



## Speaker Biographies

### Landmarks for Guiding Success – National View and Best Practice Awards

#### **Secretary Kevin Thibault, P.E., Florida Department of Transportation, Moderator**

Kevin J. Thibault was named Secretary of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) by Governor Ron DeSantis on January 18, 2019. As Secretary, Thibault oversees the lead agency in state government with the statutory responsibility to coordinate the planning and development of a safe, viable, and balanced transportation system serving all regions of the state, and to assure the compatibility of all components, including multimodal facilities.

Secretary Thibault has spent half of his professional career in the private sector providing transportation engineering services for a number of states, including Florida, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Vermont, Indiana, and California, as well as several Canadian transportation entities. For over 16 years, Thibault has served in various roles within FDOT from project management to executive leadership and has consistently focused on the importance of partnerships to deliver the transportation needs of the state. Secretary Thibault received his Bachelor of Science Degree in Civil Engineering from the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.

#### **Executive Director Carlos Braceras, P.E., Utah Department of Transportation**

Utah Governor Gary Herbert appointed Carlos Braceras to serve as Utah Department of Transportation executive director on May 6, 2013. Former UDOT Executive Director John Njord appointed Braceras to deputy director in May 2001. At the time, he was the director of UDOT's Region 3. Braceras also worked on the Legacy Parkway/I-15 North Project, where he was responsible for development of the environmental documents, design-build contracts, and construction of both facilities.

Braceras received a Bachelor's degree in geology from the University of Vermont and a Bachelor's degree in civil engineering from the University of Utah. He currently serves as chair of the AASHTO Design Subcommittee, chair of the Center for Environmental Excellence Advisory Board, chair of the TRB Executive Committee, member of the board of directors and past president of the American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, member of the board of directors and past president of the Western Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials, past chair of ITS America, and past chair of RUC West.

#### **Joung H. Lee, Policy and Government Relations Director, American Association of State Highway and Transportation Officials**

Joung Lee leads AASHTO's policy efforts across all modes of transportation. Working with Congress, executive branch agencies, and industry stakeholders, Joung represents the policy interests of state departments of transportation as bills and regulations are developed and implemented. He also oversees AASHTO's technical capacity-building programs in areas of environment, finance, planning, transit, and rail. Joung began his career with the Federal Highway Administration in 2000 before joining AASHTO in 2007. He founded Young Professionals in Transportation in 2008, and is a graduate of the University of Virginia and the University of Pennsylvania.



**Commissioner Margaret Anderson Kelliher, Minnesota  
Department of Transportation**

Margaret Anderson Kelliher was appointed Commissioner of the Minnesota Department of Transportation on December 18, 2018 by Minnesota Governor Elect Tim Walz. She began the job on January 7, 2019 when the Walz-Flanagan administration took office.

Anderson Kelliher, served 12 years in the Minnesota House of Representatives, where she was elected as the Minnesota House Speaker for four years. While in the Minnesota House, she served 10 years on both the Transportation Policy and Transportation Finance committees. While serving as House Speaker, Kelliher oversaw the successful Transportation and Transit Funding package in 2008, creating an investment of new and dedicated funds into Minnesota's bridges, roads and transit system. At the time of passage, the legislation was a groundbreaking investment in the multimodal transportation and transit system in Minnesota and nationally.

Kelliher graduated from Gustavus Adolphus College with a BA in Political Science and Harvard's Kennedy School of Government with a Master's in Public Affairs Mid-Career. She is married with two young adult children and lives in Minneapolis

**Brad Thoburn, Assistant Secretary for Strategic Development,  
Florida Department of Transportation, Moderator**

As the Assistant Secretary for Strategic Development, Brad Thoburn leads statewide transportation planning, modal development and research for the Florida Department of Transportation. He has more than 25 years of experience specializing in surface transportation and transit planning and public policy. He has a track record of major accomplishments, leadership and innovation as a transportation executive.

Mr. Thoburn has led a major transit system overhaul; planning and development of roadway programs, bus rapid transit and commuter rail; and integration of transportation and land use planning. He has extensive experience developing strategic plans and transportation policy including approaches responding to emerging technologies and trends associated with autonomous and connected vehicles and shared mobility.

Brad previously served in management at Michael Baker International. He also held several key leadership positions in the public sector including with the Jacksonville Transportation Authority (JTA), the Florida Department of Transportation and the City of Jacksonville.

Brad is a long-time resident of Florida with his wife, Dearing and two daughters. He was born in Cleveland, Ohio and received a Bachelor of Arts from Washington and Lee University.



## Getting from Here to There – Progress Toward Equity and Inclusiveness

### **Beth Alden, AICP, Executive Director, Hillsborough MPO**

Beth Alden leads an award-winning team of planners with a vision of a well-connected, prosperous and equitable community with healthy, safe mobility choices. She has spearheaded initiatives that empower residents to reshape their communities together, including the first multijurisdictional Vision Zero Action Plan in the country, and the first tri-county growth scenarios collaboration in our region, It's Time Tampa Bay. Beth has worked in the public and private sectors as a professional planner since 1994, and holds a Master's in Planning from the University of Minnesota.

### **Tia Boyd, Research Associate, USF CUTR**

Tia Boyd is a Research Associate with the USF Center for Urban Transportation Research. Her research focuses on transportation decision-making, with an emphasis on equity in transportation planning. Most recently, Tia worked on The Transportation Equity Toolkit, developing guidance and tools to better integrate equity into needs assessments and project prioritization processes. She is currently serving in a lead role for a transportation equity curriculum for graduate programs, which will be completed in 2022.

### **Fatima Elkot, Planning Intern, Plan Hillsborough**

Fatima Elkott is currently pursuing her Master's in Urban and Regional Planning at USF. She is working as an intern for the Hillsborough MPO where she has been assisting with the 2021 Nondiscrimination Plan Update, the Garden Steps initiative, and creating an interactive, tri-county bicycle map. She is very passionate about community outreach and hopes to bridge the gap between planners and the public in her future career.

### **Brooke Peters, Recent Graduate Student, University of Florida in Urban and Regional Planning**

Brooke Peters graduated from the University of Florida in 2019 with a master's degree in Urban and Regional Planning. Brooke focused her studies on Transportation Planning and the use of Spatial and Statistical Analysis Software. For her work on multiple projects related to Transportation Equity, including a graduate studio, a master's thesis, and as a Research Assistant for the Center for Health and the Built Environment, she received the Margaret E. Raynal Award. Currently, she serves as the Transportation Planner for the City of Coral Springs. She will be presenting her research for her master's thesis on "Transportation Access and the Relationship to Equity: A Case Study of Gainesville, Florida."

### **Alison Stettner, AICP, Director for Office of Policy Planning, Florida Department of Transportation, Moderator**

Alison Stettner serves as the Director of the Office of Policy Planning. She has worked for the Florida Department of Transportation for the past 5 years serving both at District 5 as the District Planning & Environmental Management Administrator and at Florida's Turnpike as the Planning Manager. She has more than 20 years of experience in transportation planning and growth management. Prior to her work at FDOT, Alison was the Development Services Director at Orange City, the Planning and Development Manager at Seminole County, and a transportation planner for both PBS&J and Orange County. Alison received her Bachelor of Science from Michigan State University in Environmental Science and Management and a Master's in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Florida.



## Pit Stops Along the Way – What Does an EV Future Look Like?

### **Matt Alford, Executive Director, Drive Electric Florida**

Matthew Alford is the Executive Director of Drive Electric Florida, a nonprofit organization composed of a diverse membership from the environmental, government, transportation, technology, and electric utility sectors dedicated to accelerating Florida's transition to electric transportation. By facilitating collaborative policy development, spearheading advocacy at the state and local level to increase electric vehicle adoption, and coordinating the legislative and regulatory strategy of the organization's members, Drive Electric Florida is quickly emerging as the most visible and effective voice for sustainable and equitable electric transportation options in a nascent market.

Previously, Alford held senior roles in Florida's Legislative and Executive branches, serving as a Chief of Staff in the Florida Senate, and the Deputy Legislative Affairs Director for the state's Commissioner of Agriculture and Consumer Services. He earned his Masters Degree in Applied American Politics and Policy from The Florida State University. He is a resident of Tallahassee, and the proud father of two beautiful children.

### **Heather J. Hildebrandt, Statewide Initiatives Supervisor, Transportation Planning Division, North Carolina Department of Transportation**

During her career, Heather Hildebrandt has mainly worked at the intersection of transportation and air quality. With Mobile Source Compliance with the Division of Air Quality, she gained expertise with alternative fuels and emission control and also managed grants through both state and federal funded programs. Currently, Heather works with the North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) in the Transportation Planning Division

where she supervises the Statewide Initiatives Group that oversees Transportation Conformity, the Congestion Mitigation Air Quality Program as well as statewide multi-modal planning. The group also helps lead efforts at NCDOT for resiliency and electrification of the transportation sector. Heather has volunteered as a mentor with FIRST Robotics and has worked with the EV Challenge since 1996. She currently sits on the board of the Carolina Electric Vehicle Coalition. Heather graduated from North Carolina State University with a Master of Science in Civil Engineering focused on Environmental Programs.

### **Peter King, Electric Transportation Project Manager, Duke Energy Florida**

He leads Duke Energy Florida's initiatives in transportation electrification to include strategy development, infrastructure, and customer outreach. He is lead project manager on one of the largest utility owned electric vehicle infrastructure pilots in the US known as Duke Energy Florida Park & Plug. Peter joined Duke Energy in October 2017 after 14 years with the 7th largest municipal utility in the US, JEA in Jacksonville, FL. With JEA, he held various positions. Most recently with JEA, Peter established the utility's electrification programs for on-road electric vehicles and non-road electrification. He lead projects to deploy public electric vehicle charging infrastructure and developed innovative electric transportation outreach programs for utility customers. Peter earned a Bachelor of Science degree in business administration and Masters business administration from the University of North Florida. Peter is a Certified Energy Manager and holds a Project Management Professional Certification.



**Michael King, Assistant Director of Electrification and Energy, Colorado Department of Transportation**

Michael King is the Assistant Director of Electrification & Energy for the Colorado Department of Transportation's Office of Innovative Mobility. In this role, he specializes in program and policy development for vehicle electrification, alternative fuels, and other emerging transportation technologies.

During his eight years with CDOT, Michael has worked on a variety of projects. His current focus areas include the expansion of the statewide DC fast-charging network, the integration of zero-emission vehicles into transit agency fleets, and exploring the potential of hydrogen fuel cells for medium and heavy duty vehicles.

Prior to joining CDOT, he studied International Development with a focus on Sustainable Urban Development at the University of Denver's Josef Korbel School of International Studies and spent three years working for nonprofit and government agencies in Latin America.

**Jennifer Fortunas, Manager, Forecasting and Trends Office, Florida Department of Transportation, Moderator**

Jennifer Fortunas manages FDOT's Forecasting and Trends Office (FTO), the trusted source for transportation system performance in Florida. FTO is responsible for transportation forecasting, modeling, performance, trends, customer satisfaction surveys, and demographic analysis. Some of the products FTO provides its customers include the Digital Sourcebook, the Florida Statewide Model, Model Task Force, and the Survey Colloquium.

Prior to joining FTO, Jennifer worked for three years as the State Managed Lanes Engineer, ten years in systems planning office, and ten years in private consulting doing roadway design, Project Development and Environment (PD&E), and transportation planning. Jennifer is a registered professional engineer in the state of Florida.



## Have a Safe Trip – Community Projects Setting the Course

### **Stephen Benson, AICP, CNU-A, Chief Planner, City of Tampa**

Stephen Benson serves as Transportation Planner for the City of Tampa. He joined the City last year to coordinate the implementation of Mayor Castor's Transforming Tampa's Tomorrow (T3) strategic plan for transit and mobility. Previously he served as the Metropolitan Planning Administrator for FDOT District 7, where he led multi-modal planning programs, complete streets, intergovernmental programs and public involvement. Prior to this, he worked in the District Traffic Operations office and in the consulting field. Stephen has held local leadership positions with the American Planning Association and the Congress for the New Urbanism and served on the board for the Hillsborough County Planning Commission. He is a proud Tampa native and a graduate of the University of South Florida's Urban & Regional Planning Program.

### **Mike Ziarnek, AICP, Transportation Planner – Complete Streets, City of Pensacola**

Mike Ziarnek serves as the Complete Streets Planner for the City of Pensacola. He's been in this position since July 2019. During this time, he has been part of championing the recently enacted a Complete Streets Ordinance. He's really enjoyed advocating for the City of Pensacola's Complete Streets effort. Prior to his time with the City, he was the Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator for the Florida Department of Transportation, District Five. Mike earned a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering and a Master of Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Colorado Denver.

### **Kristof Devastey, P.E., Senior Engineer, Toole Design**

Kristof is a licensed Professional Engineer with more than 12 years of experience in traffic and transportation engineering. His work has placed a strong emphasis on roadway safety, livable transportation, and Complete Streets. He is also experienced in transportation planning studies and traffic operational analyses. Above all, Kristof's passion lies in finding ways to reconcile conventional approaches to safety with Safe Systems and Complete Streets approaches. Kristof has a master's in Civil Engineering from Florida International University and is an active member of the Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) from which he holds national certifications as a Professional Traffic Operations Engineer (PTOE) and a Professional Transportation Planner (PTP).



**Greg Stuart, Executive Director, Broward Metropolitan Planning Organization**

Greg brings more than 28 years of transportation and land use planning experience in both private and public sectors. He secured Federal appropriations for major transportation projects, modified state rules to facilitate traffic mitigation and helped stimulate redevelopment efforts in Southeast Florida. Greg currently serves on the AMPO Board of Directors and the NARC Executive Directors Council. He also Chairs the Florida MPO Advisory Council (MPOAC) Staff Directors Advisory Committee and the MPOAC Freight Committee. Greg is a member of Florida's Freight Advisory Committee, working closely with the Florida Department of Transportation on freight issues. In his spare time, Greg is the Vice Chair of Fort Lauderdale's Transportation Management Agency, with an annual ridership exceeding 750,000 passengers, operating seven routes.

**Steven Buck, P.E., Roadway Engineering Supervisor, Florida Department of Transportation, Moderator**

Steven Buck is a graduate of Purdue University with a Bachelor's of Science in Civil Engineering and of the University of Central Florida with a Master of Science in Civil Engineering. While the majority of his career has been with FDOT, Steven has also worked for INDOT, Purdue and a year with a consulting firm. As a Roadway Engineer Supervisor Steven is PM/EOR for ten active design projects. He is heavily involved in the 3D modeling and innovative techniques the Department is pursuing. In addition to his projects he assists on other projects in the District on an as needed basis.