

PAG Meeting Summary

State Road 515 Northeast Connector Expressway Phase 2 PD&E Study

State Road 515 Northeast Connector Expressway Phase 2 Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study Project Advisory Group (PAG) Meeting No. 3

Date/time: March 12, 2026, at 9:30 a.m.

Location: Virtual meeting (Teams)

Attendees: 13 PAG members (Attendees list at end of summary)

Notifications

Invitation letters were emailed to 50 members of the PAG on February 19, 2026, and a reminder was emailed on March 9, 2026.

Welcome

Nick Lulli, the Public Involvement Consultant to the Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX), called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. Next, he provided virtual housekeeping information as well as Title VI information before turning the meeting over to Sunserea Gates, Consultant Project Manager with VHB, for the presentation.

State Road 515 Northeast Connector Expressway Phase 2 PD&E Study Presentation

Sunserea Gates presented on the following information:

- **Project Background**

Ms. Gates explained that the SR 515 Northeast Connector Expressway is included in the CFX 2045 Master Plan and is identified as part of the Southern Beltway. The proposed connector would begin at Florida's Turnpike and continue northeast to serve as a regional beltway in eastern Osceola County. This expressway would provide system linkage to the planned Southport Connector Expressway and SR 534 expressway extension.

- **Project Development Process**

Ms. Gates gave an overview of the project development process, noting that the project is currently in the PD&E phase. The goal of the PD&E Study is to provide a Preferred Alternative for CFX Governing Board approval.

PAG Meeting Summary

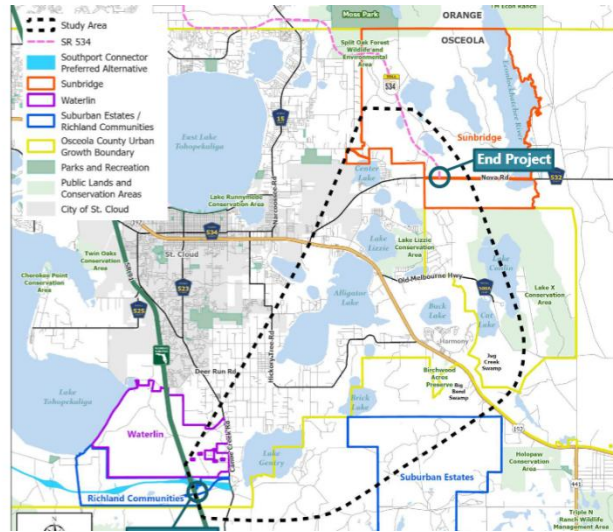
State Road 515 Northeast Connector Expressway Phase 2 PD&E Study

- **Study Area and Related Projects**

This study is considering an approximately 15 to 20-mile expressway from Florida's Turnpike to SR 534 at Nova Road, with interchanges at Florida's Turnpike, Canoe Creek Road, US 192, and Nova Road. Ms. Gates showed a detailed map of the study area, followed by another slide listing other area projects.

Study Area

- 15- to 20-mile expressway
- **Southwest terminus:** proposed Southport Connector Expressway/ Florida's Turnpike
- **Northern terminus:** SR 534 at Nova Road
- **Full interchange:** US 192 and Canoe Creek Road



- **Purpose and Need**

Osceola County conducted the Osceola Transportation Southeast Area Transportation Study (SEATS), which concluded that the Northeast Connector Expressway would be needed by the year 2040. Osceola County is the fastest growing county in Central Florida, with a projected population increase of 56% by 2050. Ms. Gates also mentioned that there are 37 planned developments located within the study area.

- **Advisory and Stakeholder Group Input**

Ms. Gates reiterated that the purpose of advisory groups is to provide input to the study team about environmental, social and community concerns. Key input from advisory group members includes the need to preserve natural resources, concerns for floodplains and wetland connectivity, and a desire to avoid growth outside Osceola County's Urban Growth Boundary.

- **Study Timeline**

Ms. Gates presented the study timeline, noting that the study team has completed the alignment alternatives analysis and is sharing the results with the advisory group members.

- **Advisory Group and Stakeholder Feedback**

This next slide listed feedback previously received from the ESC, EAG, PAG, and CEG groups, which included the desire to minimize impacts to environmentally sensitive lands, preserve natural resources, avoid impacts to existing and planned residential developments, and minimize social impacts.

- **Alternative Corridor Evaluation Recommendations**

Corridor B was eliminated, and Corridor F, Corridor D, and Corridor G have been retained for further analysis.



- **Sociocultural Constraints**

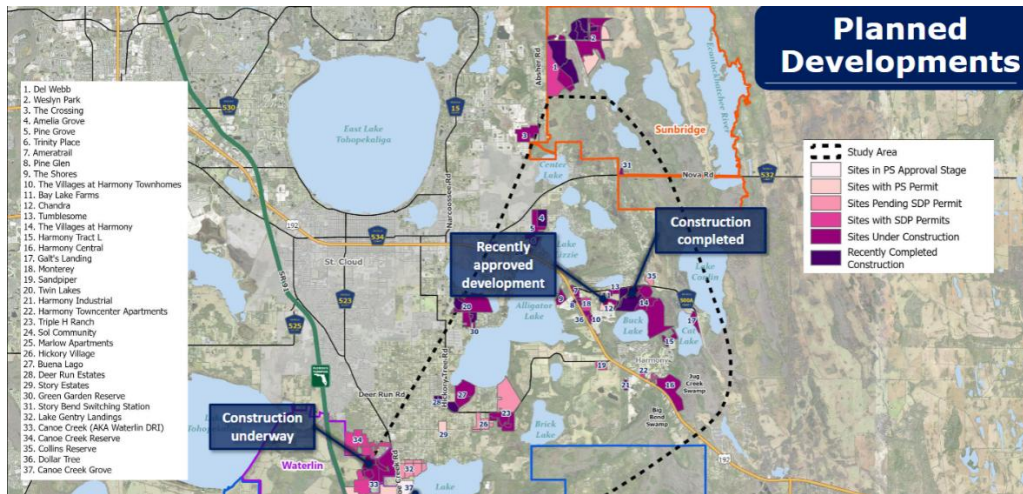
Next, Ms. Gates showed a map of the study area marked with color-coded social constraints, including existing residential land use, recent Osceola County acquisitions, and new residential land use parcels.

- **Planned Development**

Ms. Gates showed a map of planned developments in various stages: approval stage, permit, pending SDP Permit, sites with SDP and PS permits, sites under construction, and sites with recently completed construction.

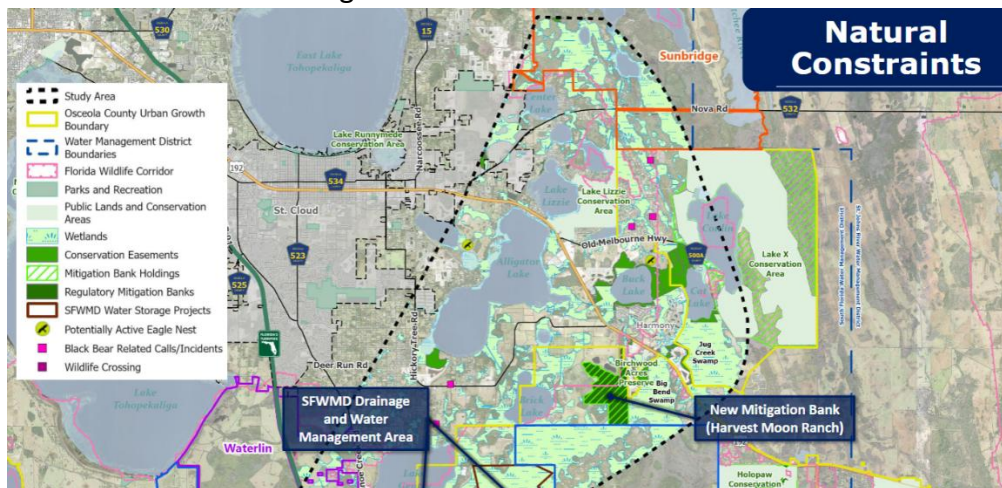
PAG Meeting Summary

State Road 515 Northeast Connector Expressway Phase 2 PD&E Study



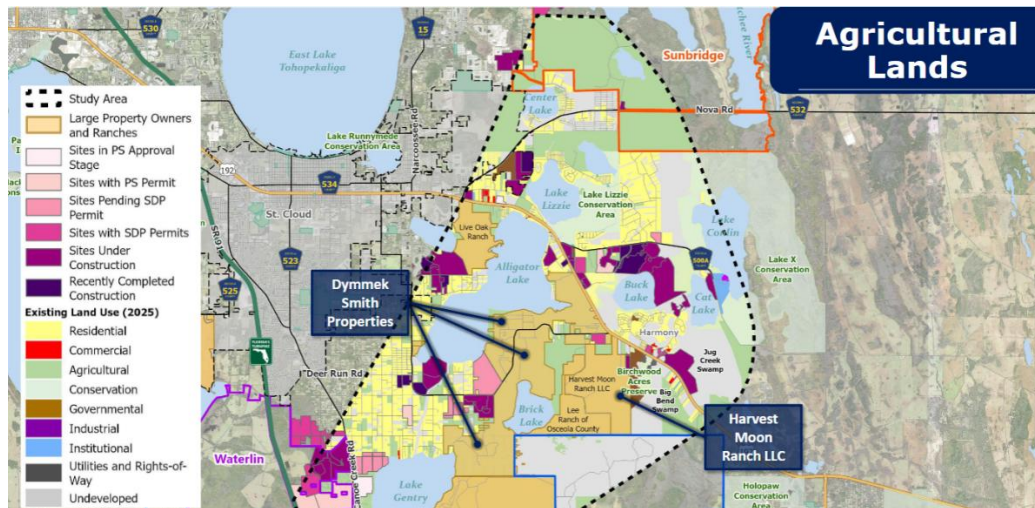
- Natural Constraints**

The next map showed various natural constraints, including the recently established Harvest Moon Ranch Mitigation Bank.



- Agricultural Lands**

The next map showed various agricultural land uses, both existing and planned. Ms. Gates noted that Harvest Moon Ranch LLC and Dymmek Smith Properties were recently added to the map.



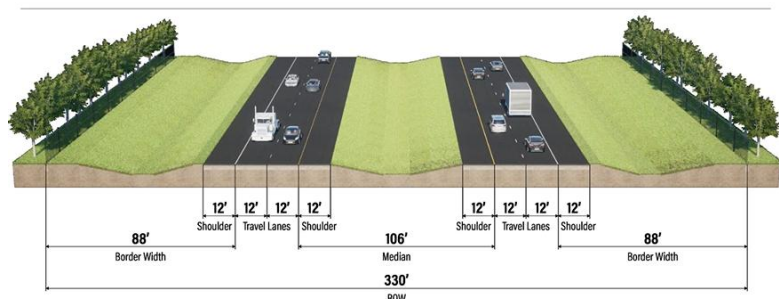
- **Florida Wildlife Corridor**

The next slide showed the Florida Wildlife Corridor, with indicators showing public lands and conservation areas, parks and recreation, the Florida Wildlife Corridor, conservation easements, mitigation bank holdings and regulatory mitigation banks. A second map included the Osceola County Urban Growth Boundary along with the planned Waterlin and Richland Communities residential developments.

- **Mainline Typical Section**

The typical section is 330 feet in total right of way, with a 106-foot median and two travel lanes in each direction. This will allow for multimodal travel and leaves room for future expansion.

Mainline Typical Section



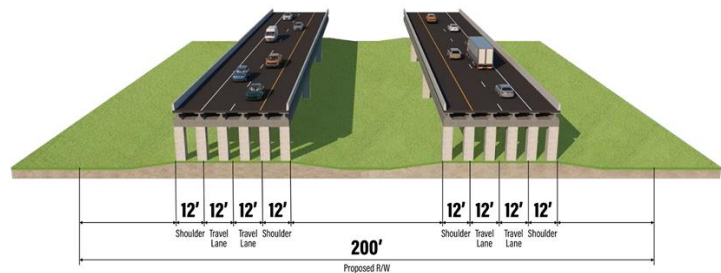
PAG Meeting Summary

State Road 515 Northeast Connector Expressway Phase 2 PD&E Study

- **Bridge Typical Section**

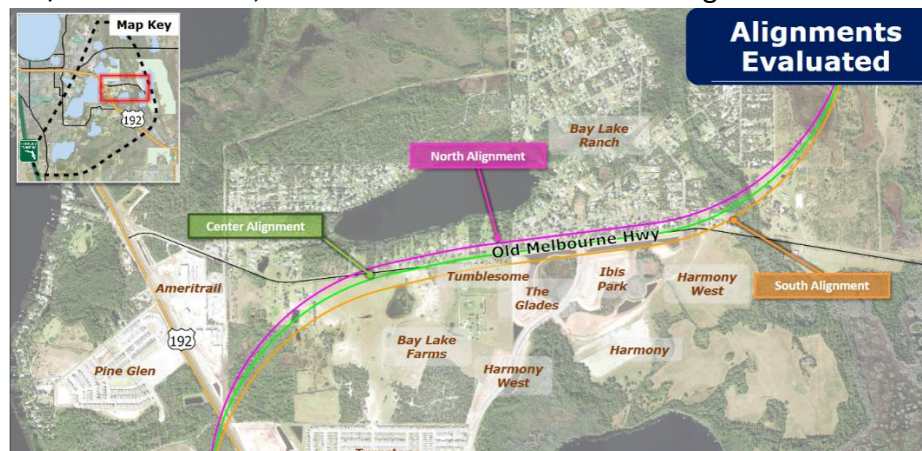
The bridge typical section will be further refined once a preferred alignment is selected.

Bridge Typical Section



- **Old Melbourne Highway Constraints**

Next, Ms. Gates showed a series of slides related to the Old Melbourne Highway area and how each alignment impacted the area. Through analysis, it was found that the North Alignment had the least impacts to residential parcels and homes, stormwater/common areas, and the least total cost for this segment.



- **Alignment Alternative Evaluation Matrix**

The next series of slides showed different evaluation criteria for each of the five Alignments, including:

- Design
- Physical impacts – such as utility conflicts
- Natural environment
- Social impacts

PAG Meeting Summary

State Road 515 Northeast Connector Expressway Phase 2 PD&E Study

Based on the comparative study, the study team has recommended that Alignment F and Alignment D be eliminated from consideration, with Alignment G recommended for further refinement.



- **Regional Conservation Opportunities**

Ms. Gates concluded the presentation by presenting opportunities for wildlife conservation, including utilizing bridge structures in sensitive areas, and mitigation opportunities.

Following the presentation, Public Involvement Coordinator Nick Lulli opened the floor for comments and questions from the Project Advisory Group, noting that the team was happy to revisit any presentation slides if needed.

Erin Sterk, Toll Studies and Forecasting Manager with Florida's Turnpike Enterprise, complimented the project team on delivering a comprehensive and well-organized presentation. She specifically thanked the team for recognizing the potential Waterlin Boulevard interchange, which is being evaluated as part of Florida's Turnpike Enterprise's adjacent project.

Ms. Sterk requested additional information regarding the presentation's reference to proposed land-use buffers along the recommended corridor. In response, Sunserea Gates explained that during Environmental Stewardship Committee (ESC) meetings held in August 2025, committee members requested that CFX evaluate opportunities to establish conservation land buffers adjacent to the future roadway. The request was modeled after the Wekiva Parkway, where conservation land acquisitions helped protect surrounding natural areas and discourage future development near the corridor. Because portions of the recommended alignment lie outside

PAG Meeting Summary

State Road 515 Northeast Connector Expressway Phase 2 PD&E Study

Osceola County's Urban Growth Boundary, CFX committed to coordinating with Osceola County to investigate similar conservation opportunities as the PD&E Study continues.

Jennifer Stults of Osceola County praised the presentation and echoed appreciation for CFX's coordination efforts regarding both the Waterlin interchange evaluation and the County's Sunbridge Parkway project. She acknowledged the significant amount of transportation planning currently underway throughout Osceola County and emphasized the importance of the strong partnership between the agencies. Ms. Stults expressed appreciation for the ongoing collaboration and stated that the County looks forward to continuing to work with CFX as the project advances.

At Mr. Lulli's request, Sunserea Gates provided an overview of the study's evolution since its initiation in April 2024. She explained that the project team began by reviewing the previous Concept, Feasibility and Mobility (CF&M) Study and initially evaluated seven potential corridors. Through successive technical evaluations, those alternatives were narrowed first to four corridors and then to three remaining corridors—D, F, and G.

The team subsequently evaluated multiple alignment options within each corridor, including several alternatives along Old Melbourne Highway. Based on engineering, environmental, and community considerations, Recommended Alignment G emerged as the leading alternative presented during this meeting.

Ms. Gates explained that input received from the advisory groups, Environmental Stewardship Committee, and the public during the upcoming Alternatives Public Workshop would be incorporated into continued engineering and environmental analyses. Additional natural resource evaluations and standard PD&E investigations will ultimately support refinement of the recommended alignment before identifying a Preferred Alternative and advancing to a formal public hearing. She also noted that another Project Advisory Group meeting is anticipated in the fall to review refinements and gather additional stakeholder input.

Nick Lulli introduced additional attendees for the record. Aslesh Lagishetty of the City of St. Cloud Public Works Department introduced himself as a transportation engineer but indicated he had no comments on the project. Katherine Shafer (Toho Water Authority), Lara Bouck (MetroPlan Orlando), Greg Moore (Florida's Turnpike Enterprise), and Henry Pinzon (Florida's Turnpike Enterprise) each stated they had no comments while complimenting the presentation and study effort.

Raulie Raulerson of the Florida Farm Bureau raised several questions related to agricultural impacts and statewide transportation planning.

PAG Meeting Summary

State Road 515 Northeast Connector Expressway Phase 2 PD&E Study

His first question asked whether the proposed project fell within the former M-CORES planning area. Ms. Gates confirmed that it does not but explained that many of the planning principles developed through the M-CORES process—including minimizing impacts to natural resources and communities, incorporating wildlife crossings, pursuing conservation opportunities, and mitigating environmental impacts—are consistent with the planning principles CFX routinely applies during PD&E studies.

Mr. Raulerson also inquired about impacts to prime farmland along the recommended alignment. Ms. Gates explained that documenting impacts to prime and unique farmland is a required component of the PD&E Study and that CFX will coordinate with the Natural Resources Conservation Service during that process. She acknowledged that every alignment considered traverses agricultural land due to the rural nature of the study area south of Lake Gentry and near Brick Lake.

Mr. Raulerson encouraged the project team to minimize fragmentation of agricultural operations by following existing property boundaries wherever practical. Where agricultural properties must be divided, he recommended maintaining farm access through underpasses or similar accommodations.

Ms. Gates responded that CFX shares those objectives and has already begun coordinating with major landowners, including Doc Partin Ranch and Dymmek Smith. She stated that continued coordination with landowners and agricultural stakeholders will occur throughout the PD&E process to preserve access and minimize impacts wherever feasible.

The remaining advisory group members either expressed appreciation for the presentation or confirmed they had no additional comments. Steve Denzler (Toho Water Authority), Tammy Reque (City of St. Cloud), James Taylor (Kimley-Horn/Waterlin), and Don Whyte (Deseret Cattle & Citrus) each complimented the quality and thoroughness of the study. Mr. Whyte specifically remarked that the effort appeared well thought out and applauded the work completed to date.

Sunserea Gates concluded the meeting by reviewing the anticipated project schedule. She announced that Alternatives Public Workshops are tentatively scheduled for April 22 and 23, 2026, consisting of one virtual meeting and one in-person meeting. Invitations were expected to be mailed within the coming weeks.

She explained that the workshops will present the alternatives evaluation completed to date and provide opportunities for public input before the project team proceeds with additional refinement. Another Project Advisory Group meeting is anticipated during the fall to present updated alternatives information.

PAG Meeting Summary

State Road 515 Northeast Connector Expressway Phase 2 PD&E Study

Looking ahead, the project team expects to hold a formal Public Hearing in early 2027 to present the Preferred Alternative. Following public input and CFX Board approval, the PD&E Study is anticipated to conclude in spring 2027.

Ms. Gates encouraged stakeholders to remain engaged by visiting the project website, reviewing posted presentation materials, and subscribing for project updates. She also reminded attendees that questions and comments may be submitted at any time to Public Involvement Coordinator Nick Lulli or CFX Director of Transportation Planning and Policy Will Hawthorne.

Nick Lulli offered attendees one final opportunity to ask questions. With no additional comments offered, he thanked the Project Advisory Group members for their continued participation and partnership throughout the PD&E Study, expressing appreciation for their feedback and ongoing collaboration before formally adjourning the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 10:41 a.m.

PAG Meeting Summary

State Road 515 Northeast Connector Expressway Phase 2 PD&E Study

Attendees

PAG Members

Jennifer A Stults, Osceola County

James Taylor, Kimley-Horn (Waterlin)

Don Whyte, Deseret Cattle & Citrus

Lara Bouck, MetroPlan Orlando

David Hulme, ARES Corp

Raulie Raulerson, Florida Farm Bureau

Katherine Shafer, CPH (Toho)

Greg Moore, Florida's Turnpike Enterprise

Henry Pinzon, Florida's Turnpike Enterprise

Steven Denzler, CPH (Toho)

Erin Sterk, Florida's Turnpike Enterprise

Aslesh Lagishetty, City of St. Cloud

Tammy Reque, City of St. Cloud

Project Team

Sunserea Gates, VHB

Nikki Melendez, VHB

Kevin Freeman, VHB

Jimmy Mulandi, CDM Smith

Will Hawthorne, CFX

Chuck Smith, VHB

Nicole Gough, Dewberry

Amy Sirmans, VHB

Kelli Muddle, Volkert

Brian Hutchings, CFX

Jonathan Williamson, Dewberry

Tiany Sousa, Quest

Nick Lulli, Quest

Mary Brooks, Quest