



Copies to: Sarah Catala
William Roll
David Nelson
Lisa Dykstra
Rick Langlass

Date: August 14, 2018
DRAFT

Project: NE Polk US 27 Mobility Study
Polk County

Project No.(s): FPID No. 440320-1-22-01
AEP: 1040058000

Meeting Place: Polk County Administration
Building
330 West Church Street
Bartow, FL 33830

Meeting Date: August 9, 2018

Meeting Time: 1:30 p.m.

Participants: Melody Bell, BOCC District 2
Tom Deardorff, Polk TPO
Sarah Catala, FDOT

Rick Langlass, RS&H
Lisa Dykstra, RS&H
William Roll, KHA

Purpose: Stakeholder interview

Commissioner Bell provided her perspective on US 27.

- Put more money into east/west roadway connections
- Avoids US 27 to save time during trips

Question #1 is US 27 a freight priority?

No, would like to see freight move to an alternative corridor. Allow more local traffic on US 27

Commissioner Bell asked about the seemingly low number of trucks identified in the presentation (4,000 AADT). William explained that the number is calculated by the number of trucks that pass one point on the roadway. Total number of trucks on the road is much higher.

Commissioner Bell recommended talking to CSX. FDOT will meet with them during the study.

Question #2 what are the influence of land uses in this area?

Distribution and warehousing are a significant influence to the area

Question #3 what is the primary function of US 27?

MEETING SUMMARY

August 9, 2018

Page 2

Acts as a collector road. Tom noted it is an arterial and should function as one.

Commissioner Bell asked if Express Lanes could be built on US 27. Rick briefly summarized the Turnpike feasibility study looking at Managed Lanes on the corridor from SR 60 to I-4.

Question #4 what are the potential types of solutions?

- Managed lanes

- Build the CPP

- Provide network connections for short trips, noted there are elderly drives on US 27

Question #5 what are critical short term improvements on US 27

- Address traffic signals. Sarah provided update on adaptive signal control program being done by D1.

- Restrict truck traffic from left lane

Question #6 what are critical long term improvements on US 27

- CPP

- Managed lanes

Question #7 how does US 27 support or hurt economic development?

- Supports development

Question #8 what are the trends for land use and development

- Davenport will have more warehousing

- Haines City will have more housing

- New steel manufacturing plant near Frostproof – good paying jobs

- Preserve some rural land

- Tourism

- West Fort Meade and Frostproof right now farming

Question #9 who should the study contact?

- Adrian Jones from Legoland (believe recently left Legoland, promoted to Merlin Entertainment North America)

- David Price from Bok Tower Gardens

- Mark Jackson from Polk County sports tourism

- Mark Bostic from Commercial Carrier

- State representatives – Burton and Killebrew

Tom noted that he spoke with Mark about map of short term rentals, but there is no map showing individual properties that are short term rentals.

Question #10 what is needed from transportation to increase development?

- Better transportation options

MEETING SUMMARY

August 9, 2018

Page 3

Sarah asked about choice of transportation.

Supports bike paths but not on US 27

More sidewalks

Question #11 what are the greatest opportunities for growth?

Development along CPP corridor

Development along I-4 corridor

Question #12 what is the priority for the corridor?

Interregional traffic

Tom thought this study may identify the need to widen SR 60 from two to four lanes in eastern Polk and Osceola Counties.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

REYNOLDS, SMITH AND HILLS, INC.



Rick Langlass, PE
Project Manager



Copies to: Sarah Catala
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Date: August 14, 2018
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Project: NE Polk US 27 Mobility Study
Polk County

Project No.(s): FPID No. 440320-1-22-01
AEP: 1040058000

Meeting Place: Polk County Administration
Building
330 West Church Street
Bartow, FL 33830

Meeting Date: August 9, 2018

Meeting Time: 1:30 p.m.

Participants: William Braswell, BOCC District 3
Tom Deardorff, Polk TPO
Sarah Catala, FDOT

Rick Langlass, RS&H
Lisa Dykstra, RS&H
William Roll, KHA

Purpose: Stakeholder interview

Commissioner Braswell provided his perspective on US 27.

- Widen it, let's go!
- Has a blueberry farm on Kuder Ranch Road off of Old Polk City Road. Is seeing more traffic use that Old Polk City Road to access CR 557 and then to I-4 westbound
- CR 557 is the north entrance to Winter Haven
- Look at using CR 557 to divert traffic from US 27
- Look at land in the SW quadrant of I-4 and US 27 to create a by-pass for US 27. Tom noted that this land is in the Green Swamp
- The interchange of CR 557 and I-4 is planned for a complete reconstruction. More traffic would use this interchange to access I-4
- Along the corridor, from Lake Wales to I-4 is heavily congested, but north of I-4 it seems not as congested
- Need an outlet to the east
- Commissioner Braswell asked if CPP is still on the table. Tom noted that he was not thinking this study would be a reinvention of CPP, but to look at connecting to Poinciana Parkway.
- Doesn't find Haines City traffic that bad.

MEETING SUMMARY

August 9, 2018

Page 2

- Noted the CFX Parkway, connection to I-4 may have had a problem with gas line, noted a connection to 532/Osceola County.

Tom mentioned the need for a connection between US 27 and Poinciana. Widening of US 17/92 to four lanes through Haines City and to the east would be very helpful.

Question #1 what is the primary purpose of US 27?

Sees trucks as the primary purpose, but would rather have another corridor like the CPP to take trucks off US 27.

Question #2 Thoughts on cars on US 27

Feels that local traffic is crossing US 27, while regional traffic is traveling along US 27

Question #3 what potential types of solution on US 27?

Other routes to provide relief from congestion on US 27 like Thompson Valley Road

Managed lanes on US 27

Bikes – too much money to build for little improvement in congestion

Transit – same thoughts as bikes, high capital cost for low returns in use

Need to concentrate on cars and trucks

Question #4 what is one major improvement needed?

Build CPP

Question #5 what is a short term improvement that is desired?

Divert traffic off of US 27

Question #6 what is a long term improvement that is desired?

Light rail, but is it practical?

Question #7 what are the significant future land use changes in the area?

Growth north of I-4

Haines City planning 5,000 homes along east side. Commissioner is on Haines City EDC.

A lot of development coming in between Davenport and Haines City.

Look at 30 years of population growth

Question #8 how does the corridor support or hurt economic development?

Helps by providing a corridor for trucks and brings distribution centers to the area

Question #9 who are people we should reach out to during the study?

Haines City EDC

Question #10 what level of involvement do you want to have in this study?

MEETING SUMMARY

August 9, 2018

Page 3

Very interested in this study. Tom noted FDOT is planning a regular update on the agenda for the TPO Board and he is drafting a summary letter for Mr. Friedman.

Question #11 what are the best ways to receive public input?

Social media is the best. Webpages are “old news”

Question #12 any groups along US 27 that the study should reach out to and talk?

No

Commissioner Braswell noted a sight distance issue at the intersection of SR 559 and CR 559A near the Love's Truck stop. Due to elevation difference on either side of the intersection, difficult for EB cars turning left to see what lane WB cars are in. Left turning cars turn in front of through vehicles.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

REYNOLDS, SMITH AND HILLS, INC.



Rick Langlass, PE
Project Manager



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Rick Langlass

Date: August 14, 2018
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Project: NE Polk US 27 Mobility Study
Polk County

Project No.(s): FPID No. 440320-1-22-01
AEP: 1040058000

Meeting Place: Polk County Administration
Building
330 West Church Street
Bartow, FL 33830

Meeting Date: August 9, 2018

Meeting Time: 11:00 a.m.

Participants: John Hall, BOCC District 5
Tom Deardorff, Polk TPO
L.K. Nandam, FDOT
Sarah Catala, FDOT

Rick Langlass, RS&H
Lisa Dykstra, RS&H
William Roll, KHA

Purpose: Stakeholder interview

Commissioner Hall provided his perspective on US 27.

- Avoids US 27 at all cost
- As he said in BOCC meeting, can take four hours to travel from Lake Wales to Clermont on US 27. No other good route to make this trip
- There is no signal progression, as soon as vehicles get up to speed they have to stop for a signal
- Uses local two-lane roads to get to the Four Corners area (raises cattle in this area), avoids I-4 and US 27
- Noted an increase in trucks using local roads (ex. Dean Still Road, Old Grade Road)
- Accidents on I-4 and US 27 creates more traffic on local roads as people find ways to avoid area
- Would not prefer to build more lanes only to have additional lanes get congested (building a bigger parking lot)
- Now that US 98 is three lanes, trucks use all three lanes, causes congestion
- Traffic congestion causes drivers to take chances which increases chances of accidents

Secretary Nandam noted that corridor improvements alone will not work, need a network of roads.

MEETING SUMMARY

August 9, 2018

Page 2

Commissioner Hall recommended against using US 27 as a leg of the CPP. Need a separate toll road to circumvent US 27.

Secretary Nandam noted that Turnpike has taken over the study for CPP. Beginning on the west side near Bartow, they are working on it in segments instead of one whole corridor. By doing it by segment, it's possible to build demand as each segment is completed. This study is looking at both local and long distance trips. Will identify both short term and long term projects.

Commissioner Hall related a story about his son who travels on I-4 to Orlando every day. The I-4/US 27 interchange is a significant issue. Seems like the center lane travels faster, not sure why.

Secretary Nandam noted that the US 27 and Champions Gates interchanges cause congestion.

Commissioner Hall stated that the biggest challenge for this study will be the changes in the commissioners over the life of the project. Suggested creating a plan to update staff to allow them to update new commissioners and allow them to champion the project.

Question #1 What is the primary function for US 27?

Freight, local and regional traffic. Polk is a logistics hot spot for the state due to its proximity to ports (Tampa, Canaveral, and Miami). More distribution centers will come to the I-4 and US 27 area.

Sarah Catala asked if Commissioner Hall would still use the routes previously noted for cattle even if US 27 were widened. Commissioner Hall responded that he would. Sarah asked if he thought we should look at other roads in the study area. Commissioner Hall noted I-4 for commuter traffic.

Commissioner Hall recommended that any added lanes for US 27 include lanes for shared rides particularly in the urbanized area. If local roads are recommended for improvement, the County does not have the money to improve the roads and they are not high on the priority list.

Tom noted that the County has a policy that no county money will be used to improve roads in the Green Swamp. Commissioner Hall noted that Old Grade Road and Dean Still Road are the best sand truck routes, but can't use public money to improve these roads.

Question #2 in what ways does US 27 hurt or help economic development?

Hinders freight when you can't move goods or people. Might drive freight business away from US 27. Businesses might locate elsewhere since congestion is so bad. Congestion costs freight companies money (fuel and time).

Sarah informed the commissioner of the adaptive signal control project (by FDOT TSM&O) which is about to start operating on US 27. Should address some of the issues with signal progression.

MEETING SUMMARY

August 9, 2018

Page 3

Commissioner Hall recommended the study will need to be flexible based on what happens in the future. For example, BEBR indicates that 1 million people will live in Polk County by 2040, and patterns change every year.

Question #3 what type of solutions should be looked at in the study?

Need to change the mindset on public transit. With more people in the County, more of a need for transit. Need other options for commuters, choices for transportation. A public transportation option between Polk and Orlando would be valuable.

Question #4 any critical short term improvements?

I-4/US 27 interchange

Intersections on US 27

Shift in paradigm in how people get around – public transportation offers more time to work during commute. But no voter support for public transit.

Question #5 people that should be contacted during the study

Freight stakeholders

Transit services

Well-advertised public forums to specific groups

Commissioner Hall thought that widening US 17/92 to four lanes between Haines City and Kissimmee would provide relief to I-4/US 27. Parallel route to relieve congestion

Question #6 how would you like to be involved?

Provide updates to Commission

Standing item on TPO agenda for updates on study

Tom noted that he will draft a letter for Jim Freeman to sign that will list items the commissioners are concerned about based on these interviews.

Public notification of meetings should be done with social media. Is it possible to use DMS signs on I-4? Possibly do an e-town hall or online survey.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

REYNOLDS, SMITH AND HILLS, INC.

MEETING SUMMARY

August 9, 2018

Page 4

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RLL', is positioned above the printed name.

Rick Langlass, PE
Project Manager

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Copies to: Sarah Catala
William Roll
David Nelson
Lisa Dykstra
Rick Langlass

Date: September 18, 2018
DRAFT

Project: NE Polk US 27 Mobility Study
Polk County

Project No.(s): FPID No. 440320-1-22-01
AEP: 1040058000

Meeting Place: Polk County Administration
Building
330 West Church Street
Bartow, FL 33830

Meeting Date: September 18, 2018

Meeting Time: 3:00 p.m.

Participants: George Lindsey, BOCC District 1
LK Nandam, FDOT
Sarah Catala, FDOT

Rick Langlass, RS&H
William Roll, KHA

Purpose: Stakeholder interview

Sarah provided a brief summary of the US 27 study.

Commissioner Lindsey provided his perspective on the US 27 study.

- Why does it take so long to study this area?
- Will there be any new ideas that solve the issues
- Seems like the answers are known, need to implement them
- Sees this study as more of a process of elimination to identify the solutions
- Wants to expedite the process

William noted that the process for the LRTP updates is a shorter time period and limits investigating avenues for solutions. This study can evaluate more comprehensive solutions for this area. He has experienced in the past road blocks from various stakeholders that prevent solutions from being implemented.

LK noted the history of the CPP. Since the CPP was removed from the FDOT work plan, it committed to identifying what improvements can be made along US 27 to maximize its capacity. The study will provide background for meetings to stakeholders in order to gain support from stakeholders. By the end of the study, we should be able to identify the purpose of US 27 and what it will look like in the different sections for the corridor.

MEETING SUMMARY

August 9, 2018

Page 2

Commissioner Lindsey noted that US 27 has been overwhelmed by local traffic. Should just give it up to the local traffic. CR 557 is experiencing significant traffic increases as drivers find alternate routes to avoid US 27.

LK said the department will look at ways the study can be expedited, but noted the process takes time and need to document support from stakeholders in order to successfully roll out a series of projects.

Commissioner Lindsey noted that another project identified as a high priority project is the widening of SR 60 out east to the Osceola Countyline. However, does D5 have any plans to widen SR 60 east to the Turnpike? If not, then just pushing the bottleneck down the road. Why spend the money on this project? Would be better to spend it on US 27. How does the Commissioner “turn the needle” on these types of projects?

Sarah noted that the SR 60 is part of a multi-district effort to evaluate SR 60.

LK stated that the department needs a game plan for improvements.

Commissioner Lindsey sees in the future higher density development and in-fill projects. Development is being forced to build along US 27, creating the additional congestion. Need to look ½ mile to 1 mile east and west for parallel corridors to help build the network.

Sarah mentioned the adaptive signal control (ASC) project that is being rolled out this year will provide some relief to addressing the congestion.

Lindsey noted that the issue with CR 557 popped up out of nowhere. This corridor has no risen to the top of the TPO’s priority for improvement. Will this study be able to identify this type of unknown problem or will it happen again.

William asked Commissioner Lindsey if he had a shopping cart of solutions for the US 27 what would he choose.

Commissioner Lindsey compared a group of small improvements with no effect vs. one big improvements with significant effect. Need to identify alternate networks for vehicles. Most of the traffic on CR 557 comes from the west side of US 27. Could Powerline Road be improved and extended to help traffic on the east side of US 27. Commissioner Lindsey sees a “tsunami” of people coming, need to get ahead of it. If the department defines a clear path of success then elected officials will follow.

Commissioners Lindsey said that “tell us what you think” is too broad, need to narrow the focus for stakeholders. He compared this to the issue the County had with water resources. Need a single focus on this issue. The department needs to get the Polk TPO onboard, more than just improvements to US 27 and US 17/92.

MEETING SUMMARY

August 9, 2018

Page 3

Commissioner Lindsey said the study needs to show measurable success during the study.

Commissioner Lindsey believes the department should contact every mayor along the corridor as well as the city manager or planning director.

The study needs to show incremental progress with substantive results.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

REYNOLDS, SMITH AND HILLS, INC.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RLL', is positioned above the printed name.

Rick Langlass, PE
Project Manager



Copies to: Sarah Catala
William Roll
David Nelson
Lisa Dykstra
Rick Langlass

Date: January 28, 2019
DRAFT

Project: NE Polk US 27 Mobility Study
Polk County

Project No.(s): FPID No. 440320-1-22-01
AEP: 1040058000

Meeting Place: Polk County Administration
Building
330 West Church Street
Bartow, FL 33830

Meeting Date: January 25, 2019

Meeting Time: 12:00 p.m.

Participants: Martha Santiago, BOCC District 4
Sarah Catala, FDOT

Tom Deardorff, Polk TPO
Rick Langlass, RS&H
William Roll, KHA

Purpose: Stakeholder interview and study update

After introductions, Sarah provided a brief description of the project background, including how this study relates to the Central Polk Parkway (CPP). After the CPP was cancelled, the district made the commitment to study the region to address the issues of mobility in this portion of the County. That is the purpose of this study. Sarah mentioned the purpose of the meeting was to introduce the study to the Commissioner as well as allow her to provide input on concerns about US 27 or the study area. Sarah noted that although there are many issues with US 27, the study will be looking regionally to identify solutions.

Commissioner Santiago stated that she is aware of the congestion issues along US 27, particularly in the Haines City area. Also, she has heard from the community about the high speeds on US 27 and they have requested additional traffic signals to allow vehicles to make turns on US 27.

Sarah asked the Commissioner what local roads she used to avoid congestion on US 27. She mentioned US 17/92, US 192, and CR 557.

Sarah informed the Commissioner that from stakeholder interviews, the study team has learned that I-4 is not a destination for most people. Most people are trying to get to Orlando or places east. They use I-4 to get to Orlando because that is the most viable route. The study team will be

MEETING SUMMARY

January 14, 2019

Page 2

looking at new regional connections to provide people other routes to Orlando and destinations east.

Commissioner Santiago inquired about the status of the Central Polk Parkway (CPP). Tom noted that one of the reasons the CPP was cancelled was the difficulty in making a connection with I-4. The interchange spacing between US 27 and Champions Gate was too close to allow for another interchanges. He noted that other solutions need to be identified. They should be a range of options. Short term improvements along US 27 need to be identified. But these improvements on US 27 should balance the needs of additional signals and access along the corridor. He mentioned that the County had previously looked at FDC Grove Road and Holly Hill to try to improve connections in the area of the hospital. The US 27 study team will be coordinating with County staff as the study progresses.

Sarah updated the Commissioner with results of the study team's coordination with Central Florida Expressway (CFX) regarding the Poinciana Parkway Extension PD&E study. The study will be evaluating a new interchange between the Extension and US 17/92. The study team has also met with the local municipalities.

The study started in the summer of 2018. It was originally planned to be three years. However, the study team is looking at ways to streamline the process by overlapping efforts where possible. The study is currently conducting data collection. This data can be used in future PD&E projects and good data can help the PD&E studies move quickly.

Sarah informed the Commissioner about the letter the County Manager, Jim Freeman, provided to FDOT after the initial interviews with the Commissioners over the summer. The letter identified several projects the study team should update the Polk TPO and Polk Commissioners during the study. The study team will be presenting to the Polk TPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Polk TPO board in the next month.

Commissioner Santiago asked why the project did not continue south of SR 60. Sarah stated that a PD&E to widen US 27 south of US 27 to six lanes was recently completed. This portion of US 27 will be widened over the next few years. William also noted that the portion south of US 27 is not anticipated to experience significant growth in the near future.

Tom noted that trucks from the Intermodal Logistics Center (ILC) use SR 60 and US 27 to reach I-4. All of US 27 is very important for truck traffic as it is a SIS facility. Several years back, the Truckers Association to the governor asking the state to preserve this facility for trucks.

New regional connections identified by the study will be longer term improvements. However, some current projects will be incorporated into the study (i.e. US 27/I-4 interchange).

Multimodal improvements include Brightline, Sunrail, and Citrus Connection. Citrus connection recommendations could be short and/or midterm improvements. Brightline and Sunrail recommendations would be long term improvements.

MEETING SUMMARY

January 14, 2019

Page 3

William asked what projects should be prioritized. Commissioner Santiago noted the following:

- Concern for tourism – Legoland will be opening new hotels
- Create new jobs in the area to reduce the number of people commuting to Orlando
- New schools in the area will increase the number of school busses in the area
- Powerline Road extension alternative
- Heavy congestion near the Four Corners area
- Transparency in the project – communicate during the study

Sarah informed the Commissioner of a feasibility study being conducted by FTE for managed lanes on US 27. The study is not complete at this time.

Sarah also provided information on the Adaptive Signal Control project recently completed on US 27 from the Eagle Ridge mall to Ronald Reagan Parkway. This new traffic signal system dynamically changes the signal timing to help improve flow through the intersections. However, there are limits to what this system can do to improve traffic flow.

Sarah also stated that the study team had coordinate with the FDOT Planning Studio to identify new development patterns in the area. They will summarize context classification in the area.

Commissioner Santiago also mentioned people from the community are concerned with pedestrian and bicycle safety to and from schools. Sarah said the study is looking at multimodal improvements and will include pedestrians and bicyclists.

The Commissioner asked that the study use County staff to keep her updated on the study and will look forward to hearing from the team at the Polk TPO board meeting.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 1:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

REYNOLDS, SMITH AND HILLS, INC.



Rick Langlass, PE
Project Manager

MEETING SUMMARY

January 14, 2019

Page 4

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Rick Langlass

Date: January 28, 2019
DRAFT

Project: NE Polk US 27 Mobility Study
Polk County

Project No.(s): FPID No. 440320-1-22-01
AEP: 1040058000

Meeting Place: Polk County Administration
Building
330 West Church Street
Bartow, FL 33830

Meeting Date: January 14, 2019

Meeting Time: 2:00 p.m.

Participants: Rick Wilson, BOCC District 2
LK Nandam, FDOT
Sarah Catala, FDOT

Tom Deardorff, Polk TPO
Rick Langlass, RS&H

Purpose: Stakeholder interview and study update

After introductions, Sarah provided a brief description of the project background, including how this study relates to the Central Polk Parkway (CPP). After the CPP was cancelled, the district made the commitment to study the region to address the issues of mobility in this portion of the County. That is the purpose of this study.

Commissioner Wilson noted his family's company had constructed numerous roads in the County in the past. He realized the difficult job the study team will have to resolve the many issues in the area, particularly the anticipated significant population growth. He noted that he uses several local back roads to avoid congestion on US 27.

LK noted the study will look to plan for development. This study and the upcoming Polk County Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) will identify needed infrastructure for the area.

Tom noted that County staff had recently calculated over 2,500 dwelling units approved by all of the nearby cities in the past 12-18 months. He would like the study to identify the parallel roads that need to be prioritized by the County for improvements. He also noted the lack of transit options.

MEETING SUMMARY

August 9, 2018

Page 2

LK informed the Commissioner about the letter the County Manager, Jim Freeman, provided to FDOT after the initial interviews with the Commissioners over the summer. The letter identified several projects the study team should update the Polk TPO and Polk Commissioners during the study. The study team will be presenting to the Polk TPO Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) and the Polk TPO board in the next month.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 2:50 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

REYNOLDS, SMITH AND HILLS, INC.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RLL', is positioned above the printed name and title.

Rick Langlass, PE
Project Manager

MEMORANDUM:

Date: October 4, 2018

To: Sarah Catala (FDOT, Project Manager)

From: David Nelson, PLA LEED AP (Renaissance, Task Manager)

Subject: NE Polk US 27 Mobility Study
Polk County
FPID No.: 440320-1-22-01

Summary: Stakeholder Interviews with Municipalities - FINAL

Introduction

Staff members from municipalities within the study area were interviewed to identify and document issues and opportunities for the study area from individual perspectives and interests. This effort focused on taking a high-level look at the future vision for the corridor, its users, and the role US 27 should play in the larger context of regional transportation networks. The following municipalities were interviewed:

- Davenport – Darryl Koon and Michael Stripling
- Haines City – Richard Greenwood, Mark Bennett, Tavia Conner and Adriana Trujillo
- Lake Wales – Kathy Bangley and James Slaton
- Winter Haven – Bruce Lyon, Merle Bishop, Eric Labbe, Sean Byers and MJ Carnevale

Themes

During the interviews, common elements emerged from discussion – these themes form key guiding principles that will help inform development of the vision and corridor concepts. *[Beneath each theme, corresponding goals from the Florida Transportation Plan Policy element are listed.]*

- **Balance the needs of multiple transportation users:** US 27 is a regional roadway with many different users – visitors, freight carriers, commuters, and local traffic. It is a collector from all the adjacent rural areas.
[Agile, resilient, and quality infrastructure]
- **Develop alternative routes:** New roadways, both north/south and east/west, are needed to take traffic pressure off US 27 and I-4 and provide alternative routes and time-effective options for different users – connections to SR 417, Osceola Parkway or Poinciana Parkway were specifically mentioned as an east/west relievers. Additionally, existing roadways such as US 17/92, SR 60, CR 547, CR 557 and Powerline Road need to be improved to provide greater capacity and

accessibility. These strategies may work to get freight traffic off US 27 and separate it as much as possible from local traffic.

[Effective and reliable mobility for people and freight]

- **Provide connectivity:** Provide a connected system of secondary roadways between destinations for local traffic and multimodal users. As more development occurs along US 27, a grid network system of parallel roadways behind this development is needed.

[Effective and reliable mobility for people and freight]

[Transportation solutions that support quality places to live, learn, work, and play]

- **Accommodate growth:** As growth in the Orlando metro area pushes southwest, more people will be moving to eastern Polk County for affordable housing, which increases both residential and associated business traffic. New distribution and warehouse facilities are moving to the area, also adding new traffic to US 27.

[Transportation solutions that support quality places to live, learn, work, and play]

- **Expand multimodal options:** there is limited transit service along US 27 and many commuters are left without connections to major employment nodes. Developments with higher densities along the corridor could lead to increased use of public transportation including rail transit (SunRail).

[More transportation choices for people and freight]

- **Safety:** Accidents are common at most major intersections along US 27, resulting from several different contributing factors including high traffic volumes, speeding and weaving, stop-and-start movements from traffic signals, freight traffic, seasonal residents/visitors, businesses and a large contingent of elderly drivers.

[Safety and security for residents, visitors, and businesses]

Comments

In addition to the general themes heard during the stakeholder interviews, several specific comments warrant noting for future reference and use in this project:

Issues/Opportunities

- Powerline Road is an important connection – it gets a lot of traffic and needs to be expanded and/or lengthened.
- US 27 has prospered with development growth, but it has hindered growth in traditional downtown areas – connections need to be strengthened to encourage private investment.
- Traffic on US 17/92 has increased with the opening of the Poinciana SunRail station.
- There are approximately 2,000 acres of industrial lands planned south of SR 544 in the Haines City area that will funnel traffic to US 27.
- The Scenic Highway loses its appeal as an alternative roadway during the school year because buses make frequent stops.
- Municipalities feel US 27 is non-descript and they desire gateway elements, signage or other identifiers to help travelers recognize their location.
- Widening SR 60 east to the Turnpike might pull some traffic off US 27.

- Add flyovers/interchanges at major intersections.

Strategies

- Holly Hill Drive and Sanders Road to Polk city Road should be developed as a diverter for westbound traffic to I-4.
- Haines City is planning a multimodal station in downtown in anticipation of future multimodal expansion.
- Dedicated truck lanes or toll lanes.

Other

- Most communities are internet and social media savvy, but traditional methods such as notices with utility bills or posting at City Hall are also effective ways of reaching people.



Copies to: Sarah Catala
Lisa Dykstra
Rick Langlass
William Roll

Date: September 14, 2018
FINAL

Project: NE Polk US 27 Mobility Study
Polk County

Project FPID No. 440320-1-22-01
No.(s): AEP: 1040058000

Meeting Place: Haines City – City Hall
620 East Main Street
Haines City, FL 33844

Meeting Date: August 13, 2018

Meeting Time: 9:30 a.m.

Participants: Richard Greenwood, Director of
Development Services
Mark Bennett, Deputy Director of
Development Services
Tavia Conner, OMB Director Assistant
to the City Manager
Adriana Trujillo, Public Works
Operations Manager

Sarah Catala, FDOT
Rick Langlass, RS&H
David Nelson, Renaissance
Hunter McKibben

Purpose: Stakeholder interview

After introductions, Sarah provided an overview of the project, discussed some of the “big picture” objectives and stressed that accommodating multimodal accessibility is a key component to the project – this is not just a roadway widening project. She showed a map of the study area, noting that we are not just studying the corridor in isolation, but to extending lengths to both the east and west. This served as a lead-in to specific questions:

Question #1 – How do you see the US 27 study area connect with and influence the larger Central Florida region.

- US 27 is not only a primary north/south roadway through the state, but it is a collector from all the adjacent rural areas.
- This is an important study for Haines City because of its lack of connectors – expanded connections can help the City from an economic standpoint.
- US 27 and other connecting roadways need to be planned so they don’t end up like US 19, which seems to have no order.

MEETING SUMMARY

August 13, 2018

Page 2

Question #2 – What changes to the transportation network do you think would help facilitate mobility and economic activities in the area?

- North/south parallel roadways and east/west arterial roadways are needed to move traffic off US 27.
- Need to four-lane US 17/92 north of Haines City. This road is always busy, especially with truck traffic, but even more so now that the new SunRail station has opened in Ponciana.
- The City has put together a vision plan that proposes a series of roadway improvements that form a loose grid pattern that would disperse traffic better, including:
 - Powerline Road and Bice Grove Road as important north/south connectors. When development is proposed along the proposed Powerline Road alignment, the City is asking for a right-of-way reservation to achieve a new 120-foot section.
 - Patterson Road as a connector between US 27 and US 17/92, although there is an issue of securing a new railroad crossing.
 - Holly Hill Drive and Sanders Road to Polk City Road as a diverter for westbound traffic to I-4.
 - Potential roadway along gas and utility easements east of City.

Question #3 – What are some of the issues and opportunities related to growth and development?

- Most of the development in Haines City is for single-family units. There are approximately 6,000 dwelling units planned or permitted.
- There isn't much demand for multi-family product right now. There had been some interest, but development was relying on construction of the Central Polk Parkway to drive demand, so the projects went away when the CPP extension was pulled.
- There are approximately 2,000 acres of industrial uses planned south of SR 544. There are some existing industrial uses adjacent to that area and there is also a railroad spur (although there is no operator at this time).
- Industrial uses will likely come after rooftops – there is residential development planned north of the industrial area.
- The Aldi's headquarters is planning an expansion.
- The hospital is an economic driver, with medial facilities, support commercial, and residential.
- There are two new hotels being planned for US 27.
- Haines City has connections to the Polk Transit System. Current routes include #15 (Winter Haven/Haines City), #416 (Poinciana/Haines City), and #427 (US 27/Haines City). There is a common transfer point at the Haines City Plaza.
- Potential planning solutions that take right-of-way (like what has been done on US 19) could impact the economic potential of the corridor.

MEETING SUMMARY

August 13, 2018

Page 3

- Almost all the primary intersections along US 27 have the potential to be problems. A more in-depth follow-up with law enforcement and emergency services should be undertaken to see if any intersections stand out.

Question #4 – What projects do you feel are priorities for Haines City?

- Connections to the SunRail system
- A multimodal station in downtown Haines City. The City is planning a site for a SunRail station in case of route expansion to the west towards Lakeland.
- Some roadways need to transition to a more urban section to accommodate commercial, retail and restaurant uses being proposed and provide a better pedestrian experience.
- New roadways (see vision plan above).

Question # 5 – Who are other people to reach out to as part of this study?

- Heart of Florida Regional Medical Center (Ann Barnhardt)
- Haines City Economic Development Council
- Developers in the area such as the Cassidy Holdings Group

Question #6 – What level of involvement do you want in this study

- Traffic issues are routinely discussed at meetings – it would be good to provide the City Commission with regular updates on project progress and potential solutions.
- A more detailed studio with the City Commission should be scheduled to hear their concerns and ideas.
- Someone from Development Services should be on the Project Advisory Group (PAG) – maybe Mark Bennett or Jeff Brown.
- Facebook may be a way to inform people of upcoming events, but electronic methods are probably not the best way to reach people in the community. The best ways to contact people are traditional methods such as:
 - Utility billings (need to notice at least one month in advance)
 - Church bulletin inserts
 - Flyers
 - Postings at City Hall (where a lot of people pay their utility bills)
 - Minister's group
 - Marquee signs

Adriana Trujillo had to leave the meeting early due to other obligations, but she promised to provide some written responses to the discussion questions (sheet provided by Sarah). I followed up with her by email after the meeting and provided her with an electronic copy of the discussion questions.

MEETING SUMMARY

August 13, 2018

Page 4

The meeting adjourned at approximately 11:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

RENAISSANCE PLANNING

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'DN', is written over a horizontal line.

David Nelson, PLA, ASLA LEED AP
Partner and Stakeholder Engagement Task Leader



Copies to: Sarah Catala
William Roll
David Nelson
Lisa Dykstra
Rick Langlass

Date: September 20, 2018
DRAFT

Project: NE Polk US 27 Mobility Study
Polk County

Project No.(s): FPID No. 440320-1-22-01
AEP: 1040058000

Meeting Place: Winter Haven City Hall
451 3rd St. NW
Winter Haven, FL 33881

Meeting Date: September 19, 2018

Meeting Time: 2:00 p.m.

Participants: Bruce Lyon, Winter Haven EDC
Merle Bishop, Winter Haven
Eric Labbe, Winter Haven
Sean Byers, Winter Haven
MJ Carnevale, Winter Haven

Sarah Catala, FDOT
Rick Langlass, RS&H
William Roll, KHA

Purpose: Stakeholder interview

Sarah provided a brief summary of the US 27 study. A map of the study area was provided, as well as a detailed map book of the existing corridor, and Sarah noted that we are not just studying the US 27 corridor in isolation but are extending context to both the east and west – from Poinciana to Winter Haven – so that we can adequately evaluate regional connections east/west as well as north/south.

Comments from the City included:

- Can't add enough capacity to US 27 to solve the problem
- Need alternate north/south corridors
- City lacks good north south routes – drivers user US 17 and Cypress Gardens Blvd to go from SW to NE
- City desires a north/south corridor east of the city connecting SR 540, SR 542 and SR 544.
- Fastest growing city in the County, approximately 3-4% annually
 - Biggest factor for growth is Legoland
- Large number of commuters out-of-city limits and local employees, approximately 50/50 split

MEETING SUMMARY

August 19, 2018

Page 2

- City is evaluating a “destination corridor” for Cypress Gardens Blvd from Overlook Drive to US 27. City has a vision for Cypress Gardens Blvd. Recently completed an RSA along Cypress Gardens Blvd. near Legoland.
- Legoland
 - Most customers come from Orlando
 - 18% of customers come from South Florida
- ILC
 - Growth in rail traffic, adding a 4th crane to site soon
 - CSX has 650 containers/day at the terminal using one long train
 - Capacity is 900 containers using two shorter trains
 - Most traffic heads east on SR 60 to US 27
 - Remainder of traffic use US 17 and local roads to reach I-4
 - Not convenient to get to Tampa or Orlando
- CR 557 has significant growth in traffic
 - TPO is evaluating starting a PD&E for 4-laning this roadway
 - New interchange at CR 557 and I-4
- City suggested that widening SR 60 east to Turnpike might pull some traffic off of US 27
- New Federal “Opportunity Zones” – six are located in Winter Haven, designated by census tracks
- City is looking to push industrial facilities to three locations
 - Industrial Park on SR 544 (Lucerne Park Rd)
 - Airport
 - ILC – will take a lot of time to build out, 20-30 years
- Fulfillment centers are locating here due to convenient location between Tampa and Orlando
 - ILC can’t due fulfillment due to distance to I-4, but will serve other functions
- It would be better if the CPP connected with SR 417 or Osceola Parkway instead of I-4
 - Too much traffic on I-4
 - Connecting to I-4 doesn’t make sense due to congestion on I-4
- City is building a field house for Orlando Magic developmental team at Chain O’ Lakes complex. Will hold regional/statewide tournaments for basketball/volleyball.

Question #1 – What are the best near term improvements on US 27?

- Interchanges/flyovers at major intersections
- US 19 was done too late in Pinellas. Similar roadway would be good at this point on US 27, land not as developed. Creating value to land by installing interchanges at intersections to create efficiency

Question #2 – What is the best way to connect to Osceola Parkway/SR 417?

- SR 542 east
- SR 544 east to Poinciana

MEETING SUMMARY

August 19, 2018

Page 3

Question #3 – What multimodal options is the City interested in?

- Sunrail – commuter rail would be great
- Bus service
- Need to be able to serve tourists; more hotels planned along Cypress Gardens Blvd.

Question #4 – Can the city identify any potential landmines for the study?

- No obvious issues

Question #5 – Are there any other stakeholders we should meet with during the study?

- Central Florida Regional Planning Council
- Distributors such as JB Hunt, Oakley, etc.
- Florida Hospital (Ann Barnhardt)

Question #6 – Where should the flyovers/interchanges be built?

- SR 540 (Cypress Gardens Blvd)
- SR 542
- SR 544

Question #7 – What is one strategy that should be evaluated during the study?

- Alternate corridors, parallel routes (long term)
- Flyovers/interchanges (short term)

Question #8 – What is the best way to coordinate with the city during the study?

- Presentations to the city council
- Participate in PAG – Merle would be the point of contact

The meeting adjourned at approximately 3:00 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

RS & H, INC.

MEETING SUMMARY

August 19, 2018

Page 4

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'RLL', is positioned above the printed name.

Rick Langlass, PE
Project Manager

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Mtng_19SEPT18 DRAFT.docx



Copies to: Sarah Catala
Lisa Dykstra
Rick Langlass
William Roll

Date: January 07, 2019
DRAFT

Project: NE Polk US 27 Mobility Study
Polk County

Project FPID No. 440320-1-22-01
No.(s): AEP: 1040058000

Meeting Place: City of Lake Alfred
155 E. Pomelo Street
Lake Alfred, FL 33850

Meeting Date: December 28, 2018

Meeting Time: 9:00 a.m.

Participants: John Deaton
Public Works Director

Sarah Catala, FDOT
Rick Langlass, RS&H
David Nelson, Renaissance

Purpose: Stakeholder interview with City of Lake Alfred staff

After introductions, Rick provided an overview of the study and discussed some of the “big picture” objectives and that FDOT wants to provide both short- and long-term design solutions as the project progresses, not just at its completion. He showed a map of the study area, noting that we are not just studying the corridor in narrow isolation, but are also looking to both the east and west for regional connections. A free-form discussion began, with conversation loosely grouped into the following topics:

Regarding the City of Lake Alfred:

- Traffic backs up on the one-way pairs (Shinn Boulevard southbound and Lakeshore Way northbound) through downtown now, sometimes for blocks – there are short distances between signals and the signal timing is poorly coordinated.
- Although the city provides speed enforcement programs, vehicles generally speed through the downtown – the speed limit is 35-45 mph along the one-way pairs, but people perceive them as major roadways.
- The city is working on a road diet project along the one-way pairs as part of the Downtown Master Plan effort to provide a more pedestrian-friendly destination – this project is intended to slow traffic and provide greater streetscape amenities.

MEETING SUMMARY

December 28, 2018

Page 2

There are some concerns that slowing traffic and reducing lanes may increase congestion.

- There are no trucking firms based in Lake Alfred.
- There is a new industrial park being built east of the city on US 17/92 – there are no end users yet, but when developed will increase truck traffic through downtown and to US 27. There are no other industrial parks in the city.
- Approximately 2,000 homes are planned on CR 557 north of Lake Alfred near the schools (Discovery Academy of Lake Alfred and Lake Alfred Polytech Academy) – this area will be annexed into the city.
- The city's service area runs up CR 557 to I-4 – there are multiple property owners, but some parcels are large and there is a good possibility of aggregation to facilitate new development and larger projects.
- There is no room for the city to expand towards Winter Haven or Auburndale.
- There has been discussion of adding a new traffic signal on the one-way pairs at Cummings Street – there is new development in this area and it provides a primary route to Lake Alfred Elementary School. [Sarah suggested coordination with FDOT Traffic Ops on this issue.]

Regarding US 27:

- Signalized intersections are a major issue – they slow all traffic but are especially hard on trucks.
- Converting major signalized intersections into interchanges would significantly increase traffic flows.
- Could express lanes or a separate toll facility work on US 27 to separate local traffic from through traffic? A toll facility would be a better option. Rick reviewed the feasibility study being conducted by Florida's Turnpike Enterprise evaluating managed lanes within the existing US 27 right-of-way. [Sarah noted that FDOT is not looking at widening lanes on US 27 as a first priority. Rick noted that improvements also need to balance engineering against financials to provide an effective solution.]
- Parallel frontage or backage roads would improve local traffic and reduce turn-in, turn-out conflicts and slowdowns. This could work well with new housing developments.

Regarding Other Roadways:

- There should be access to I-95 and the Turnpike without going through Lake Wales – a new east/west regional connector is needed.
- Improvements to SR 60 are important.
- People use SR 429 and SR 417 to avoid I-4.
- People use CR 557 and SR 33 through Polk City to Groveland as an alternate route to the Turnpike to avoid US 27.
- People use CR 557 and Deen Still Road to avoid sections of US 27.

MEETING SUMMARY

December 28, 2018

Page 3

- Old Polk City Road is used as a cut-through from US 27 to I-4.
- If CR 557 gets widened, it will bring more traffic, including trucks, and traffic through downtown may be just as bad.

Other Comments:

- John and/or Amee Bailey (Community Development Director) will try and attend upcoming Project Advisory Group meetings [Amee received an invitation to the first PAG meeting, as well as the meeting summary].
- The city has a population just under 6,000 people.
- The community is social media savvy and the city has a Facebook page.
- There are other ways to reach out to the community – some people still come into City Hall to pay their utility bill and project notices can also be mailed out as part of utility bills.
- The Mayor is part of the TPO.
- City Managers from the area have monthly coordination meetings.
- Lake Alfred is part of a water co-op that includes 17 municipalities – SWFWMD encourages this kind of arrangement because it promotes coordination between communities for new development needs and large water withdrawals, regional planning efforts, and infrastructure cost-sharing.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:00 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

RENAISSANCE PLANNING



David Nelson, PLA, ASLA LEED AP
Partner and Stakeholder Engagement Task Leader



Copies to: Sarah Catala
Keith Robbins
William Roll
David Nelson
Lisa Dykstra
Rick Langlass

Date: September 12, 2018
DRAFT

Project: NE Polk US 27 Mobility Study
Polk County

Project No.(s): FPID No. 440320-1-22-01
AEP: 1040058000

Meeting Place: SaddleCreek Transportation
3010 Saddle Creek Road
Lakeland, FL 33801

Meeting Date: September 11, 2018

Meeting Time: 10:00 a.m.

Participants: John Erwin, SaddleCreek
Keith Robbins, FDOT

Rick Langlass, RS&H

Purpose: Stakeholder interview

After introductions, Rick provided an overview of the project and its timeline. A map of the study area was provided, as well as a detailed map book, and Sarah noted that we are not just studying the US 27 corridor in isolation but are extending context to both the east and west – from Poinciana to Winter Haven – so that we can adequately evaluate regional connections east/west as well as north/south. This served as a lead-in to specific questions:

Question #1 – How do you see the US 27 study area connect with and influence the larger Central Florida region.

- US 27 is a main corridor for Saddlecreek's trucks.

Question #2 - Are there any specific intersections or other locations along this corridor that pose difficulty for access or throughput for freight traffic? What is the issue?

- South of SR 60 there are no significant issues with traffic. Starting north of SR 60 and in particular around Haines City there is significant congestion on US 27.

MEETING SUMMARY

September 11, 2018

Page 2

Question #3 - How would you grade the situation for truck parking along the corridor and how does that affect your daily operations tempo?

- SaddleCreek is almost all local trips so overnight parking is not an issue. Some drivers will park at customer locations for short breaks.

Question #4 - What does the flow and volume of truck traffic look like for your facility on a daily basis – inbound from where / outbound to where? General locations and directions only are helpful to get an idea of the overall flow of trucking traffic in the region.

- Generally from the Lakeland facility, truck heading south use US 98 to SR 60 to US 27 in order to go to Miami. From the Lakeland facility to Orlando, trucks use SR 33 to I-4. For trucks coming from the south and delivering to Orlando, trucks use US 27 up to Haines City and then cut over to US 17/92 in order to get to Orlando. Sometimes they use US 17/92 from the main facility to reach Orlando if there's congestion on I-4.

Question #5 - Are there any alternative routes used to access your facility, and if so, which ones and why?

- As noted above, US 17/92 is an alternative route for trucks heading from the south (South Florida) to Orlando. Also US 17/92 is an alternative route for truck heading to Orlando when I-4 is backed up.

Question #6 - Are there any sites under consideration for expanding or creating a multi-modal (truck and rail) facility?

- SaddleCreek is land locked at this facility. SaddleCreek recently expanded at another site (near interchange of Saddle Creek Road and Polk Parkway). Approximately 1 million square feet. May need to further expand at this site.

Question #7 - If trucks were allowed to use express lanes and they were available in the corridor, would your trucks use them? If not, why?

- Typical don't use tolls.
- In certain conditions, if congestion on local roads or interstates they will divert to toll roads to save time. They have an internal algorithm that computes when the trucks should shift over to a tolled facility.
- Open to using toll roads particularly if time savings outweighs the cost of tolls
- Keith noted that Saddle Creek have been using SR 417 to get around Orlando due to I-4 Ultimate construction.

MEETING SUMMARY

September 11, 2018

Page 3

Question #8 - What is your #1 complaint regarding mobility of freight on this corridor?

- Traffic, cars get the way of the trucks
- Signals timing doesn't allow trucks to stay at a consistent speed
- Rick noted that FDOT is starting an Adaptive Signal Control program along a portion of US 27 to reduce this problem.

Question #9 – Is there any data you collect that may be able to show critical insight into some of the issues with mobility along the 27 corridor? For example, delay due to congestion.

- The company collects GPS data for trucks in Orlando – can divert them to other roadways if needed
- The company does not have this capability along US 27 in Polk County.

Question #10 – What are potential types of solutions that would improve transportation in the study area that should be studied?

- Overpasses at major intersections
- Truck lanes
- Rick noted the Turnpike Feasibility study for Managed Lanes along US 27. Truck only lanes is a type of managed lane. Could be a possibility here.

Question #11 – What outcomes would your company like to see out of this US 27 Corridor Study?

- Less traffic
- Less Delays
- Faster transit through the corridor

Question #12 - What are the key opportunities in the study area?

- The centralized location of the area draws trucking operations to this area
- Noted they are served by their own rail line, so they do not utilize the ILC in Winter Haven.

Question #13 – What level of involvement do you want to have in this study?

- Rick described the PAG and its role in this study
- Would be willing to be a PAG participant (John Erwin)

Question #14 - Are there any other key people that you think we should contact at this early phase or at a later phase?

MEETING SUMMARY

September 11, 2018

Page 4

- Jeff Marple at Rooms-to-Go (*Post meeting note: Keith noted that Jeff is based in Tampa. Not familiar with the specific issues along this corridor*)

Question #15 - Do you have any additional concerns or comments?

- John offered to set up a roundtable of drivers for us to talk with in the future if that would be useful during the study

The meeting adjourned at approximately 10:30 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

REYNOLDS, SMITH AND HILLS, INC.



Rick Langlass, PE
Project Manager



Copies to: Sarah Catala
Keith Robbins
William Roll
David Nelson
Lisa Dykstra
Rick Langlass

Date: September 17, 2018
DRAFT

Project: NE Polk US 27 Mobility Study
Polk County

Project No.(s): FPID No. 440320-1-22-01
AEP: 1040058000

Meeting Place: Sherwin Williams Distribution
Center
400 Winter Haven Blvd
Winter Haven, FL 33881

Meeting Date: September 14, 2018

Meeting Time: 10:00 a.m.

Participants: Steve Strickland, Sherwin Williams
Thomas Gleason, Sherwin Williams
Joe Ford, Sherwin Williams

Keith Robbins, FDOT
Donald Spoerr, FDOT
Rick Langlass, RS&H

Purpose: Stakeholder interview

After introductions, Rick provided an overview of the project and its timeline. A map of the study area was provided, as well as a detailed map book, and Rick noted that we are not just studying the US 27 corridor in isolation but are extending context to both the east and west – from Poinciana to Winter Haven – so that we can adequately evaluate regional connections east/west as well as north/south.

Sherwin Williams' staff indicated that they would like to see the red light cameras removed from the intersections along US 27. They feel the cameras increase accidents by making drivers stop short at signals. They also mentioned a FTE survey they participated in recently about moving a staging pad in Orlando, near the I-4 and Florida's Turnpike interchange. Keith noted that the pad should stay in the same general area.

This served as a lead-in to specific questions:

Question #1 - Are there any specific intersections or other locations along this corridor that pose difficulty for access or throughput for freight traffic? What is the issue?

MEETING SUMMARY

September 14, 2018

Page 2

- Steve noted that in Haines City along US 27 between the Pilot (south of Old Polk City Road) to Walmart (Glen Estes Boulevard) and Lowes (Bates Road) the traffic backs up between the lights so much that it blocks the driveways making it difficult for vehicles to enter US 27.
- Steve indicated that congestion near I-4 and US 27 was not too bad
- Steven indicated there is a need for a signal along SR 544 at the Walmart Distribution Center truck access road. There is significant congestion WB on SR 544 between Walmart and US 27 at 6:00 am. In the afternoon, the congestion is noticed in the EB direction.

Question #3 - How would you grade the situation for truck parking along the corridor and how does that affect your daily operations tempo?

- No issues for truck parking. Either local trips or long trips heading out of the area.

Question #4 - What does the flow and volume of truck traffic look like for your facility on a daily basis – inbound from where / outbound to where? General locations and directions only are helpful to get an idea of the overall flow of trucking traffic in the region.

- Approximately 30% of the trucks from this site are long haul. The area serviced by this center is south to the Keys and north to the Panhandle and southern Alabama and Mississippi.
- 50%/50% split on trucks leaving center and heading east/west on SR 544. Trucks will use US 17 to avoid using US 27.
- 20 loads everyday between this center and a production center located in Orlando. They use US 27 to I-4 to reach the production center.

Question #5 - Are there any alternative routes used to access your facility, and if so, which ones and why?

- As noted above, US 17 is used as an alternate route. It is up to the drivers to decide when to use an alternate route.
- Recommended a new route off of US 27 up to I-4.

Question #6 - Are there any sites under consideration for expanding or creating a multi-modal (truck and rail) facility?

- There are plans for expansion at this site in the next 3-5 years.
- There are 28 trucks and 44 drivers. Truck use is slip-seated, meaning that multiple drivers use the same truck in different shifts. There are also another 25-30 outside trucks that enter the center.

MEETING SUMMARY

September 14, 2018

Page 3

Question #7 - If trucks were allowed to use express lanes and they were available in the corridor, would your trucks use them? If not, why?

- No limits on using toll lanes.
- Will use toll lanes to save time.

Question #8 - What is your #1 complaint regarding mobility of freight on this corridor?

- Traffic
- Signals timing doesn't allow trucks to stay at a consistent speed
- Donald noted that FDOT is starting an Adaptive Signal Control program along a portion of US 27 to reduce this problem.
- Short time between green and red phases of the signal.

Question #9 – What are potential types of solutions that would improve transportation in the study area that should be studied?

- New roads
- Improve existing roads – i.e. widen US 17/92 to four lanes
- Frontage roads along US 27 with minimal traffic signals

Question #10 – What level of involvement do you want to have in this study?

- Rick described the PAG and its role in this study
- Would be willing to be a PAG participant (Steve Strickland)

Question #11 - Are there any other key people that you think we should contact at this early phase or at a later phase?

- *Jimmy Davis of Davis Trucking*
 - *Has 300 trucks*
 - *Based in Starke, FL*
 - *Has a lot in west Lakeland and near Frostproof*
- *WEL – logistics service in Winter Haven, FL*
- *G.T.S*
- *Freightliner/Volvo dealerships*

MEETING SUMMARY

September 14, 2018

Page 4

Question #12 - Do you have any additional concerns or comments?

- Need another road to get off of US 27
- Biggest problem are outlet/driveways
- Suggested frontage road with no restrictions (signals)

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

REYNOLDS, SMITH AND HILLS, INC.



Rick Langlass, PE
Project Manager



Copies to: Sarah Catala
Keith Robbins
William Roll
David Nelson
Lisa Dykstra
Rick Langlass

Date: September 18, 2018
DRAFT

Project: NE Polk US 27 Mobility Study
Polk County

Project No.(s): FPID No. 440320-1-22-01
AEP: 1040058000

Meeting Place: Walmart Distribution Center
5600 SR 544
Winter Haven, FL 33881

Meeting Date: September 17, 2018

Meeting Time: 11:30 a.m.

Participants: Angel Ortiz, Walmart

Keith Robbins, FDOT
Rick Langlass, RS&H

Purpose: Stakeholder interview

After introductions, Rick provided an overview of the project and its timeline. A map of the study area was provided, as well as a detailed map book, and Rick noted that we are not just studying the US 27 corridor in isolation but are extending context to both the east and west – from Poinciana to Winter Haven – so that we can adequately evaluate regional connections east/west as well as north/south. This served as a lead-in to specific questions:

Question #1 - Are there any specific intersections or other locations along this corridor that pose difficulty for access or throughput for freight traffic? What is the issue?

- Access issues for supercenter store in Haines City.
- Access issues for fulfillment centers (8905 and 7853)
- Would like a traffic signal at truck entrance for Walmart DC on SR 544
 - Keith noted that a new traffic signal needs to meet a warrant in order to be installed

MEETING SUMMARY

September 14, 2018

Page 2

Question #2 – What is the difference between this distribution center and the facilities near I-4/US 27?

- This site is one of three “grocery only” distribution centers (others in MacClenny and Arcadia)
- I-4 sites
 - 7853 – “sortable” distribution site – sortable – small items moved by people
 - 8905 – “non-sortable” distribution site – larger items
 - Keith noted that these two locations deliver directly to homes
 - Angel noted the FedEx facility located between the two sites is used by Walmart to deliver items to individual addresses (homes)
- Three regional DC ship “non-grocery” items (Brooksville, Ft. Peirce, and Alachua)

Question #3 - How would you grade the situation for truck parking along the corridor and how does that affect your daily operations tempo?

- No truck parking issues for Walmart
- 3rd party vendors who deliver to this facility have had issues
- Noted that recent addition of Pilot and RaceTrack along US 27 have helped parking issues

Question #4 - What does the flow and volume of truck traffic look like for your facility on a daily basis – inbound from where / outbound to where? General locations and directions only are helpful to get an idea of the overall flow of trucking traffic in the region.

- Facility ships out approximately 200 trucks per day
- Facility receives approximately 200 trucks per day – not 100% sure of this number
- Mostly short haul trips
- Facility has the shortest length of hauls in the State (53 miles)
- Range – east to Melbourne, west to Bradenton, north to the Villages, and south to Wauchula

Question #5 - Are there any alternative routes used to access your facility, and if so, which ones and why?

- Will use US 17/92 as an alternate route to reach retail stores in Kissimmee

Question #6 - Are there any sites under consideration for expanding or creating a multi-modal (truck and rail) facility?

- New Cocoa Beach facility is the latest expansion, no anticipated needs in the future
- Cocoa Beach facility is “perishable grocery items” only
- As Cocoa Beach grows it will house more “perishable grocery items” and this facility will house more “non-perishable grocery items”

MEETING SUMMARY

September 14, 2018

Page 3

Question #7 - If trucks were allowed to use express lanes and they were available in the corridor, would your trucks use them? If not, why?

- Use toll roads currently
- Open to toll roads to save time
- Have short deliveries with time sensitive deliveries to stores – need dependable travel times
- “Slip seat” their trucks
- 3rd party vendor, Swift, also uses toll roads

Question #8 - What is your #1 complaint regarding mobility of freight on this corridor?

- Biggest complaint is congestion on US 27 between US 17/92 and I-4
- However, have had minimal service failures (missed delivery deadline) due to traffic
- Facility operates 24 hours
- Have two big shipping times, 6-8 am and 5-7 pm

Question #9 – Is there any data you collect that may be able to show critical insight into some of the issues with mobility along the corridor? For example, delay due to congestion?

- Angel will get in touch with Elif Raymer, Swift Terminal Manager, collocated at the Walmart DC site. Will ask her for input

Angel noted that Stores have unique delivery hours, based on:

- Stores with heavy volume of sales
- Noise ordinances
- Super Walmart and Neighborhood markets have different delivery windows
 - Determined by Home Office
 - Home office generates routes for trucks

Question #10 – What are potential types of solutions that would improve transportation in the study area that should be studied?

- Traffic signal at truck entrance on SR 544
 - Some operational issues at facility can cause backups on access roads to SR 544
 - This issue usually happen once a quarter during a staff meeting when back-up staff is working the facility not as efficiently which causes delays for processing trucks

MEETING SUMMARY

September 14, 2018

Page 4

Question #11 – What level of involvement do you want to have in this study?

- Rick described the PAG and its role in this study
- Would be willing to be a PAG participant (Angel Ortiz)
- Told him to expect us to contact him about PAG

Question #12 - Are there any other key people that you think we should contact at this early phase or at a later phase?

- Coca Cola plant in Auburndale

Question #13 - Do you have any additional concerns or comments?

- They have no major concerns at this time
- They are meeting their delivery deadlines

After interview, Angel took us into the warehouse and briefly showed us the operations. The meeting adjourned at approximately 12:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

REYNOLDS, SMITH AND HILLS, INC.



Rick Langlass, PE
Project Manager



Copies to: Sarah Catala
Keith Robbins
William Roll
David Nelson
Lisa Dykstra
Rick Langlass

Date: September 28, 2018
DRAFT

Project: NE Polk US 27 Mobility Study
Polk County

Project No.(s): FPID No. 440320-1-22-01
AEP: 1040058000

Meeting Place: Oakley Transportation Group, Inc.
101 ABC Road
Lake Wales, FL 33859

Meeting Date: September 27, 2018

Meeting Time: 1:00 p.m.

Participants: Kelly McDowell, Oakley

Keith Robbins, FDOT
Donald Spoerr, FDOT
Rick Langlass, RS&H

Purpose: Stakeholder interview

After introductions, Keith and Rick provided an overview of the project and its timeline. A map of the study area was provided, as well as a detailed map book, and Rick noted that we are not just studying the US 27 corridor in isolation but are extending context to both the east and west – from Poinciana to Winter Haven – so that we can adequately evaluate regional connections east/west as well as north/south. Keith noted the studies also being conducted by Central Office and Turnpike along this corridor.

Kelly's initial thoughts included:

- US 27 is a widely used corridor
- Enhancement of the US 17/92 corridor would be fruitful
- Trucks go in all four directions from this site
- For trucks heading north (Savannah, GA) will generally use I-4 to I-95
- Company doesn't designate routes to truckers but will review and question routes that go out of the way

MEETING SUMMARY

September 27, 2018

Page 2

This served as a lead-in to specific questions:

Question #1 - Are there any specific intersections or other locations along this corridor that pose difficulty for access or throughput for freight traffic? What is the issue?

- No particular hot spots were identified

Question #2 - How would you grade the situation for truck parking along the corridor and how does that affect your daily operations tempo?

- No truck parking issues since trucks are based here
- Sometimes returning truckers will run out of driving time before reaching the facility and will have to stop
- Does support more options for truck parking

Question #3 - What does the flow and volume of truck traffic look like for your facility on a daily basis – inbound from where / outbound to where? General locations and directions only are helpful to get an idea of the overall flow of trucking traffic in the region.

- Facility has approximately 200 trucks per day in and out of the facility in the Central Florida region
- Local operations range– Clewiston, Tampa, Winter Garden, and Leesburg
- For part of the company, the range is nationwide
- Has a total of about 400 trucks
- Performs numerous deliveries in the study area
- Have another facility in Auburndale

Oakley handles bulk liquids (food grade and hazardous). Spirits (alcohol) are considered both food grade and hazardous material. Oakley has about 50 general commodities trucks. Generally, deliver raw products to a processing facility to create a finished product.

Question #5 - Are there any alternative routes used to access your facility, and if so, which ones and why?

- No established alternative routes
- Sometimes drivers will use SR 33 to get to Leesburg
- Use an internal GPS system (NaviGO) but has some flaws
- Use previous experience from drivers for alternate routes

MEETING SUMMARY

September 27, 2018

Page 3

Question #6 - Are there any sites under consideration for expanding or creating a multi-modal (truck and rail) facility?

- This facility is maxed out. No plans for expansion at this time

Question #7 - If trucks were allowed to use express lanes and they were available in the corridor, would your trucks use them? If not, why?

- Generally avoids toll roads. Cost/benefit analysis shows it doesn't provide benefit
- Is in favor of managed lanes
- Keith noted that FDOT can only establish truck restricted lanes on limited access interstates

Question #8 - What is your #1 complaint regarding mobility of freight on this corridor?

- #1 Timing of lights, in particular the length of the yellow phase
 - Shifting of weight (liquids) causes concerns for the drivers when going through signals.
 - Would like to see a more consistent length of yellow phase.
 - Has concerns with the red light cameras for this reason
 - Keith noted the plan for Adaptive Signal Control to be implemented in a portion of US 27 particularly in the Haines City area.
- #2 State has not identified an east/west corridor other than I-4
 - Feels that other state roads (SR 60, SR 70) are unsafe for trucks – need to be divided roadways across the state.
 - Issues with congestion on north/south roads like US 27 are due to people trying to reach I-4. Might be able to solve some of the north/south issues by improving the east/west issues.
 - The improved corridor could be either north or south of I-4.
 - Keith noted that SR 80 is getting close to be 4-lane all the way across the state.

Question #9 – Is there any data you collect that may be able to show critical insight into some of the issues with mobility along the corridor? For example, delay due to congestion?

- No data is available that shows delay

Question #10 – What are potential types of solutions that would improve transportation in the study area that should be studied?

- No particular solutions identified

MEETING SUMMARY

September 27, 2018

Page 4

Question #11 – What level of involvement do you want to have in this study?

- Really likes the efforts Keith has made in keeping freight companies informed about upcoming projects through the forums and working groups
- Rick described the PAG and its role in this study
- Would be willing to be a PAG participant (Kelly McDowell)
- Told him to expect us to contact him about PAG

Question #12 - Are there any other key people that you think we should contact at this early phase or at a later phase?

- Knight Transportation in Lakeland
- Publix
- Keith Walpole
- Ellis Hunt

Question #13 - Do you have any additional concerns or comments?

- They had no other comments on the study

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

Respectfully submitted,

REYNOLDS, SMITH AND HILLS, INC.



Rick Langlass, PE
Project Manager

MEETING SUMMARY

September 27, 2018

Page 5

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Copies to: Sarah Catala
Keith Robbins
William Roll
David Nelson
Lisa Dykstra
Rick Langlass

Date: September 28, 2018
DRAFT

Project: NE Polk US 27 Mobility Study
Polk County

Project No.(s): FPID No. 440320-1-22-01
AEP: 1040058000

Meeting Place: Sunland Distribution of FL, Inc.
5916 Waverly Road
Waverly, FL 33877

Meeting Date: September 27, 2018

Meeting Time: 2:45 p.m.

Participants: Max Strickland, Sunland

Keith Robbins, FDOT
Donald Spoerr, FDOT
Rick Langlass, RS&H

Purpose: Stakeholder interview

After introductions, Keith and Rick provided an overview of the project and its timeline. A map of the study area was provided, as well as a detailed map book, and Rick noted that we are not just studying the US 27 corridor in isolation but are extending context to both the east and west – from Poinciana to Winter Haven – so that we can adequately evaluate regional connections east/west as well as north/south. Keith noted the studies also being conducted by Central Office and Turnpike along this corridor.

Max's initial thoughts included:

- US 27 is a major truck artery
- Significant growth for this company due to new regulations concerning handling refrigerated/frozen foods (they are the FedEx of frozen foods)
- First company to meet the new regulations, so Publix is using them exclusively
- Doing a lot of business with Chicago Pickles
- Has a lot of time sensitive deliveries

MEETING SUMMARY

September 27, 2018

Page 2

This served as a lead-in to specific questions:

Question #1 - Are there any specific intersections or other locations along this corridor that pose difficulty for access or throughput for freight traffic? What is the issue?

- Did not have any major issues between this facility and I-4
- Bigger concern is north of I-4 to Clermont, more accidents occur in this segment (one accident/week from I-4 to Turnpike)
- Between facility and Turnpike they have about 26 stops due to congestion on US 27
- Congestion and safety are a huge concern between the facility and Leesburg
- Roads like Old Polk City Road and Dean Still road have higher fatality rates due to being only two-lane roads.
- Logistics Pkwy at SR 60 has safety issues. Unsignalized intersection and no lighting at intersection. Mentioned a serious crash that occurred there within the past few years (fog). Recommended to push traffic over to Alturas Road via Old Bartow Lake Wales Road, where there is a signal.

Question #2 - How would you grade the situation for truck parking along the corridor and how does that affect your daily operations tempo?

- No truck parking issues since trucks are based here
- Has more issues with drivers running out of drive time while waiting at customer sites
- Would like to see customers provide space for trucks to park

Question #3 - What does the flow and volume of truck traffic look like for your facility on a daily basis – inbound from where / outbound to where? General locations and directions only are helpful to get an idea of the overall flow of trucking traffic in the region.

- Facility has 175 trucks with 55 more on order (about one year out)
- Has trucks doing local deliveries to customers
- Sends trucks to New York, New Jersey, and Boston to pick up food from out of the country and brings back to warehouse for local delivery.
- Runs L.T.L. which is “Less than Truckload”
- Has a GPS system that notifies of speeding and stopping short
- Hours of service are dictated by customers

Question #4 - Are there any alternative routes used to access your facility, and if so, which ones and why?

- Prefers to use US 27 to I-4 to SR 429 to Turnpike to avoid Orlando

MEETING SUMMARY

September 27, 2018

Page 3

- Will use Dean Still Road to SR 33 to Turnpike as well

Question #5 - Are there any sites under consideration for expanding or creating a multi-modal (truck and rail) facility?

- Just moved to this facility. Converting existing warehouse to a perishable food warehouse with a “box in a box”. Building insulated walls inside existing structure. Plans for a new 100,000 sq. foot warehouse in the next few years.

Question #6 - If trucks were allowed to use express lanes and they were available in the corridor, would your trucks use them? If not, why?

- Does use toll lanes. Safer and quicker.

Question #7 - What is your #1 complaint regarding mobility of freight on this corridor?

- The only problem are the traffic signals on US 27, too much stop and start for vehicles
- Does not see a problem with red light cameras
- Noted the traffic signal near the hospital has a short yellow phase, downgrade on US 27 leading to signal is an issue for trucks

Question #8 – Is there any data you collect that may be able to show critical insight into some of the issues with mobility along the corridor? For example, delay due to congestion?

- Between facility and Turnpike they have about 26 stops due to congestion on US 27

Question #9 – What are potential types of solutions that would improve transportation in the study area that should be studied?

- State can't keep pace with the growth in the area
- Need access roads along US 27 to reduce the number of access points on US 27
- Install concrete pavement at signalized intersections. Provides for better stopping of the trucks.

Question #10 – What level of involvement do you want to have in this study?

- Participates in other groups involving trucking industry

MEETING SUMMARY

September 27, 2018

Page 4

- Rick described the PAG and its role in this study
- Would be willing to be a PAG participant (Max Strickland)
- Told him to expect us to contact him about PAG

Question #11 - Do you have any additional concerns or comments?

- Safety is the number one concern for this company
- Reducing crashes reduces the liability insurance costs for them
- For them safety is a priority over time and fuel

After the interview, Max provided a tour of the construction in the existing warehouse and discussed plans for new warehouse on the north side.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 4:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

REYNOLDS, SMITH AND HILLS, INC.



Rick Langlass, PE
Project Manager



Copies to: Sarah Catala
Lisa Dykstra
Rick Langlass
William Roll

Date: January 07, 2019
DRAFT

Project: NE Polk US 27 Mobility Study
Polk County

Project FPID No. 440320-1-22-01
No.(s): AEP: 1040058000

Meeting Place: Heart of Florida Regional Medical
Center
40100 Highway 27
Davenport, FL 33837

Meeting Date: January 04, 2019

Meeting Time: 9:00 a.m.

Participants: Ann M. Barnhart
Chief Executive Officer

David Nelson, Renaissance

Purpose: Stakeholder interview with Heart of Florida Regional Medical Center

The meeting began with introductions. Ann is familiar with the study through her involvement with the Haines City EDC. She has also reviewed the November PAG Meeting summary and materials. David showed a map of the study area, noting that we are not just studying the corridor in narrow isolation, but are also looking to both the east and west for regional connections. Ann agreed with this approach, noting the lack of connections parallel to I-4 to get to the Orlando area. A free-form discussion began, with conversation loosely grouped into the following topics:

Regarding Heart of Florida Regional Medical Center:

- The hospital sits on 36 acres, with an additional 18 acres of undeveloped land directly to the west. The hospital has plans to expand their out-patient facilities and services.
- The hospital has 200 beds and serves over 54,000 people per year through its emergency room facilities.
- The hospital has approximately 1,000 employees, who work in 12-hour shifts running 7a-7p and 7p-7a. Employees come from all parts of the region, including Lakeland, Sebring, Clermont, Poinciana, Orlando, and Kissimmee. [Speaking with Ann's executive secretary before the meeting, she said that many employees have moved closer to the hospital because of long commute times.]

MEETING SUMMARY

January 07, 2019

Page 2

- Many of the hospital's doctors live in the Orlando area, but when they are on-call they sleep at the hospital because otherwise they can't meet the 30-minute response time requirement when their services are needed.
- The transit stop at the hospital is well-used by both employees and patients.
- Ambulances use US 27 and can trip the light at Masee Road as needed.
- There are medical offices to the north of the hospital on Park Place Boulevard, which only has directional median cuts on US 27. Vehicles wanting to go north on US 27 must turn south and make a U-turn at the Masee Road traffic signal. This is inconvenient, so many drivers use the hospital parking lot as a cut-through to get to the same traffic signal. The hospital would like to discourage this cut-through traffic as much as possible.

Regarding Masee Road Intersection:

- There needs to be left-turn arrows onto US 27 at the intersection. Vehicles turning left often block traffic going straight through the intersection, sometimes causing traffic back-up for multiple light sequences.
- There is a lot of pedestrian traffic at this intersection. People go to Crispers while they're waiting on a ride or they walk to Publix to get a prescription filled (both businesses on the east side of US 27). The signal time crossing US 27 is short, so people sometimes get stuck halfway and must wait through a signal sequence. Pedestrians need to get a jump on vehicles making turns through the intersection.
- Could a merge lane/accel lane be added going south to make it easier for vehicles turning right at the light to get into the US 27 traffic flow?
- 5,000 homes are being considered west of the hospital. This will put a heavy burden on the Masee Road intersection and hamper traffic coming in and out of the hospital (since the entrance is close to the intersection). While traffic signal upgrades will be needed in the short-term, new development needs a better system of interconnected roads in the area instead of just one outlet. This is not only an issue for normal traffic but could be a bigger problem in cases of accidents or other emergencies.

Regarding the Transportation Network:

- There needs to be a regional vision for connectivity in the east side of the county. The east part of the county relies on US 27 [more than the Lakeland area, which has varied transportation options].
- US 27 is always busy. There has been a noticeable increase in traffic since Legoland and the Intermodal Logistics Center opened.
- Many roads need repair because of the constant truck traffic.
- Traffic signals need to be synchronized on US 27, especially where lights are closely spaced (like in the Haines City area). Trucks worsen the problem – they start off slowly from green lights and other vehicles can't see around them. As a

MEETING SUMMARY

January 07, 2019

Page 3

result, traffic sometimes gets backed up into intersections when lights turn red, blocking cross traffic movements.

- Is there a way to limit trucks to the center and right lanes, leaving the left lane for other vehicles to pass truck traffic?
- There needs to be multiple truck route options. The only major routes now are usually US 27 and SR 60.
- Frequent turn-in, turn-out vehicle movements on US 27 create slowdowns and conflicts – need parallel roads (either frontage or backage) to divert some of this local traffic and cut down on accidents.

Regarding Development:

- US 27 doesn't need to end up like US 19. There needs to be some order.
- Planning coordination is lacking between municipalities.
- Planning efforts need to pay attention to the east side of the county as it grows – communities are often isolated by natural features, which limit connection options.
- Planning needs to consider multimodal options. While some urban roadways can't be modified because of existing development, there needs to be better facilities for pedestrians and bicycles, and something that helps local businesses.

Other Comments:

- There needs to be tiers of potential solutions for the region, especially short-term improvements that can be easily implemented while longer-term concepts are going through the different steps of design and construction.
- While the hospital will probably not send representation to PAG meetings, we would like to stay up-to-date on the study through meeting summaries and other materials.
- We should talk with Paul Banerjee or Raf Vittone at Polk Fire Rescue (863-519-7402) to discuss EMS related services and their experiences on US 27.

The meeting adjourned at approximately 9:57 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

RENAISSANCE PLANNING



David Nelson, PLA, ASLA LEED AP

MEETING SUMMARY

January 07, 2019

Page 4

Partner and Stakeholder Engagement Task Leader