FDOT District 4/ACEC FL Liaison Committee Meeting Summary

Friday, October 23, 2026, 1:30 PM

1) **Relevant topics from most recent statewide and local meetings:** **Transportation Committee (10/15) – Orlando**

- **DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION (DRIVE-D/C):**
  - ***DRIVE to be expanded in all functional areas of the department – Materials, Traffic Operations, Maintenance (10% reduction goal over each area) – methods for improvements to include technology, contract administration, general process efficiencies, scope assessment.***
  - ***For D/C – First official project commenced: CR 880 -Team B is primarily internal FDOT composition with geotechnical support. Team A – GFT.***
  - ***Central Office has asked for feedback on the DRIVE-D/C roll-out.*** *We are gathering District's experiences with DRIVE-D/C… whether that's Team A, Team B, the good and the bad, and any suggestions for improvement of the initiative you'd care to share. The information provided will be organized and anonymized before discussion with Central Office.*

- **SMALL BUSINESS GROWTH PROGRAM:**
  - Three-tier program structure that differentiates firms by gross receipt, creating an incentive-based growth pathway. The general perception is the % goals may become % requirements, factors for selection in the future, but not at the outset.
  - ***Percent goals are aspirational goals – tracking will be on the District side will not affect project selection***

- **OTHER ITEMS:**
  - Focus by FDOT remains on support of the 5 pillars of the compass, presentation of Work Program to Florida Transportation Commission reflected this focus, with Community Engagement at the center of those efforts. FDOT focus areas from 2026 Legislative and Special Session: Talent, Tools, Technology. ***Outcomes – continue to focus on legislative outreach and opportunities to promote transportation and work program delivery, with 2027 session on the horizon.***
  - ***FLAIR to PALM Conversion.*** With the State of Florida converting its system for processing payments to vendors, process down-time is expected through December and perhaps into January. We're collecting each district's anticipated plans, outage duration and any requests to Industry so we can organize and seek consistency in the direction coming from FDOT statewide. This is not an FDOT process but a State of Florida process, but we'd like to gain additional clarity and consistency well in advance of this planned upgrade.
    - ***Consultants have been confused because they are getting different dates from different districts – Central office made a decision that all communication will be coming from the procurement office. Will highlight CITS unavailable dates 12/2 -1/23. Goal is to be working with internal PM to get relevant invoices in by December 2. Look for communication from Central Office.***
  - ***FDOT D4 Road to Your Future Event*** held 6/10 – excellent industry turnout. *ACEC discussing additional events that could encompass all industry hiring needs.* ***Given local college events at FAU/FIU/UM, South Florida CCD, what is best ROI for expanding.***
  - ***FDOT D4/Industry Construction Symposium*** held 6/25 – productive dialogue, panel discussions.

- ***FDOT D4/ACEC Production Industry Forum*** held 9/22 – good presentation content and discussion, good turnout by both groups.
- ***Mutual gains negotiations training – Samuel Loyd in Central Office said the content has been finalized and sent to Brandon Spencer for approval – they will be providing the District with the training next year.***
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2) <u>Standing Item Updates:</u>

Committee champions from FDOT and ACEC identified below. Goal being to provide the full committee with positive progress updates, working towards best practices, completed work doctrine. Committee champions are empowered to establish sub-committees or working groups to develop/implement recommendations between quarterly liaison meetings.

<u>AREAS AND CHAMPIONS:</u>

- **DRIVE: PROJECT DELIVERY AND COST EFFICIENCIES – CESAR MARTINEZ AND JAVIER MANSO**
  - *DRIVE Best Practices and Lessons Learned*
  - *D/B Mentality. Best practices for streamlining project delivery, what stages appropriate to refine scope, maximize value per project within work program.*
  - Cost controls on projects with a focus on scopes, fees, engineering decisions – evaluate short term improvements, streamline the development of plans, and focus on the ROI of a project when considering trying to address needs vs. limited resources. (DRIVE initiative long term)
  - ***Looking to find ways to advance survey and get the data earlier***
  - ***We discussed where DRIVE can be applied to bridge rehab – consider setting up a meeting with Leslie to review different ideas***
  - ***Consider a workshop after 3-4 projects have been completed to gather feedback from both Team A and Team B – First project - CR 880 -Team B is primarily internal FDOT composition with geotechnical support. Team A – GFT***
  - ***Forecast & Performance Cost Estimate Memo***
  - ***DRIVE D/C Progress and expectations of engagement – FDOT D4 has a light CAP this year so that has helped focus and implementation***
  - ***Update on DRIVE in other functional areas – TSM&O, ITS, Public Involvement, Staff Augmentation, etc.***
  - ***Consultant contract execution timeframe efficiencies***
  - ***DRIVE has become the normal, bring DRIVE ideas, don't wait for FDOT to ask***
  - ***Staff augmentation – where are we heavy? Since open positions are being filled, augmentation may not be as needed – Operations open positions went down from 20% to 3%.***
  - ***Consultant execution time – how can we execute and get moving faster D4 is at 4.3 months average***
    - ***Longest time is from ad to award – largest in the state***
      - ***Any feedback on ideas of how to shorten***
    - ***Selection to execution time frame is lean***

- **QUALITY – BRAD SALISBURY AND CORIANN SALAS**
  - *Final plans*
  - *Pay item issue on the software*
  - *AI use in Quality control*
  - *Established monthly meetings to consist of a couple of ACEC-FL representatives and a couple of FDOT representatives.* ***Initial meeting held in September, second meeting 10/22.***

- ***Kickoff in mid-September and met yesterday. We have 3 top priorities UC, cost estimates and quantities accuracy and public Involvement Deliverable Quality***
- ***Brainstormed ideas to create accountability, fill gaps, and educate team members, and negotiate responsibility in the staff hour estimate***

- ***Feedback from D4***
  - ***Can we quantify bid questions on quantities and utilities and what type of ERC comments***
  - ***There is a code for utilities claims***
  - ***Highlight the top three projects with UC issues at Tim Lattner monthly meeting***

- **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT – KEREISHA OTTEY AND LISA DYKSTRA**
  - Kereisha Ottey and Lisa Dykstra coordinated with Carolina Sanchez to review the statewide ACEC/FDOT Workforce Development committee. This is running well including a D4 STEM program, bridge competition, adopt a school initiative.
  - ***Curriculum on Great American Teach In***
  - ***Survey industry and FDOT to find where the needs are and be sure to include the regional perspective***
  - ***How can we keep the students engaged throughout the year***
  - **Updates and expectations for upcoming WFD events:**
    - **Construction Careers Day – October 27/28, 2026**
    - **FAU Infrastructure Night – November 4, 2026**
    - **Regional Bridge Building Competitions – January 23, 2027**
  - Discussed areas to focus on that would help advance workforce development, and recapped the many D4 FDOT employee workforce development initiatives ongoing including PE Trainee program, internship program, GROW Team, and others.
  - Met with Ryan Drendel in September, he leads the recruitment for the D4 Grow Team.
  - After checking into existing FDOT, local, and statewide existing Workforce Development initiatives, many initiatives are ongoing, including internal FDOT D4 retention efforts, events promoting construction careers, the FDOT Statewide Workforce Development Program, ACEC and FDOT outreach to middle school and high school students (Great America Teach in, and locally through CareerSource Broward.
  - Interested to identify types of positions that are hardest to fill in transportation for FDOT or consultants so we might focus on addressing those that are most challenging to fill. One area of difficulty seems to be filling/retaining FDOT Operations Center positions.
  - Checked with local colleges and universities to determine what programs they have that help train students and line them up for transportation jobs of all types (office and field jobs).
  - ***D5 Example of "Emerging Leaders Committee"***
    - ***Kereisha and Lisa are investigating existing ways we might work collaboratively with FAU, Broward College, possibly others to identify direct lines of attracting students to transportation jobs.***
    - ***D4 group/cohort subcommittee – work together about what is important to them***
  - *The subcommittee remains open to suggestions about any specific area(s) where FDOT or industry see the need for increased attention to address Workforce Development concerns, so we can work on those areas.*

- **RELATIONSHIP BUILDING/INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT – ANSON SONNETT AND JANETTE LACHOWSKI**
  - ***D4 Industry Forum (hosted by FDOT and ACEC)*** *feedback for future events?*
  - ***First FDOT/ACEC Networking event 10/22 -*** *Funky Buddha*

- *Event will have PMs, leadership, TRC committee members, etc., ACEC reps, 100-150 target attendees.* ***Feedback on the 10/22 event?***
- ***Great feedback; can we do it twice a year (spring and fall)***

- **SAFETY SUBCOMMITTEE – KATIE KEHRES AND JAMES SPINKS**
  Subcommittee members: Linda Hess, Pat Kennedy, Tejsingh Rana, Carlos Francis, Morteza Alian, James Spinks
  - Attending D4 Safety Team Monthly Steering Meeting on a Quarterly basis. ***Monthly check-ins now occur with James and Larry Wallace.***
    - *ACEC joining 11/17, then 2027: 2/11, 5/18, and Aug & Nov to be scheduled*
    - *Katie and Larry met w/ Tej & James on 10/22*
  - Subcommittee invited to safety presentations and working on safety messaging distribution.
    - Ex. 9/8 Beltway USA Pedestrian Barrier Protection/worker safety – potential pilot being considered
  - Joint meeting held with Katie and SSO (Brenda Young and staff) regarding initiative ideas.
    Target Zero Champions Initiative:
    - ✓ The concept focuses on developing **Target Zero champions / advocates** within the consultant community.
    - ✓ ***Training modules/certificate program being developed – 1 hour with 8 modules. PowerPoint with content will be converted to CBT type videos***
    - ✓ Initiative **feasible for launch early 2027**, based on leadership feedback, currently working through content edits.
    - ✓ Working with ACEC to host on website.
    - ✓ TZ Champion effort was announced and presented on at the D4 Design Consultant Management Industry Forum on 9/22
    - ✓ 10/22 update – working on script/recordings and w/ PDH subcommittee, as well as the branding aspect with ACEC to make sure all good
      - Link already created for pledge (not live yet & will only be accessible IF they do the training, will have an email follow)
      - Digital Certificate will also need to be reviewed by D4 and ACEC then finalized, and work through signing logistics

- **EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES - TYLER FURREY AND TONY PIEDRA**
  - *Use of AI (Artificial Intelligence) Applications that meet current guidance. Next steps entail industry feedback and guidance update recommendations, pilot project ideas, etc.*
    - *FDOT has limited data sources, and the current model doesn't have a memory. Discussed importance of closed system development*
    - *There has been limited tasks assigned to Construction staff to use AI to improve efficiency*
    - *Additional guidance will be distributed as developed, not a major priority currently for pilot projects as a result*
  - ***Advanced Air Mobility (AAM) – Continuing to monitor pilot programs and research.***

3) Conference and Symposium Announcements

- **South Florida Construction Career Days** – 10/26-28 – Davie, Florida. ***2,000-2,400 students anticipated. Final push for volunteers underway.***
- **Henry Fuller Task Team** – 11/4-6 – Westgate River Ranch, ***agenda being finalized.***
- **FAU Infrastructure Night** – 11/4 – Keynote Speaker, D4 Secretary Braun.

- **FDOT 2026 Transportation Symposium**, Orlando, December 16 & 17 at the Hilton Orlando (previously this was not going to be attended by D4 and D6, but now FDOT sending staff).

4) Local Topics:

- Mutual Gains Negotiations Training for PSU staff, FDOT Project Managers, and Consultant Firms. Committee in agreement given the number of new parties involved, would be good to develop training for these groups. ACEC to provide anonymous list of areas of potential topics, elements for clarification in the negotiation process as this training is formalized.

5) General Discussion:

- Mel to get with Alia to finalize 2027 meeting calendar (**4th Friday – every three months, likely will be changed to 1st Friday to avoid conflicting meetings.**)

Participants (Invitees shown, attendees will be adjusted and noted in Bold for meeting summary):

- FDOT – **Steve Braun, Paul Lampley**, John Krane, **Binod Basnet, Matt Carlock, Kelley Hall**, **Kereisha Ottey, Anson Sonnett**, Tyler Furrey, **Jessica Rubio**, Birgit Olkuch, Cesar Martinez

- ACEC – **Mel Pollock (Chair), Coriann Salas, Lisa Dykstra, Javier Manso, Tony Piedra, Janette Lachowski, Guest FELI Attendee Julieta Rivero-Manso**