DRAFT

East Central Florida Corridor Task Force Final Report

Recommendations for Connecting Established and Emerging Economic Centers in Brevard, Orange, and Osceola Counties

Submitted to
Governor Rick Scott

Pursuant to Executive Order 13-319

December 1, 2014
Transmittal Letter

To be drafted
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In 2013, Governor Scott by Executive Order created the East Central Florida Corridor Task Force and charged the Task Force to develop consensus recommendations for future transportation corridor investments in portions of Brevard, Orange, and Osceola counties. The Task Force included 13 members representing the public, private, and civic sectors. This report documents the Task Force’s findings and recommendations, including a proposed action plan for strategic transportation corridor investments.

The total population of the three counties is projected to nearly double from 2.0 to 3.8 million residents over the next 50 years. Several trends are linking once separate cities and towns into a single economic region, including the continued economic strength of the agricultural sector, sustained growth in tourism activity, the growth in high-tech industries, and the expansion of global trade and logistics.

The planned development of a series of mixed-use centers on the eastern edge of the existing concentration of urban development in Orange and Osceola counties will create additional demand for travel. Most notable is the development under Florida’s sector planning law of a long-term master plan for 133,000 acres of the Deseret Ranches in eastern Osceola County. The draft North Ranch master plan envisions a network of 16 centers with projected population of 355,000 by 2060 and 490,000 by 2080.

These trends point to significant increases in demand for travel between the three counties during the next 50 years. The Florida Department of Transportation projects that east-west travel between Orange, Osceola, and Brevard counties may double or triple between 2014 and 2060, with even higher growth anticipated in north-south travel between eastern Orange and Osceola counties.

Limited options for both east-west and north-south travel raise concerns about the ability to accommodate future growth in demand and achieve the economic opportunities facing this region. The existing transportation system includes four east-west highway connections between Orange, Osceola, and Brevard counties; three north-south highway connections between eastern Orange and Osceola counties; and no high-capacity transit connections in these areas. There is a need for strategic transportation investments in this study area, but also a need to protect regionally significant natural resources and support high-quality development that is consistent with regional and local plans and visions.

The Task Force developed 21 guiding principles to help balance considerations of conservation, countryside, and centers when making decisions about future corridors. These principles also are intended to point toward development of a new generation of transportation corridors that incorporate multiple modes, multiple uses, innovative design techniques, and advanced technologies.

The Task Force recommended nine corridor alternatives for further study. Five alternatives primarily involve multimodal improvements to existing corridors (Figure ES.1). The Task Force also recommended four potential study areas for new or significantly upgraded corridors – two east-west corridors (Figure ES.2) and two north-south corridors (Figure ES.3).

The Task Force recommended a proposed action (see box on page 7) plan to move forward with strategic corridor investments. Implementation will begin with outreach to local governments and regional planning, water, and transportation agencies to encourage these partners to consider possible amendments to their plans. State and federal agencies will be encouraged to move forward with recommended plans and investments. The Florida Transportation Commission and the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity are identified as potential leads for tracking implementation.
Figure ES.1. Recommended Improvements to Existing Transportation Corridors
Figure ES.2. Recommend Study Areas for New East-West Transportation Corridors
Figure ES.3. Recommended Study Areas for New North-South Transportation Corridors
PROPOSED ACTION PLAN

1. Identify future investment needs to maximize the use of and add capacity to existing east-west corridors between Orange, Osceola, and Brevard counties. These corridors include the State Road 528 corridor from Orlando to Port Canaveral (Alternative A, Figure ES.1); the State Road 50 corridor from downtown Orlando and the University of Central Florida to Cape Canaveral (Alternative B, Figure ES.1); the State Road 520 corridor from eastern Orange County to Cocoa (Alternative C, Figure ES.1); and the U.S. 192 corridor from Kissimmee to Melbourne (Alternative E, Figure ES.1).

2. Identify future investment needs to maximize the use of, add capacity to, and improve the connectivity between existing and planned north-south corridors in eastern Orange and Osceola counties. These should include multimodal improvements to the Narcoossee Road corridor and the State Road 417 corridor (Alternative G, Figure ES.1); and improved connectivity among the existing Orange County expressway system, the planned Osceola County expressway system, and Florida’s Turnpike.

3. Conduct one or more Evaluation studies of potential new east-west corridors between Orange, Osceola, and Brevard counties. The proposed study or studies should consider a multimodal corridor along the Orange/Osceola county line to provide connectivity between the Orlando International Airport/Lake Nona area, the Northeast District of Osceola County, the North Ranch Master Plan, and the State Road 520 corridor (Alternative D, Figure ES.2); and a multimodal corridor from the Orlando International Airport/Lake Nona area through the proposed North Ranch Master Plan to central/southern Brevard County, including the potential need for an additional crossing of the St. Johns River (Alternative F, Figure ES.2).

4. Conduct one or more Evaluation studies of potential new north-south corridors in eastern Orange and Osceola counties. The proposed study or studies should consider continuation of the project development process for the Northeast Connector Expressway and extension of this expressway from its planned terminus at the Osceola Parkway Extension to the State Road 528 corridor, including potential multimodal improvements (Alternative H, Figure ES.3); and a new multimodal corridor serving planned population centers on the North Ranch and connecting to existing east-west corridors including U.S. 192, Nova Road, State Road 520, State Road 528, and State Road 50/408 (Alternative I, Figure ES.3).

5. Develop a regional passenger rail and transit system plan to identify and set priorities for long-term passenger rail and transit investments in the three study area counties and the broader Central Florida region.

6. Amend existing local and regional plans, as appropriate, to include the corridors and the study areas defined in actions 1 through 5, as well as to ensure consistency with the recommended guiding principles. These plans would include local government comprehensive plans; metropolitan planning organization long-range transportation plans; expressway authority master plans; the Strategic Regional Policy Plan; and the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

7. Develop an agreement among local governments, metropolitan planning organizations, transportation authorities, water management districts, and other entities to strengthen consistency among future transportation, land use, and water supply plans.

8. Coordinate with appropriate local governments and landowners to develop planning tools and legal instruments to reserve and protect rights of way to support implementation of the transportation corridors recommended in the Evaluation studies.

9. Develop a framework for potential partnership and co-location agreements with railroads, utilities, or other infrastructure providers to support implementation of the transportation corridors recommended in the Evaluation studies.
INTRODUCTION

Background

The Central Florida region has a large and growing population, a diverse and expanding economy, and a unique mix of natural, historic, and cultural resources. Decisions about statewide and regional transportation corridors will be critical to Central Florida’s future, connecting separate cities into an integrated region and connecting this region to external markets. Well-planned transportation corridors can improve mobility and connectivity for people and freight, support economic development, and facilitate emergency evacuation and response. These corridors should be planned in coordination with long-term land use decisions to ensure the protection of environmental resources, the preservation of productive agricultural lands, and the thoughtful planning of centers for future economic development and urban growth.

During the past few years, Florida’s state agencies have focused on the need for better coordination of long-term decisions about transportation, land use, economic development, and environmental stewardship:

- In 2010, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) with input from a 29-member steering committee and more than 10,000 Floridians developed the 2060 Florida Transportation Plan. To help implement this plan, FDOT initiated a Future Corridors planning process to plan for the future of the major transportation corridors critical to the state’s economic competitiveness and quality of life over the next 50 years. The Future Corridors planning process involves three steps: a Concept Study for a broad area connecting two regions; a more detailed Evaluation Study for a corridor or segment within the study area; and more specific decisions about particular alignment(s) within a corridor through the Project Development and Environment process.

As part of this process, FDOT completed the Tampa Bay-Central Florida Concept Study in 2013. This study examined long-term mobility and connectivity needs in the 15 counties from Tampa Bay to the Atlantic Coast. The study recommended that FDOT work with partners to transform and modernize the critical Interstate 4 corridor; enhance passenger and freight rail service across the region; and assess the feasibility of developing one or more parallel multimodal corridors to provide alternatives to Interstate 4. The study also recommended that FDOT conduct a pilot Evaluation Study to address the regional connectivity gap between the Orlando International Airport and southern Brevard County and to refine the future corridor planning process for future use.

- In 2012, the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (DEO) worked with state, regional, and local partners to establish the Florida Strategic Plan for Economic Development. This plan emphasized supporting strong regional industry clusters, strengthening and connecting Florida’s economic regions, and positioning Florida as a global hub for trade and investment. It also recommended coordinating plans and investments to address Florida’s long-term economic development, environmental stewardship, community development, and infrastructure needs on a statewide and regional basis.
Several trends have highlighted the importance of future transportation corridor planning in Central Florida, particularly in Orange, Osceola, and Brevard counties:

- In 2007, myregion.org completed a 50-year regional visioning process with input from nearly 20,000 residents of Brevard, Lake, Orange, Osceola, Polk, Seminole, and Volusia counties. This process culminated in the adoption of the *How Shall We Grow?* vision and regional growth compact by representatives of 7 counties and 86 cities. The vision focused on four key themes: conservation, countryside, centers, and corridors. The vision specifically identified the need for improving connectivity between Orlando and southern Brevard County.

- Regional and local economic development initiatives have focused on strengthening the region’s position in industries such as tourism, trade and logistics, simulation, aerospace and aviation, and life sciences. A key issue is the transition of the Brevard County economy following the end of the Space Shuttle program.

- The region’s transportation hubs have initiated major expansion plans. The Canaveral Port Authority is continuing to expand its cruise business, aggressively growing its container business, deepening and widening its channel, and improving intermodal connections. The Orlando International Airport has initiated a $1.1 billion capital improvement program to expand the capacity of the existing North Terminal Complex and begin development of a South Terminal Complex, including an intermodal terminal for intercity and commuter rail service. Melbourne International Airport is the center of a major cluster of aviation- and technology-related businesses, including 1,800 new jobs announced by Northrop Grumman Corporation’s “Project Magellan” in 2014. Space Florida and the Kennedy Space Center both developed new master plans and investment programs to help transition Cape Canaveral to serve changing civil and military markets and to expand commercial markets.

- In 2012, Florida East Coast Industries, Inc., announced the formation of All Aboard Florida, LLC, for the purpose of establishing privately operated passenger rail service from Miami to Orlando on a route that would traverse Brevard County and terminate at the Orlando International Airport. Planning and environmental studies for the service are underway.

- Also in 2012, the Osceola County Expressway Authority (OCX) adopted a 2040 Master Plan that identifies potential new transportation corridors in Osceola County, with potential future connections to Orange and Brevard counties.

- In 2014, the Governor and Legislature created the Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX) to develop and operate a regional expressway system serving Lake, Orange, Osceola, and Seminole counties. CFX assumes the assets and responsibilities of the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority (OOCEA). OCX will become part of CFX sometime after 2018 when financial milestones outlined in the law have been achieved on current projects. CFX is developing a 2040 master plan, building on the existing OOCEA and OCX master plans and prior OOCEA feasibility studies for potential system expansions.

- Local governments have conducted a variety of long-term, large-scale planning processes that anticipate significant growth of existing and new residential and employment centers. Most significantly, Osceola County has worked with Farmland Reserve, Inc., a non-profit corporation commonly referred to as Deseret Ranches, to prepare a long-term master plan for about 19,000 acres in the “Northeast District” of the Ranch in 2012 under Florida’s sector planning law; and to initiate a long-term master planning process for an additional 133,000 acres of the “North Ranch” in 2013.
Task Force Study Area and Charge

In recognition of the importance of transportation corridor planning to the area’s future, Governor Rick Scott created the East Central Florida Corridor Task Force through Executive Order 13-319 on November 1, 2013. Appendix A provides a copy of the Executive Order. The Task Force’s purpose is to evaluate and develop consensus recommendations on future transportation corridors serving established and emerging economic activity centers in portions of Brevard, Orange, and Osceola counties (study area shown in Figure 1).

The study area runs from Orlando and Kissimmee to Cape Canaveral and Palm Bay. The area has unique environment that includes the Indian River Lagoon; the headwaters of the Everglades; the St. Johns and Econlockhatchee Rivers; productive agricultural lands; and high-quality beaches, rivers, parks, forests, preserves, and wildlife habitat. A diverse mix of cities, towns, and rural areas house a population of more than 2 million residents, which is projected to nearly double by 2060. The area is a global leader in tourism, agriculture, aerospace, and life sciences, and increasingly is tied to a broader 15-county “super region” from Tampa Bay to the Atlantic Coast.

Figure 1. East Central Florida Task Force Study Area

Source: Florida Department of Transportation
The Governor charged the Task Force to accomplish the following tasks:

- Recommend guiding principles for coordination of future transportation planning with environmental stewardship, land use, sustainable agriculture, economic development, and community development plans and investments;
- Review transportation plans of the Florida Department of Transportation, MetroPlan Orlando, the Space Coast Transportation Planning Organization, the Orlando-Orange County Expressway Authority, the Osceola County Expressway Authority, and other public and private entities and determine the extent to which these plans are consistent with each other and how they might affect future corridor planning between East Central Florida and the Space Coast;
- Review the land use and development plans of local and regional governments and entities and determine the extent to which these plans are consistent with transportation plans and how they might affect future corridor planning between East Central Florida and the Space Coast;
- Consider and recommend transportation facilities, including the general purpose, need, and location for any new or enhanced transportation corridors as well as a range of alternative routes and modes for major transportation corridor investments;
- Solicit and consider input from local, regional, state, and federal agencies; stakeholders, including property owners, agricultural interests, business interests, and environmental interests; residents; and the public; and
- Recommend a proposed action plan for moving forward with new or enhanced transportation corridors in the study area.

The Task Force included 13 members representing the public, private, and civic sectors (see list of members on page i of this report).

**Undertaking the Governor’s Charge**

**Work Plan**

The Task Force met eight times in locations in the three counties: April 29, June 5, June 27, August 22, September 15, October 9-10, October 31 (via web-conference), and November 13. The meeting agendas provided for background briefings on key issues, discussion and consensus-building among Task Force members, and public comment. The Task Force’s work plan followed the charge laid out in the Executive Order, including the following tasks:

- Review of existing statewide, regional, and local plans related to the study area, including the State Comprehensive Plan; the Florida Strategic Plan for Economic Development; the 2060 Florida Transportation Plan, How Shall We Grow?, the East Central Florida 2060 Plan (the Strategic Regional Policy Plan) and the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, both prepared by the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council; the comprehensive plans adopted by Brevard, Orange, and Osceola counties; the long-range transportation plans prepared by MetroPlan Orlando and the Space Coast Transportation Planning Organization; the OOCEA and OCX master plans; seaport, airport, and spaceport master plans; regional emergency response and evacuation plans; and other relevant documents;
- Review of background papers and briefings prepared by staff from DEO and FDOT covering trends and conditions in the study area;
• Briefings from technical experts and agency staff on topics related to the Task Force charge;
• Input from stakeholders and the public; and
• Development of recommendations related to each element of the Task Force’s charge.

Coordination with Sector Planning Activities

A key element of the Task Force’s work plan was to enhance the coordination of transportation and land use decisions through linking implementation of existing statutes related to transportation corridor planning, comprehensive planning, and sector planning (see box).

The Task Force requested presentations from each county government on current comprehensive plans and major land use planning initiatives; requested presentations from major landowners in the study area; and requested that staff develop maps and technical analyses of existing and planned developments and transportation facilities in the study area. In particular, the Task Force coordinated with the separate, concurrent sector planning process underway on the North Ranch in Osceola County. Representatives of Osceola County and the Deseret Ranch provided periodic updates to the Task Force and exchanged data and technical information with Task Force staff.

**LINKING CORRIDOR PLANNING AND LAND USE PLANNING STATUTES**

- § 337.273, Florida Statutes, encourages “immediate and decisive action to plan, designate, and develop transportation corridors” within Florida, including “timely preservation, management, or acquisition of property necessary to accommodate existing and planned transportation facilities” within a corridor. This statute also provides that “the designation and management of transportation corridors can best be achieved through the inclusion of transportation corridors in the local government comprehensive plans...to ensure comprehensive planning for future development and growth [and] improved coordination between land use and transportation planning.”

- § 163.3245, Florida Statutes, provides that local governments or combinations of local governments can adopt into their comprehensive plans a long-range “sector plan” for a substantial geographic area of at least 15,000 acres to promote and encourage long-term planning for conservation, development, and agriculture on a landscape scale; to facilitate protection of regionally significant resources; and to avoid duplication of effort in terms of the level of data and analysis required for a development of regional impact, while ensuring the adequate mitigation of impacts to applicable regional resources and facilities. Sector planning occurs in two steps: first, adoption of a long-term master plan for the entire planning area as part of the comprehensive plan; and, second, adoption by local development order of two or more detailed specific area plans that implement the long-term master plan.
Agency Coordination

Representatives of the study area’s county and municipal governments, metropolitan/transportation planning organizations, expressway authorities, regional planning council, water management districts, and other government entities were invited to observe Task Force meetings. Staff from many of these agencies also were requested to brief the Task Force on specific topics.

DEO and FDOT staff and consultants coordinated on a regular basis with staff from affected local, regional, and state agencies to keep them informed about the Task Force’s process and to ensure that the Task Force had access to the accurate and up-to-date technical information. These included individual briefings to each agency, as well as group discussions with multiple agencies in March 2014 (prior to the Task Force’s first meeting), August 2014 (following the initial round of community workshops), and October 2014 (following the completion of the Task Force’s draft report).

Stakeholder and Public Involvement

The Task Force solicited and considered input from stakeholders, including property owners, agricultural interests, business interests, environmental interests, residents, and the public. Activities included:

- Public comment opportunities at all Task Force meetings.
- An interactive website that provided public access to all Task Force materials and allowed stakeholders and the public to submit comments at any time.
- A statewide webinar on June 24 to provide an overview of the work of the Task Force to date and an opportunity to receive questions from the public. A total of 88 people participated in the webinar.
- Two community workshops on July 8 in Kissimmee to obtain input from stakeholders and the public on transportation corridor needs and related issues in the study area. A total of 57 participants discussed trends, conditions, issues, and opportunities in the study area and identified priority issues for consideration by the Task Force.
- Three additional community workshops October 6, 7, and 8 in Melbourne, Kissimmee, and Orlando, respectively. A total of 56 people provided feedback on draft guiding principles under development by the Task Force, as well as input to the Task Force on potential corridor needs and alternatives.
- A formal public comment period on the Task Force’s draft report between its October and November meetings.

Access to the Task Force’s Proceedings

Appendix C provides a summary of all background documents reviewed by the Task Force, discussion papers prepared for the Task Force, and technical presentations at Task Force meetings. Copies of all presentations and discussion papers, the community workshop summaries, and meeting minutes are posted on the Task Force’s web site at http://www.ecfcorridortaskforce.org/.
OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY AREA

The study area includes portions of Brevard, Orange, and Osceola counties, generally running from Interstate 4 on the west to the Atlantic Ocean on the east (area shaded in red in Figure 2). The study area’s northern boundary runs to the north of State Road 50, and its southern boundary skirts to the south of existing urbanized areas in Osceola County and follows U.S. 192 to Palm Bay. The study area comprises 2,153 square miles.

The study area generally is viewed as part of a broader “Central Florida” region typically defined as including Brevard, Lake, Orange, Osceola, Polk, Seminole, and Volusia counties (shaded in brown in Figure 2).

This region, in turn, is part of a broader 15-county “superregion” that spans the central portion of the Florida peninsula from Tampa Bay to the Atlantic Ocean (shaded in beige or brown in Figure 2).

The total population of all seven Central Florida counties is expected to increase by about 3 million residents by 2060. Most forecasts suggest that the “southeastern quadrant” of the region from central Orlando to the Orlando International Airport/Lake Nona and onward into northeastern Osceola and southern Brevard counties will be one of the fastest-growing areas over the next few decades. Significant growth also is anticipated in the other quadrants.

The combined population of Brevard, Orange, and Osceola counties is expected to increase from 2.0 million residents in 2012 to 3.8 million residents in 2060, based on the medium-range forecast by the University of Florida’s Bureau of Business and Economic Research through 2040 with extrapolation by FDOT through 2060.¹

¹ This forecast is based on demographic trends and does not consider the availability of land for development. Some local governments indicate that BEBR projections typically have understated population growth in their jurisdictions, and have suggested that the total increase could be greater.
Figure 3. Historic and Projected Population of Brevard, Orange, and Osceola Counties

Source: University of Florida Bureau of Business and Economic Research “medium” projection through 2040; Florida Department of Transportation extrapolation to 2060.

The 15-county superregion encompasses 7.5 million people and an estimated $300 billion in economic activity per year, making it the 10th largest regional economy in the United States. Interstate 4 functions as the “spine” across this superregion. Providing better connectivity from emerging centers to Interstate 4, as well as providing alternatives to Interstate 4 for long-distance trips, is a critical strategy for future economic competitiveness.

“How Shall We Grow?” is a shared regional vision for the seven-county Central Florida region. The vision describes what the region’s residents said they desire for the future – a region “that consumes less land, preserves more precious environmental resources and natural countryside, creates more distinctive places to live in both rural and urban areas, and provides more choices for how people travel.” The Central Florida Regional Growth Compact is a voluntary agreement signed by representatives of the region’s 7 counties and 86 cities committing to continue regional cooperation to implement the How Shall We Grow? principles. These principles have been incorporated by more than two thirds of the region’s local governments into comprehensive plans, policies, and other development practices. The Task Force used the themes of How Shall We Grow? — the “4Cs” — as an organizing framework. This section documents issues and opportunities related to transportation corridor planning, and is organized by these themes: conservation, countryside, centers, and corridors.

“How Shall We Grow?”
Themes: The Four Cs

- **Conservation** – Enjoying Central Florida’s most precious resources – lands, waters, air, and wildlife.
- **Countryside** – Maintaining Central Florida’s heritage of agriculture and small villages.
- **Centers** – Hamlets, villages, towns, and cities – a variety of places to live, work, and play.
- **Corridors** – Connecting our region with more choices for how people and freight move.
Conservation

Conservation refers to the study area’s surface and groundwater resources, natural lands, wildlife habitat, and other natural resources.

Although there is widespread recognition of the study area’s environmental importance, there is no single map or list that depicts all of the regionally significant natural resources. A starting point is the strong consensus on the “Seven Jewels of Central Florida,” a regional landscape vision of “must save” places defined in 2005 through a stakeholder initiative known as Naturally Central Florida. In the study area, these places include the St. Johns and Econlockhatchee Mosaic; northern portions of the Indian River Lagoon; and northern portions of the Greater Kissimmee Prairie (Figure 4).

The study area includes additional resources that are shown as priorities in national, state, and regional landscape-scale conservation initiatives, because they:

- provide habitat for a variety of federal- and state-listed species;
- provide important linkages for connecting conservation lands and habitats in south Florida to the rest of the state; and
- are important for managing, restoring, and protecting water resources, including the Everglades, the Upper St. Johns River Basin, the Econlockhatchee River, and the Indian River Lagoon.

Many of these resources have been preserved via acquisition or easement through federal, state, local, or nonprofit conservation initiatives. Other resources have been identified in development orders for mitigation purposes, such as the Disney Wilderness Preserve, Split Oak Forest Mitigation Park, Viera Wilderness Park, and portions of the Northeast District Sector Plan. About 16 percent of the total land area currently is managed for conservation purposes by federal, state, regional, or local agencies (Figure 5).

Still other resources have been targeted for acquisition or identified as potential priorities for future management through a variety of initiatives, including Florida Forever, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s Florida Ecological Greenways Network, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission’s Cooperative Blueprint, the Florida Forest Service’s Rural and Family Lands Protection Program, the U.S. Forest Service’s Florida National Scenic Trail, and the Florida Wildlife Corridor.
Figure 5. Existing Managed Lands and Florida Forever Projects in the Study Area

Source: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission; Florida Natural Areas Inventory
A significant portion of the study area’s land is under private ownership and the resources on these lands may not be fully documented in public sector environmental data sources. The study area’s largest private landowner, Farmland Reserve, Inc., doing business as Deseret Ranches of Florida, Inc., currently is working with Osceola County to develop a long-term master plan for 133,000 acres of Deseret’s North Ranch under Florida’s sector planning law. This process has yielded a comprehensive environmental framework for the North Ranch, which builds upon many of these prior federal, statewide, regional, and local efforts (Figure 6). This framework will be required to undergo state and regional review before going into effect.

The Task Force believes that identification and protection of regionally significant natural resources must occur prior to or parallel with development of new or enhanced transportation corridors. A key consideration is maintaining the natural systems connectivity that is an essential ingredient in keeping the region’s fragile ecosystems healthy and functioning. This requires a large-scale or “landscape” approach to planning for connectivity and the identification of specific linkages to fill connectivity gaps.

An additional concern is the potential for corridor investments, when needed through or near environmentally sensitive areas, to direct future growth into areas not planned for urban development. The Task Force recognizes that multimodal transportation corridors, if located properly, and planned and designed in conjunction with well-defined, mixed-used urban centers, can protect regionally significant natural resources by supporting development in more suitable places.
The Task Force also recognizes the importance of linking transportation corridor decisions to water supply planning. This study area is at the headwaters of multiple watersheds and faces growing demand for water consumption from residential, industrial, and agricultural users. The Central Florida Water Initiative, a collaboration of three water management districts, has concluded that traditional groundwater sources can meet some, but not all, projected and permitted needs in its five-county study area (Lake, Orange, Osceola, Polk, and Seminole) through 2035.\(^2\) Focusing growth in mixed-use centers along transportation corridors could result in a more efficient use of water resources than prior development practices. There also may be opportunities to coordinate future transportation corridor investments with implementation of the Central Florida Water Initiative’s regional water supply plan, as well as water supply planning provisions of the proposed sector plan for the North Ranch.

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\(^2\) The Central Florida Water Initiative’s analysis did not include Brevard County and did not consider the sector planning process for the North Ranch in Osceola County.
CONSERVATION: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Issues related to Corridors

- Potential for new or enhanced east-west corridors from Orange County or Osceola County to Brevard County to involve new or expanded crossings of the St. Johns River and the Econlockhatchee River as well as impacts to wildlife corridors and other key ecosystem linkages.
- Potential impacts of new or enhanced north-south corridors in eastern Orange County or Osceola County on regionally significant natural resources, including potential for additional development in areas not currently planned for growth.
- Potential impact of new or enhanced corridors and associated development on regional surface and groundwater resources.
- Vulnerability to climate trends and extreme weather events for transportation corridors and population centers located in low-lying coastal areas or close to the St. Johns River, Econlockhatchee River, Indian River Lagoon, and other water bodies.

Opportunities related to Corridors

- Protect regionally significant natural resources by directing growth to more suitable areas identified in regional and community visions and plans.
- Accomplish transportation and conservation goals together through coordination of plans and investments.
- Restore environmental functions degraded or fragmented by prior corridor investments, such as incorporating bridges or wildlife crossings as part of reconstruction or modernization of existing corridors.
- Consider the characteristics of natural systems as part of the context for designing future corridors.
- Contribute to implementation of Central Florida Water Initiative regional water supply plan through coordination of transportation corridor investments with potential projects to move water through the study area.
**Countryside**

The “countryside” - East Central Florida’s rural lands -- represent both the study area’s heritage and a key driver of its future. Agriculture, marine industries, and eco-tourism are key strengths of the study area’s economy. Small towns and villages are a preferred way of life for many residents - and with modern communication technologies, these rural lands increasingly can attract skilled professionals and entrepreneurs and enable them to do business worldwide. A strong rural lands strategy is critical to the future of this region.

About 391,000 acres, or 28 percent of the study area, are currently in commercial agricultural use (Figure 7). Major agricultural landholdings include:

- The Deseret Ranches, which include nearly 250,000 acres spread across all three counties, plus additional land to the south of the study area boundary. Deseret is one of the largest cow-calf ranches in the United States.
- The 14,000 acre Cocoa Ranch in west central Brevard County, which is owned by A. Duda & Sons, Inc.; and
- Six additional ranches in Osceola County and one ranch in Brevard County that each comprise between 5,000 and 10,000 acres.

The total number of farms and the total acreage of farmland in the three counties decreased during the past five years, in contrast to a slight increase statewide.

Agriculture, other natural resources, and related manufacturing and distribution industries accounted for more than 212,000 jobs and $10.6 billion in value-added impacts in the three counties in 2011. Osceola County is the state’s third largest producer of cattle and calves, with Brevard and Orange also ranking among the top 30 counties statewide. The study area also is an important producer of citrus and plants and sod for landscaping. The agricultural sector is becoming more diversified and increasing productivity through animal science and other advanced ranching and farming methods.

Each of the study area counties identifies future lands for agricultural uses and classifies lands for rural development activities (Figure 8):

- Orange County has established an Urban Service Area and a Rural Service Area.
- Osceola County has established an Urban Growth Boundary. This Urban Growth Boundary would be amended to accommodate anticipated development on the northern portions of the Deseret Ranches (see discussion below).
- Each county identifies rural settlements, enclaves, or development districts to preserve historic communities and provide for a rural lifestyle.
Figure 7   Lands in Commercial Agricultural Use in the East Central Florida Study Area

Source: Property appraiser offices for Brevard, Orange, and Osceola counties; Brevard County Planning and Development Department. Customized analysis developed for the Task Force based on data as of May 2014.
Figure 8: Lands Designated for Future Urban or Rural Uses in the East Central Florida Study Area

Sources: Brevard, Orange, and Osceola County Comprehensive Plans, Future Land Use Elements.
The Task Force recognizes that maintaining the most productive agricultural lands is essential to the area’s future economy and quality of life. Many of the study area’s major agricultural lands also play important environmental functions, including providing habitat and assisting with water storage, filtering, and groundwater recharge.

The area’s major agricultural landowners have been recognized as good long-term stewards of their lands and partners in planning for the future of the region. Transportation corridor planning provides opportunities to provide better connectivity to productive farmlands. When planned in conjunction with land use decisions, transportation corridor planning also can help preserve agricultural lands and rural developments by supporting urban growth in more suitable places.

**COUNTRYSIDE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

**Issues related to Corridors**

- Potential impacts of new or enhanced transportation corridors on agricultural lands with important economic or environmental functions.
- Potential impacts of new or enhanced transportation corridors on areas located outside of Orange County’s Urban Service area and Osceola County’s Urban Growth Boundary or identified in county plans as rural settlements, rural enclaves, and rural development districts.

**Opportunities related to Corridors**

- Provide better connectivity from productive agricultural lands to processing facilities, transportation hubs, and external markets to help expand the size, diversity, and scale of the agricultural industry.
- Preserve the viability of productive agricultural lands and rural development areas by supporting urban growth in more suitable areas identified in regional and community visions and plans.
Centers

Population and employment centers are the critical building blocks of the region’s economy. The region has made a strong commitment through the How Shall We Grow? principles and regional and local plans to focus future growth in a mix of centers.

Regional and community visions and plans call for infill development in the core of the region including the City of Orlando and the Interstate 4 corridor, where significant growth has occurred in the past. Major transportation corridor investments such as the reconstruction of portions of Interstate 4 and the new SunRail service will reinforce these core areas. However, the magnitude of anticipated population growth suggests significant growth may occur in outlying areas and new centers as well.

Future land use and development plans for each county reflect unique approaches, issues, and opportunities (Figure 9):

- **Brevard County.** Growth has been shifting from historic locations in the northern part of the county and along the coast to the central and southern portion of the county. The county is focusing on redeveloping existing centers, expanding economic centers such as Cape/Port Canaveral and Melbourne, and supporting growth of a significant new mixed-use center in Viera.

- **Orange County** has established an Urban Service Area and initiatives for sustainability and “complete communities.” Its plan is organized around six market areas; the Rural East market area is outside of the Urban Service Area. Key initiatives include continued growth of the Orlando central business district; transit-oriented development near the new SunRail stations; continued growth of the Horizon West development to the west of the study area; expansion of the Orlando International Airport; visioning for the International Drive/Convention Center District; growth of the “Medical City” and related development at Lake Nona to the south of the Airport and “Innovation Way” to the east of the Airport; and master planning for the University of Central Florida.

- **Osceola County** is focusing in the next few decades on growth within its established Urban Growth Boundary, which includes 300,000 acres in the northwest and north central portion of the county. The county has developed conceptual master plans for mixed-use planning districts including the communities to the East and South of Lake Toho. A third conceptual master plan covering the 19,000-acre “Northeast District” of the Deseret Ranches was converted into a sector plan consistent with Florida Statutes.

In 2013, Osceola County and Farmland Reserve, Inc. jointly initiated a long-term master planning process for 133,000 acres of the North Ranch in Osceola County under Florida’s sector planning law. The planning area is to the east and southeast of the Northeast District and outside of the established Urban Growth Boundary. The stated goals of the process are to maximize job growth and reinforce long-term economic sustainability for the region; protect large-scale natural systems; connect regions and economic centers with multimodal transportation systems; and plan mixed-use communities using highest quality growth practices. The draft Long-Term Master Plan submitted to the County in August 2014 anticipates creating a network of 16 centers to accommodate population of approximately 355,000 residents by 2060 and an estimated 490,000 residents by 2080 (Figure 10). The draft plan is under review with anticipated adoption as a comprehensive plan amendment in 2015. The current process does not include the Brevard County or Orange County portions of the North Ranch.
Figure 9: Generalized Future Land Use with Planned and Proposed Developments

Sources: East Central Florida Regional Planning Council, 2011; University of Florida GeoPlan Center, 2013; Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, 2014.
Anticipated population growth and implementation of these long-term planning initiatives will reshape the region by expanding existing and creating new centers. The Task Force applied a typology developed during *How Shall We Grow?* to categorize existing and planned centers. The study area currently includes one Large Regional Center with more than 250,000 population (Central Orlando) and two Regional Centers with 100,000 to 249,999 population (Palm Bay and Melbourne). Kissimmee, Taft, and the University of Central Florida area are current Medium Centers (50,000 to 99,999 people) (Figure 11).

With the redevelopment of existing centers and growth expected in major sector plans and developments of regional impact, the study area could have the equivalent of 10 Medium Centers by 2060, adding Innovation Way, Orlando International Airport-Lake Nona, Poinciana, East and South Toho, Narcoossee Road-Harmony, the Northeast District, and Viera. If the draft long-term master plan is approved, the North Ranch portion of Osceola County could form an additional Large Regional Center by 2060 (Figure 12).
Figure 11  Current Population Centers in East Central Florida

Population Centers: 2012
- □ >250,000 – Large Regional Center
- □ >100,000 – Regional Center
- □ 50,000-99,999 – Medium Center
- □ 30,000-49,999 – Small Center
- □ 10,000-29,999 – Town
- □ 5,000-9,999 – Village

Existing Transportation Facilities
- Limited Access Facility
- Other State Highway
- Local Road
- SunRail
- Railroad
- Major Airport
- Cape Canaveral Spaceport
- Port Canaveral
- SunRail or Amtrak Station

Other Features
- East Central Florida Corridor Study Area
- Managed Land
- Urbanized Area
- Airport Boundary
- Water Body
- County Boundary

Source: FDOT analysis based on U.S. Census Bureau, 2012.
Figure 12. Population Centers in East Central Florida in 2060 (Projected)

Source: Florida Department of Transportation projection, 2012; Osceola County Comprehensive Plan, Northeast District Element; Osceola County Comprehensive Plan, South Toho Element; Osceola County Comprehensive Plan, East of Lake Toho Element; Brevard County Comprehensive Plan, December 2011. Chapter 11, Future Land Use; Lake Nona DRI & PD Amendment, Staff Report to the Orlando Municipal Planning Board, January 17, 2012; Innovation Way Final Report, Orange County Planning Department, 2005.
Improving connectivity among employment centers is critical to the area’s economic competitiveness:

- Central Florida is one of the world’s leading tourist attractions. Visit Orlando reported more than 59 million domestic and international visitors to Orange, Osceola, and Seminole counties in 2013. Port Canaveral is the world’s second largest home port for cruise passengers. Brevard County’s beaches and the Kennedy Space Center also are important attractions. Strong growth in tourism is expected to continue, with opportunities for more visits involving multiple centers and requiring regional travel. Regional connectivity to the Orlando International Airport is essential.

- The region’s economic development strategy emphasizes development of regional innovation clusters in industries such as aerospace, life sciences, information technology, and defense and homeland security. Technology-based industries are concentrated in an arc from the University of Central Florida through Central Orlando and Innovation Way to Lake Nona, as well as at Cape Canaveral and Melbourne. Closing regional connectivity gaps, such as between Melbourne and Orlando, could expand access to skilled labor, create more efficient supply chains, and enable the collaboration between researchers, educational institutions, manufacturers, suppliers, and service providers that lead to strong innovation clusters.

- The combination of a large consumer and visitor market, a productive agricultural sector, and a small but growing manufacturing base will expand the importance of logistics and distribution industries. The expansion of Port Canaveral’s container operations and Orlando International Airport’s cargo facilities, and the development of a major intermodal logistics center in Winter Haven, point to the significance of Central Florida as a logistics hub and the potential value of better connectivity from the region to global markets.

- The region also includes major military installations including Naval Support Activity Orlando and Patrick Air Force Base, Cape Canaveral Air Force Station, and U.S. Air Force Malabar Test Facility in Brevard County

The Task Force reaffirms the *How Shall We Grow?* principles as a guide for the future of the region’s centers. The Task Force also recognizes the value of long-term, large-scale planning to envision how future transportation corridors and future centers together can create the framework for high-quality, sustainable growth. Decisions about the location and characteristics of new centers are particularly significant, especially when they involve potential changes to established urban growth boundaries/service areas, are located in or near regionally significant natural resources or productive agricultural lands, or may have impacts on adjacent jurisdictions.
## CENTERS: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

### Issues related to Corridors

- Consistency between locations of new or enhanced corridors and locations of centers targeted for future growth.
- Potential impacts of new or enhanced corridors outside of established urban service areas/growth boundaries in Orange and Osceola counties; potential for additional growth in areas not currently planned for urban development, including spillover impacts across county lines.
- Potential impacts of new or enhanced corridors on approved developments of regional impact or other large-scale planned developments throughout the study area.
- Potential for a mismatch between the characteristics of new or enhanced corridors and the characteristics of the existing communities through which the corridors pass.

### Opportunities related to Corridors

- Provide additional transportation choices that benefit existing communities and support high-quality growth patterns consistent with the *How Shall We Grow?* principles.
- Support growth in business and personal travel, including more trips to multiple centers within the study area.
- Improve connectivity between economic centers, to help strengthen regional innovation clusters and targeted industries identified in state, regional, and local economic development strategies.
- Improve connectivity between transportation hubs such as the Orlando International Airport, Melbourne International Airport, Kissimmee Gateway Airport, Port Canaveral, and Cape Canaveral Spaceport, to support growth in trade and logistics.

## Corridors

The study area has an extensive transportation system today to support interregional, intraregional, and local trips. Key transportation corridors include (Figure 13):

- Three major interregional highway corridors, including Interstate 4, Interstate 95, and Florida’s Turnpike;
- Limited access toll expressways including the Beach Line Expressway (State Road 528), the East-West Expressway (State Road 408), and the Central Florida GreeneWay and Southern Connector (State Road 417);
- Major arterial highways owned by the state or by county government; and
- Two major rail corridors: the state-owned SunRail corridor, which provides commuter rail service and is also is shared by Amtrak intercity passenger trains and by CSX-operated freight trains, and the Florida East Coast Railway line in eastern Brevard County.
Figure 13. Existing Transportation System in the East Central Florida Study Area

Source: Florida Department of Transportation.
A variety of major corridor improvements are currently under construction or have determined to be feasible based on anticipated revenues through the year 2040 (Figure 14). These include:

- The “Ultimate Plan” for Interstate 4 including the construction of four variable priced tolled express lanes in the median throughout the study area;
- Expansion of SunRail commuter service to eventually operate from DeLand to Poinciana, with an extension to the Orlando International Airport;
- Improvements to State Road 528, including widening of the segments from Interstate 4 to Florida’s Turnpike and from Interstate 95 to State Road 401 at Port Canaveral;
- Development of a system of expressways to link existing and planned communities in Osceola County’s urban growth boundary to Interstate 4, Florida’s Turnpike, and other regional expressways; and
- Development of the St. Johns Heritage Parkway, a planned loop around the west side of Palm Bay that would act as a reliever for Interstate 95.

Even with these improvements, the study area’s transportation system will not be able to accommodate anticipated growth in demand for moving people and freight without a significant decline in the efficiency and reliability of the system. If current patterns of development, travel, and transportation investment continue, most major state and local roads in the study area are projected to exceed level of service standards by 2060.

Improved connectivity and expanded choices are needed. Areas experiencing strong growth or planned for future development in central and southern Brevard County and northeastern Osceola County currently are not well connected to Interstate 4, the Orlando International Airport, and Central Orlando. In addition, there are few choices for long-distance trips moving to, from, and through the study area – a constraint on the area’s businesses and a significant concern during natural disasters and other emergencies.

The Task Force reaffirms the commitment in the How Shall We Grow? principles to connect centers through multimodal transportation corridors. The Task Force also recognizes the need to rethink the concept of a transportation corridor – moving from today’s roads to incorporate multiple modes of transportation, multiple uses such as utility infrastructure, and emerging technologies. A key issue is ensuring that those corridors designed to provide high-speed, high-capacity movement between economic centers are able to function in that manner over the long-term.

Finally, the Task Force recognizes the need to make timely decisions about the location of new or enhanced corridors, particularly to ensure coordination with land use decisions and to help preserve right of way so that future connectivity needs can be met.
Figure 14. Planned Multimodal Transportation Improvements

Source: FDOT, Osceola County Expressway Authority, All Aboard Florida, Brevard County
CORRIDORS: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Issues

- Ability of highway system to accommodate future growth in population, employment, and visitors.
- Limited modal or route choices available for moving people and freight to, from, and through the study area.
- Connectivity gaps, especially between Orlando and southern Brevard County and between developing areas in eastern Orange and Osceola counties.
- Limited capacity to effectively support emergency evacuation and recovery efforts, particularly for east-west travel to effectively accommodate a coastal evacuation from Brevard County.
- Balance between improving access to regional centers and maintaining the ability of major highway or rail corridors to provide high-speed connections to other regions or states.
- Balance between moving freight and moving people on major highway or rail corridors.
- Constraints on adding capacity to some existing corridors due to limited right of way or impacts on surrounding land uses.
- Funding availability for corridor development and corridor operation and management, especially for rail and transit systems.

Opportunities

- Continue efforts to modernize existing corridors through introduction of managed lanes and other operational strategies.
- Preserve right of way now for corridors that may not be built until future decades through coordination between the state, local governments through their comprehensive plans, and private landowners.
- Preserve sufficient right of way and plan and design future corridors so that alternative modes and uses can be incorporated when the market can support them.
- Incorporate emerging technologies such as automated or connected vehicles and alternative fuel vehicles into future corridor design.
- Coordinate or co-locate transportation, energy, water, and other infrastructure to create growth corridors in targeted areas.
Regional And Local Planning Activities

Pursuant to its charge, the Task Force reviewed existing transportation plans developed by state, regional, local, and private sector entities to determine the extent to which these plans are consistent with each other and how they might affect future corridor planning in East Central Florida. The Task Force also reviewed the land use and development plans of local and regional governments and entities to determine the extent to which these plans are consistent with transportation plans and how they might affect future corridor planning in the study area.

Multiple transportation, land use and development, and other long-range plans cover the study area, including:

- Local government comprehensive plans developed by three county governments and 39 municipal governments;
- Long-range transportation plans developed by the Florida Department of Transportation and two metropolitan planning organizations (MetroPlan Orlando, which includes Orange, Osceola, and Seminole counties, and the Space Coast Transportation Planning Organization, which covers Brevard County);
- Expressway authority master plans developed by the Central Florida Expressway Authority and the Osceola County Expressway Authority;
- Transit development plans, developed by the Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority (which covers Orange, Osceola, and Seminole counties) and Space Coast Area Transit;
- A variety of airport, seaport, spaceport strategic or master plans;
- Strategic Regional Policy Plan, developed by the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council; and
- Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy, developed by the East Central Florida Regional Planning Council, as well as a variety of economic development plans.

The Task Force reviewed these plans and found that:

- The horizon or forecast year varies across existing plans: 2018 for the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy; 2025 to 2030 for the county comprehensive plans; 2040 for most of the metropolitan planning organization long-range transportation plans and expressway authority master plans; and 2060 for the Strategic Regional Policy Plan. Few planning processes match the 50-year scale being explored by FDOT for future transportation corridor planning.
- Forecasts for the level and distribution of future population vary across the study area’s counties and across functional areas (for example, land use, transportation, and water supply planning). These differences make it difficult to integrate different plans and address the impacts of major developments or infrastructure investments across jurisdictional boundaries.
- Sector plans, conceptual master plans, and similar processes are being used more frequently to plan for the future of large geographic areas within individual counties. This creates the opportunity for more thoughtful long-term planning and large-scale rather than incremental developments and investments. However, these processes also introduce additional complexity to the planning process including the use of longer-term horizons (out to 2080 for the North Ranch Long-Term Master Plan) and additional future projections and definitions of need.
Transportation, land use, economic development, conservation, water supply, and community development decisions traditionally have been made through separate processes and coordinated through local government comprehensive plans.

*How Shall We Grow?* provides a shared regional vision for all seven counties across these various issue areas. *How Shall We Grow?* principles formed the basis for the East Central Florida 2060 Plan, have been incorporated into all three county comprehensive plans, and have been adopted by more than two thirds of local jurisdictions into updates of policies, plans, and development practices. *How Shall We Grow?* provides a strong starting point for future decisions about transportation corridors and other long-range investments. However, implementation of *How Shall We Grow?* remains voluntary and there is no process in place to update this vision.

Regional collaboration has continued since completion of *How Shall We Grow?,* resulting in several noteworthy successes: creation of the Congress of Regional Leaders representing seven counties and 86 cities; implementation of the “Open for Business” initiative to streamline permitting and other regulatory decisions across seven counties; creation of the Central Florida Expressway Authority; creation of the Central Florida Commuter Rail Commission and implementation of the initial phases of the SunRail commuter rail system; continued support for the Central Florida MPO Alliance; and development of the Central Florida Water Initiative to coordinate water supply planning across counties and water management districts.

Many of the existing regional entities are organized around the urbanized area or metropolitan area boundaries and do not fully match the scale of the economic region. In particular, Brevard County is not currently included in the Central Florida Expressway Authority, the Central Florida Regional Transportation Authority, MetroPlan Orlando, or the Central Florida Water Initiative.

Based on this overview of the study area and existing planning processes, the Task Force developed recommended guiding principles for future corridor planning; recommendations for major improvements to existing transportation corridors as well as study areas for potential new corridors; and proposed actions and supporting recommendations to move these corridors and study areas forward. These recommendations are documented in the following sections of this report.
RECOMMENDED GUIDING PRINCIPLES FOR FUTURE TRANSPORTATION CORRIDOR PLANNING

The Task Force recommends the following principles to guide decisions about planning and developing future transportation corridors in the East Central Florida area. They are intended to balance conservation, countryside, centers, and corridor issues and opportunities at a regional scale.

Conservation

- Identify regionally significant land and water resources prior to determining locations for future corridor investments; implement coordinated land acquisition and/or protection measures prior to or in parallel with implementation of future corridor investments.
- Avoid, to the extent feasible, existing lands currently managed for conservation purposes; where avoidance is not feasible, minimize and mitigate impacts on these lands.
- Maintain and, where possible, restore and enhance the integrity and connectivity of regionally significant environmental lands.

Countryside

- Improve transportation connectivity to, from, and between working farms and other economically valuable rural lands.
- Plan and develop transportation corridors in a manner that protects the region’s most productive agricultural lands and other rural lands with economic or environmental significance.
- Plan and develop transportation corridors in a manner that is compatible with areas identified in local plans to maintain their rural character as a choice for residents.

Centers

- Improve connectivity for transportation and other infrastructure to established and emerging regional population and employment centers.
- Locate major transportation corridor improvements and, if needed, new facilities in areas targeted for growth in regional and local plans. When planning new or enhanced transportation corridors that are intended to support new population and employment centers, ensure that these new centers are consistent with the How Shall We Grow? principles and promote:
  - Compact development in both urban centers and adjacent areas;
  - Mixed use development with integration of residential and commercial uses;
  - Open space, parks, greenways, agricultural areas, and buffers between centers; and
  - “Green” community designs that support a reduced urban and environmental footprint, such as reduced water consumption.
- Plan and develop transportation corridors in a manner that improves connectivity to and enhances the quality of existing communities and previously approved developments, while avoiding or minimizing
adverse impacts on these communities and developments. When a corridor and a center intersect, plan and design the corridor so that its purpose and scale is compatible with that of the center.

**Corridors**

- Plan and develop multimodal transportation corridors that are consistent with the *How Shall We Grow?* principles and provide:
  - Connectivity between centers and to other regions;
  - Congestion relief;
  - Choices for moving people and goods; and
  - Concurrency with new development.

- Direct strategic investments to transportation corridors that will provide better access to regional employment centers and other economic assets or provide better connectivity to global markets.

- Make optimal use of existing transportation facilities before adding new capacity to existing facilities or developing new facilities.

- Where possible, give preference to enhancing existing corridors, recognizing that new corridors may be needed to meet current or future mobility and connectivity needs.

- Make early decisions about the location of new or enhanced corridors to ensure effective coordination with conservation and land use decisions and to enable timely preservation, management, or acquisition of property necessary to accommodate existing and planned transportation facilities.

- Plan enhanced or new transportation corridors, where appropriate, to accommodate multiple modes of transportation, including opportunities for recreational trails and other forms of active transportation, and to accommodate multiple uses, including utility infrastructure.

- Plan highway elements of future transportation corridors to be limited access, with interchange locations identified to provide access to economic development activities dependent on long-distance transportation, and to support growth in areas targeted for economic development. Plan rail and transit elements of future transportation corridors to support compact development locations and to encourage public transportation ridership.

- Protect the integrity of statewide and interregional corridors by developing and maintaining strong regional and local transportation networks to accommodate demand for regional and local trips.

- Plan, design, construct, and operate transportation corridors to reflect the context of the communities and environment through which the corridors pass to the fullest extent possible.

- Use state-of-the-art and energy-efficient infrastructure, vehicles, materials, technologies, and methodologies, where economically feasible, to develop and operate transportation corridors.

- Plan, design, construct, and operate transportation corridors to be safe and secure for all users.

- Plan, design, construct, and operate transportation corridors to support emergency evacuation, response, and post-disaster recovery activities; ensure that corridor improvements intended to enhance emergency evacuation and response are not used to promote additional development in hazardous areas or areas not planned for growth.
RECOMMENDED CORRIDOR NEEDS AND ALTERNATIVES

The Task Force assessed future transportation corridor needs and potential alternative solutions for addressing these needs in the study area over the next 50 years. These needs were organized into three major “travel sheds,” or flows of people and freight between key concentration of population and economic activity in the study area:

- East/west travel between Orange and Osceola counties and northern Brevard County;
- East/west travel between Orange and Osceola counties and central/southern Brevard County; and
- North/south travel in eastern Orange and Osceola counties.

For each travel shed, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) estimated 2014 daily trips and developed projections of daily trips in 2060. The baseline 2060 projection reflects estimated future population in the study area, assuming full buildout of the areas included in approved developments of regional impact and approved sector plans. Additional scenarios for the year 2060 assumed:

- adoption and implementation of the North Ranch Long-Term Master Plan;
- additional development in eastern Orange County outside of the established Urban Service Area; and/or
- accelerated integration of the Orange, Osceola, and Brevard county economies, including a higher rate of growth in cross-county travel.

The Task Force considered these forecasts and other available data, its recommended guiding principles, and agency, stakeholder, and public input. Based on this information, the Task Force recommended a total of nine corridor alternatives for further study.

- Five of these alternatives primarily involve improvements to existing corridors, including all four existing crossings of the St. Johns River – State Road 50, State Road 528, State Road 520, and U.S. 192 – as well as the Narcoossee Road/State Road 417 corridor between Orange and Osceola counties to the east of the Orlando International Airport.
- The remaining four corridor alternatives are study areas for potential new corridors – two running east-west and two running north-south.

The remainder of this section describes the major transportation needs identified by the Task Force and documents the nine existing corridors or study areas.

The Task Force recognizes that the need for and economic feasibility of each specific corridor alternative – particularly the potential new corridors—will depend heavily on the magnitude and timing of future population and economic growth including the buildout of planned developments and proposed new centers such as the North Ranch. In addition, many of these corridor alternatives – again, particularly the potential new corridors—may involve impacts on regionally significant lands and waters, productive agricultural lands, and established urban and rural communities. Certain alternatives may need to be modified or not developed further to maintain consistency with the recommended guiding principles.
Given its charge of developing recommendations on future corridor investments over a 50-year period, the Task Force developed a comprehensive framework of potential corridors that could be improved or developed over the next 50 years. Future planning studies and project development activities will refine, narrow, and help set priorities among these alternatives. The Task Force recommends that these studies occur in the context of this broader framework, to consider potential combinations and tradeoffs among these existing and potential corridors.

**East-West Travel between Orange/Osceola Counties and Northern Brevard County**

An estimated 118,000 person trips occur each day between locations in Orange and Osceola counties and northern Brevard County, defined for this purpose as Titusville, Cape Canaveral, Cocoa, Rockledge, and northern locations in the county. The total number of daily person trips is projected to grow to between 201,000 and 357,000 by the year 2060.3

Travel to and from northern Brevard County today primarily occurs using three major highways, each of which involves an existing crossing of the St. Johns River: State Road 528 from Orlando to Port Canaveral; State Road 520 from eastern Orange County to Cocoa; and State Road 50 from Orlando to Titusville.

Plans that include long-range projections of available revenues, developed by the Florida Department of Transportation and the metropolitan planning organizations, have identified future improvements to portions of State Road 528 and State Road 50, but funding to add capacity at the Brevard County line on any of these corridors has not yet been identified.

In addition to supporting this overall growth in travel, the Task Force identified the following long-term transportation needs in this portion of the study area:

- Support anticipated growth in trade through Port Canaveral serving the Central Florida market;
- Support continued growth in personal and visitor travel, including cruise passengers using Port Canaveral and visitors traveling between major attractions in Orange and Osceola counties and Brevard County;
- Improve connectivity between high-technology research and employment centers including the University of Central Florida, Innovation Way, Lake Nona, and Cape Canaveral;
- Strengthen connectivity between major transportation hubs and corridors in five modes, including the Cape Canaveral Spaceport; Port Canaveral; Orlando International Airport; the planned multimodal passenger terminal for All Aboard Florida, SunRail, and other regional transit services at Orlando International Airport; additional SunRail stations; and the Taft intermodal freight yard; and
- Enhance the transportation system’s ability to support emergency evacuation, response, and post-disaster recovery activities.

The Task Force evaluated a range of potential corridor investments to help address these needs, and recommended four alternatives for further study. While not part of the study area, the Task Force also discussed the long-term potential for improvements to State Road 46, which connects Interstate 4 and State Road 417 near Sanford to Interstate 95 north of Titusville.:

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3 Estimates of daily person trips in each travel shed are intended to serve as order of magnitude representations of current and future travel demand within the study area irrespective of mode choice or route choice. Trips with an origin and/or destination outside the study area are not included in the person trip estimates presented in this section.
Figure 15. Alternative A: Develop State Road 528 into a Multi-Modal, Multi-Use “Super Corridor”

Alternative A: Develop State Road 528 into a multi-modal, multi-use “super corridor” from Interstate 4 in Orlando to State Road A1A in Port Canaveral.

Improvements could include: general purpose lanes; managed express lanes or truck-only lanes; infrastructure for autonomous vehicles and alternative fueled vehicles; freight, intercity passenger, and regional passenger rail services; trails for nonmotorized transportation; pipelines; and electricity transmission and communications infrastructure. Such improvements could address the full list of needs identified in this part of the study area, with particular emphasis on supporting the planned expansion of Port Canaveral, the Cape Canaveral Spaceport, the Orlando International Airport, and other major transportation hubs.

Because this corridor already is limited access, future improvements could occur with modest impacts on surrounding communities, agricultural lands, and environmental lands. However, the width of the current Beach Line Expressway right of way may not be sufficient to accommodate multiple transportation modes as well as non-transportation uses, particularly west of Econlockhatchee River and east of Interstate 95. Finally, while additional capacity in the corridor would enhance the transportation system’s ability to support emergency evacuation, response, and post-disaster recovery activities, the corridor must be designed to minimize vulnerabilities to natural and human-made hazards.
Alternative B: Preserve and enhance the existing State Road 50 corridor from the Central Orlando and University of Central Florida areas through rural eastern Orange County to Cape Canaveral.

Short to medium term strategies may involve improving the capacity and efficiency of State Road 50, particularly in the western portion of this corridor. FDOT is studying potential transit alternatives in the corridor from downtown Orlando to the University of Central Florida. The Central Florida Expressway Authority will initiate a project development and environmental (PD&E) study in 2015 to assess options for extending the East-West Expressway (State Road 408) from its current terminus at the Challenger Parkway near the University of Central Florida to the State Road 50/State Road 520 split (a seven mile distance).

The long-term solution could involve a multimodal corridor from the University area to Interstate 95 or Cape Canaveral through further extension of State Road 408, major improvements to State Road 50, and/or extension of planned high-capacity transit services. Such improvements could impact regionally significant land and water resources and established rural communities, particularly if a new alignment is selected away from the existing State Road 50 right of way and river crossings. Planning studies can help assess the feasibility and timing of future improvements, and identify steps needed to manage existing facilities and available right of way to preserve the opportunity for future multimodal improvements.
Alternative C: Preserve and enhance the existing State Road 520 corridor from eastern Orange County to Cocoa.

As with State Road 50, short- to medium-term solutions may involve improvements to the existing facility and strategies to preserve right of way and manage access to the facility to preserve the opportunity for future multimodal improvements. The long-term solution could involve a high-capacity multimodal corridor along the full length of State Road 520, building on the planned extension of State Road 408 from the Challenger Parkway to the State Road 50/State Road 520 split.

Because of its northwest-to-southeast flow, State Road 520 could tie into multiple east-west and north-south alternatives. The State Road 528 corridor could be a logical midpoint for staging future improvements to the full corridor.
Alternative D: Create a new multimodal corridor along the Orange/ Osceola County line from the Orlando International Airport/ Lake Nona area to the State Road 520 corridor.

This corridor could provide better connectivity between the Orlando International Airport, Lake Nona, Innovation Way, the Northeast District, and northern portions of the North Ranch. The purpose and need for this corridor is linked to the timing and magnitude of future development on the North Ranch..

This corridor also could provide an alternative east-west connection from Interstate 4 to Interstate 95 if linked to existing State Road 417 or Osceola Parkway on the west end and the existing State Road 520 corridor across the St. Johns River to Interstate 95 on the east end. The corridor also could include an extension of proposed transit services in the Osceola Parkway corridor.
East-West Travel between Orange/Osceola County and Central/Southern Brevard County

An estimated 66,000 person trips occur each day between locations in Orange and Osceola counties and central and southern Brevard County, defined for this purpose as Viera and locations to the south including Melbourne and Palm Bay. The total number of daily person trips is projected to grow to between 123,000 and 217,000 by the year 2060.

U.S. 192 from Kissimmee and St. Cloud to Melbourne is the only corridor directly connecting Osceola County and southern Brevard County today. There is no direct connection from Orange County. A large number of trips between central and southern Brevard County and Orange and Osceola counties use Interstate 95 to connect to east-west corridors in northern Brevard including State Roads 528, 520, and 50.

In addition to supporting this overall growth in travel, the Task Force identified the following long-term transportation needs in this portion of the study area:

- Connect major existing and future population centers including Orlando, Kissimmee, St. Cloud, Melbourne, Palm Bay, Viera, and the areas included in the Northeast District and the North Ranch Sector Plans;
- Expand labor market and supply chain for businesses in eastern Osceola and central/southern Brevard counties;
- Connect high-tech employment centers such as Lake Nona, Innovation Way, University of Central Florida, Melbourne, and the new Florida Advanced Manufacturing Research Center in Kissimmee;
- Improve access to Orlando International Airport, Melbourne International Airport, and Kissimmee Gateway Airport; and
- Enhance the transportation system’s ability to support emergency evacuation, response, and post-disaster recovery activities.

The Task Force evaluated a range of potential corridor investments to help address these needs, and recommended two alternatives for further study:
Alternative E: Preserve and enhance the existing U.S. 192 corridor from Kissimmee to Melbourne.

U.S. 192 is the major corridor connecting southern Brevard County to Orange and Osceola counties today. Significant capacity improvements could be considered to accommodate future growth in demand and improve connectivity between Lake Buena Vista, Kissimmee, St. Cloud, Melbourne, and Palm Bay.

Multimodal improvements could build on planned high-capacity transit service in the U.S. 192 corridor from U.S. 27 to Florida’s Turnpike and in the Narcoossee Road corridor. Multimodal corridor improvements could connect to the planned Northeast Connector Expressway on the west end and to the St. Johns Heritage Parkway or Interstate 95 on the east end.

Initial planning studies could help establish the feasibility and timing of future improvements, as well as agreements to preserve future right of way and to manage this corridor to promote interregional travel. A key emphasis should be the future of the rural portion of the corridor between Narcoossee Road and Interstate 95.
Alternative F: Develop a new multimodal corridor from the Orlando International Airport/Lake Nona area to central/southern Brevard County.

This option could provide a direct connection between these two major economic centers, and also serve the emerging population centers in the Northeast District and the North Ranch. This option could include:

- Multiple end points in Orange County or Osceola County that consider connectivity to the Orlando International Airport, employment centers such as Lake Nona and Innovation Way, the existing Orange County expressway system, the planned Osceola County expressway system, and SunRail or other high-capacity transit systems.

- Use of existing right of way such as Nova Road where possible to cross the Deseret Ranch and connect to the future centers identified in the North Ranch Long-Term Master Plan.

- Multiple end points in Brevard County that consider connectivity to employment centers such as Melbourne and Viera and to corridors including Interstate 95 and the planned St. Johns Heritage Parkway.
• Connections to one or more north-south corridors in eastern Orange and Osceola counties that would connect to U.S. 192, Nova Road, State Road 520, State Road 528, and State Road 50.

The purpose and need for this corridor is linked to the timing and magnitude of future development on the North Ranch. With most of this corridor involving new or significantly upgraded facilities, this corridor could be planned and developed as a multimodal, multi-use corridor with full use of emerging technologies.

Planning for this corridor must consider the potential need for an additional crossing of the St. Johns River, including the potential impacts of a new crossing on the watershed, wetlands, habitat, protected species, wildlife corridors, conservation lands, and existing and previously approved developments. While this alternative could provide a direct connection to close the regional connectivity gap between economic centers, it presents environmental and conservation land policy issues that are not evident at this stage of the planning process with regard to other corridor alternatives.
North-South Travel in Eastern Orange and Osceola Counties

North-south travel in eastern Orange and Osceola counties is anticipated to grow dramatically in the next few decades due to further growth of existing centers such as the University of Central Florida, St. Cloud, and Harmony and the buildout of planned developments including Lake Nona, Innovation Way, the Northeast District, and the North Ranch. The total number of daily person trips across the county line between areas to the east of the Orlando International Airport is expected to grow from about 15,000 today to between 148,000 and 237,000 by 2060.\(^4\)

Only a few corridors cross the county line in this area today:

- Boggy Creek Road directly to the south of the Orlando International Airport;
- Narcoossee Road to the east of the Airport; and
- Nova Road on the Deseret Ranches close to the Brevard County line.

State Road 417 and major arterials including the Innovation Way/Alafaya Trail corridor serve north-south travel in Orange County to the east of the Airport. The planned Northeast Connector Expressway and major arterials envisioned in the Northeast District Sector Plan and the North Ranch Long-Term Master Plan will serve north-south travel in eastern Osceola County. However, current plans provide for limited connectivity between the Osceola and Orange county expressway systems.

In addition to supporting this overall growth in travel, the Task Force identified the following long-term transportation needs in this portion of the study area:

- Provide a continuous north-south corridor in a fast growing area;
- Support anticipated population growth including development of new centers including the Northeast District, Innovation Way, and the North Ranch;
- Connect high tech research and employment centers including the University of Central Florida, Innovation Way, Lake Nona, and the new Florida Advanced Manufacturing Research Center in Kissimmee;
- Support agricultural transportation needs; and
- Improve regional connectivity to Orlando International Airport.

The Task Force evaluated a range of potential corridor investments to help address these needs, and recommended three alternatives for further study:

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\(^4\) Facility-level traffic volumes at the county line indicate that many more than 15,000 people use facilities within this travel shed today. These counts include people traveling to and from Kissimmee and other points in central and northwest Osceola County who currently use Boggy Creek Road and Narcoossee Road to cross the county line to access points in eastern Orange County, due to the lack of better alternative routes. To be consistent in the presentation of estimated demand for travel in 2014 and 2060, the definition of the travel shed was limited to areas between Florida’s Turnpike and the St. Johns River, excluding Kissimmee.
Figure 21. Alternative G: Multimodal Improvements to the Existing Narcoossee Road and State Road 417 Corridor

Alternative G: Make multimodal improvements to the existing Narcoossee Road and State Road 417 corridor from U.S. 192 to the University of Central Florida area.

These improvements would enhance north-south travel between Orange and Osceola counties directly to the east of the Orlando International Airport, and provide a direct connection between the Orange and Osceola expressway systems. Expansions of Narcoossee Road may be constrained by development abutting the right of way, but high capacity transit service options could be explored.
Figure 22. Alternative H: Extend the Planned Northeast Connector Expressway North to the State Road 528 Corridor

Alternative H: Extend the planned Northeast Connector Expressway north from its planned terminus at the Osceola Parkway Extension in Osceola County to the State Road 528 corridor in Orange County.

This extension would connect the Northeast District to existing and emerging economic centers in Orange County within the current Orange County Urban Service Area. It could provide an additional option to the Narcoossee Road corridor in Osceola County and to State Road 417 south of State Road 528 in Orange County.

The corridor could provide a route for commuter rail services to the Northeast District and the North Ranch by connecting to the Orlando Utilities Commission rail line in the area of Innovation Way, which in turn would connect to the SunRail corridor and the planned intermodal center at Orlando International Airport.

Planning for this corridor must consider potential impacts of a new corridor on the Econolackhatchee River watershed, wetlands, habitat, protected species, wildlife corridors, conservation lands, and land currently designated for long-term agricultural use.
Alternative I: Create a new north-south multimodal corridor in eastern Orange and Osceola counties.

This corridor could connect the future population centers on the North Ranch to other regional destinations and east-west corridors:

- At its northern end, the corridor could be integrated with proposed improvements to the State Road 520 and State Road 50 corridors and provide connectivity to the University of Central Florida area and downtown Orlando;
- At its southern end, the corridor could be integrated with proposed improvements to U.S. 192 and provide connectivity to Melbourne/Palm Bay; and
- The corridor also could connect to proposed new and improved east-west corridors linking Orange and Osceola counties to Brevard County, including State Road 528, the proposed new east/west multimodal corridor along the Orange/Osceola County line from the Orlando International Airport/Lake Nona area to the State Road 520 corridor, and the proposed new east-west multimodal corridor from the Orlando International Airport/Lake Nona area to central/southern Brevard County.
The acquisition of right of way for a new corridor could impact the connectivity and function of lands currently in productive agricultural use, and could facilitate new development in an area outside of established urban service area/growth boundaries. In southeastern Orange County, the corridor would pass through areas that are identified as rural service areas in the county’s comprehensive plan.

The corridor could be completed in phases corresponding to phasing of development in the North Ranch Sector Plan area and contingent on future planning in southeast Orange County. For example, the segment between Nova Road and U.S. 192 could be timed to coincide with development of centers in the central portion of the North Ranch and linked with multimodal improvements to the U.S. 192 corridor and proposed new east-west corridors.
PROPOSED ACTION PLAN

Pursuant to the Executive Order, the Task Force has developed a proposed action plan for moving forward with new or enhanced transportation corridors in the study area. This section documents nine actions and identifies potential lead organizations for each action. The actions are organized into four categories:

Improve Existing Corridors

1. Identify future investment needs to maximize the use of and add capacity to existing east-west corridors between Orange, Osceola, and Brevard counties. These corridors should include the following (Figure 24):

   - The State Road 528 corridor from Interstate 4 to State Road A1A, including options for creating a multi-modal, multi-use “super corridor” (Alternative A);
   - The State Road 50 corridor from downtown Orlando and the University of Central Florida to Cape Canaveral, including potential extensions of the State Road 408 East-West Expressway and planned high-capacity transit services (Alternative B);
   - The State Road 520 corridor from eastern Orange County to Cocoa, including potential extensions of the State Road 408 East-West Expressway and planned high-capacity transit services (Alternative C); and
   - The U.S. 192 corridor from Kissimmee to Melbourne, including potential extensions of planned high-capacity transit services (Alternative E).

Additional planning and project development activities should define specific projects, determine the potential staging of these projects over the next 50 years, and identify strategies needed to manage existing facilities and to preserve additional right of way to enable these future improvements to occur.

   Suggested lead organization: Florida Department of Transportation, working with the Central Florida Expressway Authority for portions of State Road 528 and State Road 408.

2. Identify future investment needs to maximize the use of, add capacity to, and improve the connectivity between existing and planned north-south corridors in eastern Orange and Osceola counties. These improvements should include the following (Figure ES.1):

   - multimodal improvements to the Narcoossee Road corridor and the State Road 417 corridor (Alternative G); and
   - improved connectivity among the existing Orange County expressway system, the planned Osceola County expressway system, and Florida’s Turnpike.

Additional planning and project development activities should define specific projects, determine the potential staging of these projects over the next 50 years, and identify strategies needed to manage existing facilities and preserve additional right of way to enable these future improvements to occur.

   Suggested lead organization: Florida Department of Transportation, working with the Central Florida Expressway Authority and the Osceola County Expressway Authority.
Figure 24. Recommended Improvements to Existing Transportation Corridors
Evaluate Potential New Corridors

3. Conduct one or more Evaluation studies of potential new east-west corridors between Orange, Osceola, and Brevard counties. The proposed study or studies should consider (Figure 25):

- a multimodal corridor along the Orange/Osceola county line to provide connectivity between the Orlando International Airport/Lake Nona area, the Northeast District of Osceola County, the North Ranch Master Plan, and the State Road 520 corridor (Alternative D); and

- a multimodal corridor from the Orlando International Airport/Lake Nona area through the proposed North Ranch Master Plan to central/southern Brevard County, including the potential need for an additional crossing of the St. Johns River (Alternative F).

   Suggested lead organization: Florida Department of Transportation

4. Conduct one or more Evaluation studies of potential new north-south corridors in eastern Orange and Osceola counties. The proposed study or studies should consider (Figure 26):

- continuation of the project development process for the Northeast Connector Expressway and extension of this expressway from its planned terminus at the Osceola Parkway Extension to the State Road 528 corridor, including potential multimodal improvements (Alternative H); and

- a new multimodal corridor serving planned population centers on the North Ranch and connecting to existing east-west corridors including U.S. 192, Nova Road, State Road 520, State Road 528, and State Road 50/408 (Alternative I).

   Suggested lead organization: Florida Department of Transportation

Amend and Strengthen Regional and Local Plans

5. Develop a regional passenger rail and transit system plan to identify and set priorities for long-term passenger rail and transit investments in the three study area counties and the broader Central Florida region.

   Suggested lead organization: Florida Department of Transportation, Central Florida MPO Alliance

6. Amend existing local and regional plans, as appropriate, to include the corridors and the study areas defined in actions 1 through 5, as well as to ensure consistency with the recommended guiding principles. These plans would include:

   - Local government comprehensive plans (suggested lead organizations: Brevard County, Orange County, Osceola County, any impacted municipality, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity);

   - Metropolitan planning organization long-range transportation plans (suggested lead organizations: MetroPlan Orlando, Space Coast Transportation Planning Organization);

   - Expressway authority master plans (suggested lead organizations: Central Florida Expressway Authority, Osceola County Expressway);

   - The Strategic Regional Policy Plan and the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (suggested lead organization: East Central Florida Regional Planning Council).
Figure 25. Recommend Study Areas for New East-West Transportation Corridors
Figure 26. Recommended Study Areas for New North-South Transportation Corridors
7. Develop an agreement among local governments, metropolitan planning organizations, transportation authorities, water management districts, and other entities to strengthen consistency among future transportation, land use, and water supply plans. Improved consistency should emphasize:

- Population forecasts across jurisdictions and across disciplines (e.g., transportation, land use, and water supply planning); and
- Assumptions regarding the timing and amount of development expected in future centers, including the overall allocation of future population growth across the study area.

*Suggested lead organization: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, working with regional and local entities*

**Prepare Frameworks for Implementation**

8. Coordinate with appropriate local governments and landowners to develop planning tools and legal instruments to reserve and protect rights of way to support implementation of the transportation corridors recommended in the Evaluation studies.

*Suggested lead organizations: Florida Department of Transportation, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity*

9. Develop a framework for potential partnership and co-location agreements with railroads, utilities, or other infrastructure providers to support implementation of the transportation corridors recommended in the Evaluation studies.

*Suggested lead organization: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, working with regional and local entities*
ADDITIONAL TASK FORCE RECOMMENDATIONS

The Task Force identified supporting recommendations to ensure that the action plan is implemented consistent with the guiding principles. These recommendations are organized into four categories:

**Regional Collaboration**

1. **Strengthen and sustain the *How Shall We Grow*? shared regional vision as a foundation for future transportation corridor planning and related long-term decisions in the region.** Key emphasis areas should include:

   - Strengthen the process for the integration of the *How Shall We Grow*? principles and the *East Central Florida 2060 Plan* into local land use and transportation plans.
   - Develop a process through which local governments in the study area can identify and resolve extra-jurisdictional impacts of growth and development plans including changes in urban growth boundaries/service areas, building on this shared vision.
   - Work with *myregion.org* to convene local governments, metropolitan planning organizations, state agencies, and other partners to develop a process for conducting future updates of *How Shall We Grow*?

   *Suggested lead organizations: East Central Florida Regional Planning Council, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, working with applicable state, regional, and local entities*

**Conservation**

2. **Ensure the long-term protection of regionally significant natural resources that could be impacted by the proposed transportation corridors** through the following solutions:

   - Coordinate transportation and conservation decisions through strategies such as shared acquisition or preservation of land for future corridors and future conservation; regional mitigation banks; and incentives for landowners such as conservation easements and payments for ecosystem services.
   - Identify regionally significant natural resources where avoidance by the proposed transportation corridors may not be possible and determine appropriate design solutions such as the use of bridging and wildlife crossings.
   - Address potential impacts from the proposed transportation corridors to areas identified for mitigation purposes in development orders related to developments of regional impact and sector plans.
   - Identify opportunities to support regional water supply plans as part of the development of the proposed transportation corridors, such as the co-location of transportation and water distribution infrastructure; improved management of surface water and stormwater in areas impacted by new or enhanced corridors; and other mitigation activities associated with the proposed corridors.

   *Suggested lead organization: Florida Department of Transportation, working with Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, water management districts, applicable federal partners, environmental stakeholders*
Countryside

3. Ensure that productive agricultural lands are preserved and enhanced by the proposed transportation corridors through the following solutions:

- Work with landowners to ensure the proposed corridors do not impede plans to maintain lands with significant economic or environmental value in long-term agricultural uses.
- Identify strategies and mechanisms to support the continued viability of agriculture as a productive economic sector in areas impacted by the proposed transportation corridors, such as agricultural diversification initiatives; conservation easements; transfer of development rights programs; agricultural zoning; and payment for ecosystem services.

_Suggested lead organizations: Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, working with Florida Department of Transportation, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, and local governments_

Centers

4. Coordinate future land use decisions to maximize the benefits of the proposed transportation corridors on economic development and quality of life, while minimizing negative impacts on existing communities through the following solutions:

- Develop future land use plans and access management strategies that support the intended function of the proposed transportation corridors for high-speed, high-capacity travel.
- Work with local governments and landowners to revise existing approved developments of regional impact and development orders that might be impacted by the proposed transportation corridors.
- Define economic development strategies that support the intended function of the corridors, including targeted sites for future employment centers.

_Suggested lead organization: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, working with the Florida Department of Transportation, local governments, and regional and local economic development organizations_
Finally, the Task Force recommends the following activities to initiate implementation of this report, including the action items and supporting recommendations.

1. Meet with local governments and regional planning, water, and transportation agencies to share the findings and recommendations of the Task Force. Encourage these partners to consider possible amendments to their respective plans by September 30, 2015 to enable initial implementation of the action items and supporting recommendations of this report.

   Suggested lead organization: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Florida Department of Transportation

2. Meet with other state agencies and federal agencies to share the findings and recommendations of the Task Force. Encourage these agencies to move forward with planning of recommended state and federal investments and implementation of related policies in support of the Task Force recommendations.

   Suggested lead organization: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Florida Department of Transportation

3. Develop a process for tracking progress on implementation of these recommendations over time.

A potential approach may include the following:

- Recommend that the Florida Transportation Commission be tasked with tracking progress of the transportation-related action items and recommendations from this report and suggesting new or revised transportation policies as needed to enable their successful implementation.

- Recommend that the Florida Department of Economic Opportunity be tasked with tracking progress of the land use and economic development-related recommendations from this report and suggesting new or revised policies as needed to enable their successful implementation.

   Suggested lead organization: Florida Department of Economic Opportunity, Florida Transportation Commission
APPENDIX A: EXECUTIVE ORDER 13-319
APPENDIX C: LIST OF TECHNICAL RESOURCES CONSULTED BY THE TASK FORCE