph.bove@volkert.com>

**Cc:** Williamson, Jonathan <jwilliamson@Dewberry.com>

**Subject:** FW: Osceola County Comments - FW: CFX Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study, Project Kickoff Notification

Will Hawthorne, PE

Director of Engineering

Central Florida Expressway Authority

4974 ORL Tower Road • Orlando, FL 32807

407.690.5337 (p) • 321.332.3474 (c)

CFXway.com

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All emails to and from CFX are kept as a public record. Your email communications, including your email address may be disclosed to the public and media at any time.

---

**From:** Joshua DeVries <[Joshua.Devries@OSCEOLA.ORG](mailto:Joshua.Devries@OSCEOLA.ORG)>

**Sent:** Wednesday, April 21, 2021 9:36 AM

**To:** Will Hawthorne <[Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com](mailto:Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com)>

**Cc:** Tawny H Olore <[tawny.oloré@OSCEOLA.ORG](mailto:tawny.oloré@OSCEOLA.ORG)>; Robert Mindick <[Robert.Mindick@osceola.org](mailto:Robert.Mindick@osceola.org)>

**Subject:** Osceola County Comments - FW: CFX Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study, Project Kickoff Notification

Thank you for including Osceola County in the Southport Connector Expressway Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study process. Below are Osceola County's comments for consideration as part of the PD&E Study process.

**Transpiration and Transit:**

While we certainly understand the reason for expansion of the study area, Osceola County would prefer an alternative that is as Consistent as possible with our TRN2 Roadway Classification System UGB 2080 Comprehensive Plan Map and the South of Lake Toho Conceptual Master Plan (CMP) as possible. Both of which can be found at the below links."

TRN2 Roadway Classification System UGB 2080 Comprehensive Plan Map:

<https://www.osceola.org/core/fileparse.php/2731/urlt/TRN-2B-Roadway-Classification-System-UGB-2080.pdf>

South of Lake Toho CMP: [https://library.municode.com/fl/osceola\\_county/codes/comprehensive\\_plan?nodeId=OSCEOLA\\_CO\\_COMPREHENSIVE\\_PLAN\\_CH3SOLATOEL](https://library.municode.com/fl/osceola_county/codes/comprehensive_plan?nodeId=OSCEOLA_CO_COMPREHENSIVE_PLAN_CH3SOLATOEL)

**Parks & Public Lands:**

Osceola County will request that the road, on the SW and SE end of Lake Toho will require a wildlife crossing that provides linkage from SW to NE and NW corridors and conservation easements/lands.

If you have any questions or would like to discuss further, please feel free to reach out.

Thank You,

Joshua DeVries, AICP

Director of Planning / Sr. Planner

Department of Transportation and Transit

Osceola County Government

1 Courthouse Square, Suite 3100

Kissimmee, FL 34741

Phone: 407.742.7813

Fax: 407.742.0204

[Joshua.DeVries@Osceola.org](mailto:Joshua.DeVries@Osceola.org)

---

**From:** Muddle, Kelli <[kelli.muddle@volkert.com](mailto:kelli.muddle@volkert.com)>

**Sent:** Friday, April 16, 2021 11:23 AM

**Subject:** CFX Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study, Project Kickoff Notification

**[EXTERNAL EMAIL] - This email originates outside of Osceola County Government. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize and confirm the sender's email address. If you are unsure if an email is safe or not, please forward the email to [itsecurity@osceola.org](mailto:itsecurity@osceola.org)**

Good morning,

The attached Project Kickoff Notification is provided for your review. Please let us know if you have any questions or comments. We look forward to your continued participation in this project.

**From:** [Danielle Simon](#)  
**To:** [Muddle, Kelli](#); [Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com](mailto:Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com)  
**Cc:** [THPO Compliance](#)  
**Subject:** RE: CFX Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study, Project Kickoff Notification  
**Date:** Friday, May 7, 2021 9:53:24 AM

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TRIBAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

TRIBAL HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION OFFICE  
SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA  
30290 JOSIE BILLIE HIGHWAY  
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CLEWISTON, FL 33440

THPO PHONE: (863) 983-6549  
FAX: (863) 902-1117

THPO WEBSITE: [WWW.STOFTHPO.COM](http://WWW.STOFTHPO.COM)



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TREASURER

May 7, 2021

Mr. Will Hawthorne, PE  
Central Florida Expressway Authority  
4974 ORL Tower Road  
Orlando, FL 32807  
[Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com](mailto:Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com)

Subject: CFX Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study  
THPO Compliance Tracking Number: 0032772

In order to expedite the THPO review process:

1. Please correspond via email and provide documents as attachments,
2. Please send all emails to [THPOCompliance@semtribe.com](mailto:THPOCompliance@semtribe.com),
3. Please reference the THPO Compliance Tracking Number if one has been assigned.

Dear Mr. Hawthorne,

Thank you for contacting the Seminole Tribe of Florida – Tribal Historic Preservation Office (STOF-THPO) Compliance Section regarding the CFX Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study.

The proposed project does fall within the STOF Area of Interest. While it is clearly stated in the Project Kickoff Notification that the Southport Connector Expressway is a non-federal action, could you please clarify whether this project falls under the purview of Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act as amended? Regardless, we would greatly appreciate receiving a copy of the Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS), scheduled to be conducted during the PD&E Study, upon completion. Please continue to consult with us as the project develops and feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

Respectfully,  
Danielle A. Simon, MA, RPA  
Compliance Review Specialist  
STOF-THPO, Compliance Review Section  
30290 Josie Billie Hwy, PMB 1004  
Clewiston, FL 33440  
Email: [daniellesimon@semtribe.com](mailto:daniellesimon@semtribe.com)

**From:** Bradley Mueller <[bradleymueller@semtribe.com](mailto:bradleymueller@semtribe.com)>

**Sent:** Friday, April 16, 2021 11:32 AM

**To:** THPO Compliance <[THPOCompliance@semtribe.com](mailto:THPOCompliance@semtribe.com)>

**Subject:** FW: CFX Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study, Project Kickoff Notification

---

**From:** Muddle, Kelli <[kelli.muddle@volkert.com](mailto:kelli.muddle@volkert.com)>

**Sent:** Friday, April 16, 2021 11:23 AM

**Subject:** CFX Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study, Project Kickoff Notification

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Good morning,

The attached Project Kickoff Notification is provided for your review. Please let us know if you have any questions or comments. We look forward to your continued participation in this project.

# CENTRAL FLORIDA EXPRESSWAY AUTHORITY

June 18, 2021

SUBJECT: **THPO Compliance Tracking Number: 0032772**  
Southport Connector Expressway  
Poinciana Parkway to Canoe Creek Road  
Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project No.: 599-233  
Osceola and Polk Counties, Florida

Dear Ms. Simon, MA, RPA:

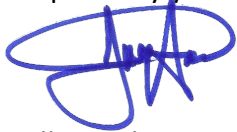
This letter is in response to your May 7, 2021 letter related to the Southport Connector Expressway Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study.

We note that your communication indicates the Southport Connector Expressway project does fall within the Seminole Tribe of Florida (STOF) Area of Interest. As the Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX) follows the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) PD&E guidelines a Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS) will be completed. The CRAS will be provided to the STOF for review and comment.

While the project is a non-federal action it will require applications for state and federal permits. As such, the CRAS will be conducted to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and Chapter 267, Florida Statutes.

We thank you for the interest that you have for this important transportation improvement. If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully yours,



Will Hawthorne, PE  
Director of Engineering  
Central Florida Expressway Authority  
4974 ORL Tower Road  
Orlando, FL 32807  
[Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com](mailto:Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com)



**From:** [Danielle Simon](#)  
**To:** [Muddle, Kelli](#)  
**Cc:** [Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com](#); [THPO Compliance](#)  
**Subject:** RE: CFX Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study, Project Kickoff Notification  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 23, 2021 1:04:54 PM

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SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA  
TRIBAL HISTORIC PRESERVATION OFFICE

TRIBAL HISTORIC  
PRESERVATION OFFICE  
  
SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA  
  
30290 JOSIE BILLIE HIGHWAY  
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FAX: (863) 902-1117  
  
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PETER A. HAHN  
TREASURER

Good Morning,

Thank you very much for your response. We are in receipt of the correspondence and document relating to the CFX Southport Connector Expressway Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study (THPO #0032772). We appreciate your clarification of project details and look forward to receiving additional materials for Section 106 review as they become available. Please continue to consult with our office and feel free to contact us with any questions or concerns.

Respectfully,  
Danielle A. Simon, MA, RPA  
Compliance Review Specialist  
Tribal Historic Preservation Office, Compliance Review Section  
30290 Josie Billie Highway, PMB 1004  
Clewiston, Florida 33440  
Email: [daniellesimon@semtribe.com](mailto:daniellesimon@semtribe.com)

---

**From:** Muddle, Kelli <[kelli.muddle@volkert.com](mailto:kelli.muddle@volkert.com)>  
**Sent:** Friday, June 18, 2021 4:19 PM  
**To:** THPO Compliance <[THPOCompliance@semtribe.com](mailto:THPOCompliance@semtribe.com)>  
**Cc:** [Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com](#); Danielle Simon <[daniellesimon@semtribe.com](mailto:daniellesimon@semtribe.com)>  
**Subject:** RE: CFX Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study, Project Kickoff Notification

Good afternoon,

Thank you for your email and interest in the CFX Southport Connector Expressway Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study. Attached is a response to your inquiry submitted on May 7, 2021: THPO Compliance Tracking Number: 0032772.

If you have any further questions and/or comments, please do not hesitate to contact me at my contact information below or the study team at [ProjectStudies@CFXway.com](mailto:ProjectStudies@CFXway.com).

All the best,  
Kelli Muddle

Senior Planner



2300 Maitland Center Parkway, Suite 122

Maitland, FL 32751

E-mail: [kelli.muddle@volkert.com](mailto:kelli.muddle@volkert.com)

Office: (407) 965-4211 ext. 3187

Direct: (321) 274-4756

Cell: (407) 902-9515

[www.volkert.com](http://www.volkert.com)

**From:** [Section106](#)  
**To:** [Muddle, Kelli](#)  
**Subject:** Re: CFX Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study, Project Kickoff Notification  
**Date:** Monday, May 17, 2021 4:40:20 PM

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Good afternoon Ms. Muddle,

Is this an early notification or public notice as well as a federal undertaking? It states this is a non-federal action but trying figure out what action this statement pertains to. The Muscogee Nation would greatly appreciate the clarification.

Thank you

**Robin Soweka, Jr.**

Cultural Resource Specialist, Historic and Cultural Preservation Department  
The Muscogee Nation  
P.O. Box 580 | Okmulgee, OK 74447  
T 918.732.7726 | F 918.758.0649  
[rosoweka@MuscogeeNation.com](mailto:rosoweka@MuscogeeNation.com)  
[MuscogeeNation.com](http://MuscogeeNation.com)



---

**From:** Muddle, Kelli <[kelli.muddle@volkert.com](mailto:kelli.muddle@volkert.com)>  
**Sent:** Friday, April 16, 2021 10:22 AM  
**Subject:** CFX Southport Connector Expressway PD&E Study, Project Kickoff Notification

Good morning,

The attached Project Kickoff Notification is provided for your review. Please let us know if you have any questions or comments. We look forward to your continued participation in this project.

# CENTRAL FLORIDA EXPRESSWAY AUTHORITY

June 18, 2021

SUBJECT: Southport Connector Expressway  
Poinciana Parkway to Canoe Creek Road  
Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project No.: 599-233  
Osceola and Polk Counties, Florida

Dear Mr. Soweka, Jr.:

This letter is in response to your May 17, 2021 letter related to the Southport Connector Expressway Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study.

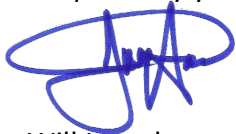
The intent of the Project Kickoff Notification package is to provide government agencies and representatives of each Native American Tribe with a reference document containing project context and potential project effects. Recipients of the Project Kickoff Notification package are welcome to provide feedback after reviewing the reference document.

As the Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX) follows the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) PD&E guidelines a Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS) will be completed. At your request, the CRAS can be provided to The Muscogee Nation for review and comment.

While the project is a non-federal action it will require applications for state and federal permits. As such, the CRAS will be conducted to comply with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) and Chapter 267, Florida Statutes.

We thank you for the interest that you have for this important transportation improvement. If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully yours,



Will Hawthorne, PE  
Director of Engineering  
Central Florida Expressway Authority  
4974 ORL Tower Road  
Orlando, FL 32807  
[Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com](mailto:Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com)



May 25, 2021

Will Hawthorne, P.E.  
Central Florida Expressway Authority  
4974 ORL Tower Road  
Orlando, FL 32807  
Via [Email-Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com](mailto:Email-Will.Hawthorne@cfxway.com)

Re: Southport Connector

Dear Mr. Hawthorne,

The purpose of this letter is to provide the comments of the Nature Conservancy to the project kick-off letter soliciting comments on the consistency of the project with chapter 163, Florida Statutes. As you know, the Nature Conservancy owns and operates The Disney Wilderness Preserve that is located immediately adjacent to the project area. Previously, we have communicated our concerns on the impact the proposed Southport Connector could have on our ability to manage our property with prescribed fire, and possible noise and viewshed effects that are dependent on the proximity of the route to our preserve. In addition, we are concerned about possible impacts the road could have the water quality of Reedy Creek.

This letter will focus on the consistency of the project with chapter 163, and the regional growth implications of the proposed Southport Connector. First, while the Southport Connector is identified in the South Lake Toho Element of the Osceola County Comprehensive Plan, the plan also identifies smart growth principles that require consideration of environmentally sensitive lands and the protection of wildlife corridors:

### **GOAL 3-1: - ACHIEVING SMART GROWTH**

*The goal of the South Lake Toho Conceptual Master Plan is to balance social, environmental, and economic sustainability to form enduring places for people to live and thrive. This goal can be achieved by using long-range, large-scale planning to accommodate sustainable economic development and contribute to a sound tax base, alleviate the pressure for urban sprawl, and reduce vehicle miles traveled by linking road and transit networks.*

*The plan also will provide a variety of housing options; protect environmentally sensitive lands, wildlife corridors and upland habitat, and create a strong sense of place through street layout, open space arrangements, streetscape appearance, and linkage of neighborhoods to commercial services and jobs.*

In the conservation element, the Osceola County Policy 13-1.92 identifies as a specific goal, the identification of lands that will preserve or create wildlife corridors.

Osceola County Policy 13-1.92

*Osceola County shall identify, conserve, manage, restore, and protect environmentally significant areas in a manner consistent with applicable federal, state, and local laws. A specific goal of this program is to identify lands that will maintain, enhance, preserve, and*

*create wildlife corridors connecting large conservation land as measured by the acres of contiguous conservation lands sufficiently large to support animal species with large range requirements.*

The construction of a beltway around Osceola County, particularly in an area that is immediately north of an area of connected or proximate conservation lands including the Nature Conservancy's Disney Wilderness Preserve, Reedy Creek Mitigation Bank, Southport Mitigation Bank, Northern Everglades National Wildlife Refuge, will act as a physical barrier impeding the movement of wildlife from the Northern Everglades region to the North. The Project Kick-off document fails to identify the impact of the proposed Southport Connector on the protection of wildlife corridors in the region. This issue should be addressed in the context of the cumulative impact of the Poinciana Parkway, Southport Connector and Northeast Connector on the movement of wildlife.

Next, the Transportation Element of Osceola County Comprehensive Plan changes that were made in 2020 elevate the importance of transit as an alternative for commuting to work.

#### **Policy 6-1.1.2: - Implementation of Sustainability Plan**

*Consistent with the Future Land Use Element, the transportation system shall be planned and implemented to increase connectivity, provide high-frequency transit and create a pedestrian environment to reduce reliance on automobile travel, as well as to recognize the build-out of the County to a new sustainable vision that encourages a balanced 1:1 jobs to housing ratio by automobile.*

#### **OBJECTIVE 6-3.1: - Integrated Transportation Network**

*The County shall promote alternative modes of transportation to provide a safe, comfortable, attractive, efficient, and energy-efficient multimodal transportation network and shall encourage the use and expansion of alternative modes of transportation for commuting, as well as for recreational purposes.*

#### **Policy 6-3.2.2: - Future Transit Corridors.**

*The County shall ensure that future roadways and expansion of existing major roadways be designed as future transit corridors to accommodate automobiles, bicycles, pedestrians, and transit, specifically by incorporating public transit facilities and sidewalks into planned and existing roadway projects.*

While the Kick-Off document indicates that the PD&E will address "mass transit accommodation" on the Southport facility, the enhanced use of transit should be considered as an alternative for addressing commuter trips from Osceola residents to jobs in Orlando/Orange County, particularly given the economic demographics of the county. To be consistent with the Osceola County Comprehensive Plan, design for any Southport Connector should incorporate public transit facilities and accommodate pedestrians and bicycle users.

Finally, the construction of the Southport Connector is likely to accelerate development pressure in the South and East Lake Toho regions, particularly given the number of unbuilt development of regional impact an area of Osceola County that is currently in a predominantly agricultural land use. Evaluation of the alternatives in a PD & E study should include a thorough review of the potential cumulative impacts of the siting of the road on growth patterns in the region and the long-



term impact of that growth on habitat fragmentation and water quality and quantity in Polk/Osceola County.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide comments and I look forward to participating in future meetings of the Environmental Advisory Group and the Project Advisory Group.

Sincerely yours,

Janet Bowman  
Janet\_Bowman@tnc.org  
Senior Policy Advisor  
The Nature Conservancy  
(850) 251-9406



# CENTRAL FLORIDA EXPRESSWAY AUTHORITY

July 28, 2021

SUBJECT: Southport Connector Expressway  
Poinciana Parkway to Canoe Creek Road  
Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study  
CFX Project No.: 599-233  
Osceola and Polk Counties, Florida

Dear Ms. Bowman:

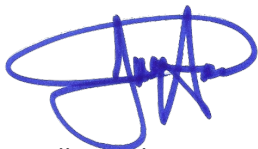
This letter is in response to your May 25, 2021, letter related to the Southport Connector Expressway Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study.

The intent of the Project Kickoff Notification package is to provide government agencies, Native American Tribes, and key project stakeholders with a reference document containing project context and potential project effects. Recipients of the Project Kickoff Notification package are welcome to provide feedback after reviewing the reference document.

CFX appreciates the input provided by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in your letter of May 25, 2021, as well your input provided during the one-on-one stakeholder meetings held with our study teams during the previous Concept, Feasibility, and Mobility Study and the current PD&E Study. As our study progresses, we will continue our coordination with TNC to address your concerns regarding your ability to manage your property with prescribed fire and minimizing or avoiding potential environmental impacts such as noise, viewshed, and water quality. In addition, we will continue to coordinate with Osceola County regarding the specific elements of the Osceola County Comprehensive Plan as noted in your letter, such as transit and multimodal options, which have been identified in the Osceola County Comprehensive Plan as separate enhancements beyond the Southport Connector Expressway. We also recognize the importance of identifying and maintaining corridors for wildlife and are continuing to coordinate with agencies and stakeholders on how to best address these wildlife corridors not only through the Southport Connector Expressway project but our other projects in the area as well.

Thank you for the interest you have in this important transportation improvement. We look forward to your continued participation in future meetings of our Environmental Advisory Group. If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me.

Respectfully yours,



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