

## FDOT District 4/ACEC FL Liaison Committee Meeting Summary

Friday, April 24, 2026, 1:30 PM

- 1) Relevant topics from most recent statewide and local meetings: Transportation Committee (3/23)
  - **DEPARTMENT'S REVIEW FOR INNOVATION AND VALUE ENHANCEMENT (DRIVE)**
    - *This is an Umbrella initiative and there will be many functional areas covered*
    - *Flexibility of implementation within the Districts - each District will have a different approach. (See process flowchart and additional information attached. All timelines tied to advertisement timeframe.)*
    - *Design Professional Service ad after May 4th - DRIVE will be applied*
    - *Team B will consist of FDOT staff with some GEC staff supplemented (assembled 2-ish months before ad)*
    - *Team A Initially agree to rates and scope for initial Phase 1 - fairly small effort - execute the full design contract*
    - *Team A and B work together to finalize final scope*
    - *Then negotiate final fee with Team A*
    - *Final bid will be compared to Phase 1 cost estimate baseline (or modified baseline if approved by District Secretary)*
    - *Then issue a pass fail - tracked statewide*
    - *Communication and collaboration will be key between Team A and B - baseline cost estimate should not be set overconservatively*
    - *District 4 would like ACEC to share information about the DRIVE D/C initiative and the Draft D4 DRIVE-D/C process with industry.*
  - **DESIGN/CONSTRUCTION (DRIVE-D/C): Process per Forecasting and Performance Bulletin Attached.**
    - The DRIVE-D/C program is effective on or after May 1, 2026, for all projects with construction cost less than \$100 million.  
**Baseline Establishment Phase**
    - The DRIVE-D/C framework will establish a Baseline early in the project development through collaboration among the District, the Prime Project Design Consultant (Team A), and a Multidisciplinary Team (Team B) to lock project scope and construction cost.
    - The Prime Project Design Consultant (Team A) is the selected design firm through the standard process. The Multidisciplinary Team (Team B) is a combination of consultants, contractors, and in-house Department staff teamed together, as determined by the District, to strategize and innovate for scope refinements and cost savings.
    - Once Team A is selected and given a Notice to Proceed (NTP), Phase 1 of the contract or a TWO (limiting amount) for DRIVE-D/C assessment will be issued by the District. The assessment is intended to identify and evaluate ideas, review Team B's findings, and identify any conflicts or concerns.
    - Within 15 working days of the executed TWO for Team A, a DRIVE-D/C partnership and collaboration meeting will be conducted, where the District, Team A, and Team B review innovative ideas, ideas for scope adjustments, and all cost saving strategies and develop recommendations. Once finalized by the District, the project scope and construction cost are locked to establish the Baseline.
    - The District will use the Baseline to negotiate Team A staff hours for the design contract.

- The District will submit the established Baseline to the Forecasting and Performance Office. The Forecasting and Performance Office will upload the information into a dashboard.
- ***See attached procedure for additional milestones in Design Development, Construction Cost Evaluation, and Performance Phases.***
- **SMALL BUSINESS GROWTH PROGRAM**
  - Three-tier program structure that differentiates firms by gross receipt, creating an incentive-based growth pathway.
  - ***Tier 1 SBE – Emerging, Start Up, Specialty, or Small by Design SBE***
    - Three-year average gross receipt: professional services - <\$7.0M
    - These firms can remain small if they choose.
  - ***Tier 2 SBE – Growth SBE***
    - Three-year average gross receipt: professional services - \$7.0M - \$10M
    - Firms may stay in Tier 2 for a maximum of 5 years
  - ***Tier 3 SBE – Mature SBE***
    - Gross receipt: Any single year >\$10M
    - Firms will be required to graduate within 3 years
  - ***See attached presentation for additional recommendations.***
  - ***ACEC-FL has reached out via survey to all member firms for comments. Feedback will be organized and provided to FDOT.***
- 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 for 2026 Legislative Session: Talent, Tools, Technology. ***Outcomes?***
- ***National Work Zone Awareness Week 4/20-4/24*** – Industry Support throughout week.

## 2) **Standing Item Updates:**

***Committee champions from FDOT and ACEC identified below. As elements within the championed area arise, progress on addressing the element, pulling in additional resources, etc. will occur between quarterly meetings. 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.***

### **AREAS AND CHAMPIONS:**

- **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***
    - ***Considering preparing a survey for ACEC-FL to distribute to Consultants***
    - ***Additional guidance will be distributed as developed, not a major priority currently for pilot projects as a result***
  - *Advanced Air Mobility (AAM)*

- **QUALITY – BRAD SALISBURY AND CORIAN SALAS**
  - *Final plans*
  - *Pay item issue on the software*
  - *AI use in Quality control*
  - ***First meeting set for May 1st - set up goals and next steps with subcommittee.***
  
- **WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT – KEREISHA OTTEY AND LISA DYKSTRA**
  - *Small Business Growth*
  - *Plans to expand the bridge competition regionally in future years.*
  - *Joint meetings with DOT counterparts are ongoing to coordinate efforts and identify collaboration opportunities.*
  - *Road to Your Future / Construction Career Days / Career Fairs*
  - ***D4 Grow Team - professional growth***
    - ***Identify challenges with WFD***
    - ***Identify available WFD programs for people to support - promoting opportunities that are existing***
    - ***Collaborating on events - Plans to expand the bridge competition regionally in future years.***
    - ***Road to Your Future / Construction Career Days / Career Fairs - June 10th, 11am-2pm - typical job fair***
  
- **RELATIONSHIP BUILDING/INDUSTRY ENGAGEMENT – ANSON SONNETT AND JANETTE LACHOWSKI**
  - *D4 Contact Management form sent out by Anson*
  - *D4 Industry Forum (hosted by FDOT and ACEC) to be held on September 16*
    - *Reached out to consultants about interested topics: AI incorporation in QC process, BABA, SBE program. Anson will include these topics in the Forum. If you have specific topics that you'd like to see incorporated, please let champions know.*
    - *D5 just had their Industry Forum, reviewing docs and provide suggestions for D4*
  - *First FDOT ACEC Networking event will be held at a brewery (26 Degree Brewery, Funky Buddha, etc). Need to confirm date and location. Target Summer 2026.*
    - *Approximately 100-150 people*
    - *Obtain company sponsors for event*
    - *Event will have PMs, leadership, TRC committee members, etc.*
  
- **PROJECT DELIVERY AND COST EFFICIENCIES – CESAR MARTINEZ, SCOTT PETERSON, AND JAVIER MANSON**
  - *DRIVE Best Practices*
  - *D/B Mentality. Best practices for streamlining project delivery, what stages appropriate to refine scope, maximize value per project within work program.*
  
- **SAFETY SUBCOMMITTEE – KATIE KEHRES AND JAMES SPINKS**
  - *Attended D4 Safety Team Monthly Steering Meeting on 2/19, finalized the ACEC D4 Highway Safety Subcommittee Charter. Monthly check-ins now occurring with James and Larry Wallace.*
  - *Subcommittee invited to safety presentations, and working on safety messaging distribution.*
  - ***Joint meeting with Katie and SSO (Brenda Young and staff) regarding initiative ideas.***

### Target Zero Initiative – Idea #1

- ✓ Participants agreed that **Idea #1** represents the strongest and most achievable concept discussed to date.
- ✓ The concept focuses on developing **Target Zero champions / advocates** within the consultant community.
- ✓ Training modules/potential certificate program to be developed
- ✓ There was consensus that this initiative is **feasible for launch within calendar year 2026**.
- ✓ **Tej** was identified as the originator of Idea #1 and should be involved in further development.
- ✓ **Subcommittee chair (James Spinks) to attend next liaison meeting, share progress.**

### 3) Conference and Symposium Announcements

- Project Management Symposium scheduled for May 7-8 at SeaWorld Renaissance Hotel, theme: Driving Progress and Connecting People.
- Transportation Conference set for May 28-29 at Hilton Disney Springs, theme: Partnership.
  - D4 Exhibit Poster featuring US 1/Jupiter Bridge replacement.
  - D4 Project included in panel discussion for stakeholder partnerships.
- Floridians for Better Transportation (FBT) - June 18-19, 2026 (Orlando)
- SASHTO – 8/21-25, Greenville, South Carolina

### 4) Local Topics:

- BDI Contracts – promote more competition; discuss the approach for allowable amount of sub-consultant services by non-BDI consultants
- PD&E Study policy direction - ***Challenge to industry to come to the District during PD&E or Design if they see opportunities for savings, even if it doesn't cover the entire scope of the project, but meets the intent.***
- Cost controls on projects with a focus on scopes, fees, and 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.
- ***Thank you for supporting NWZAW!!***

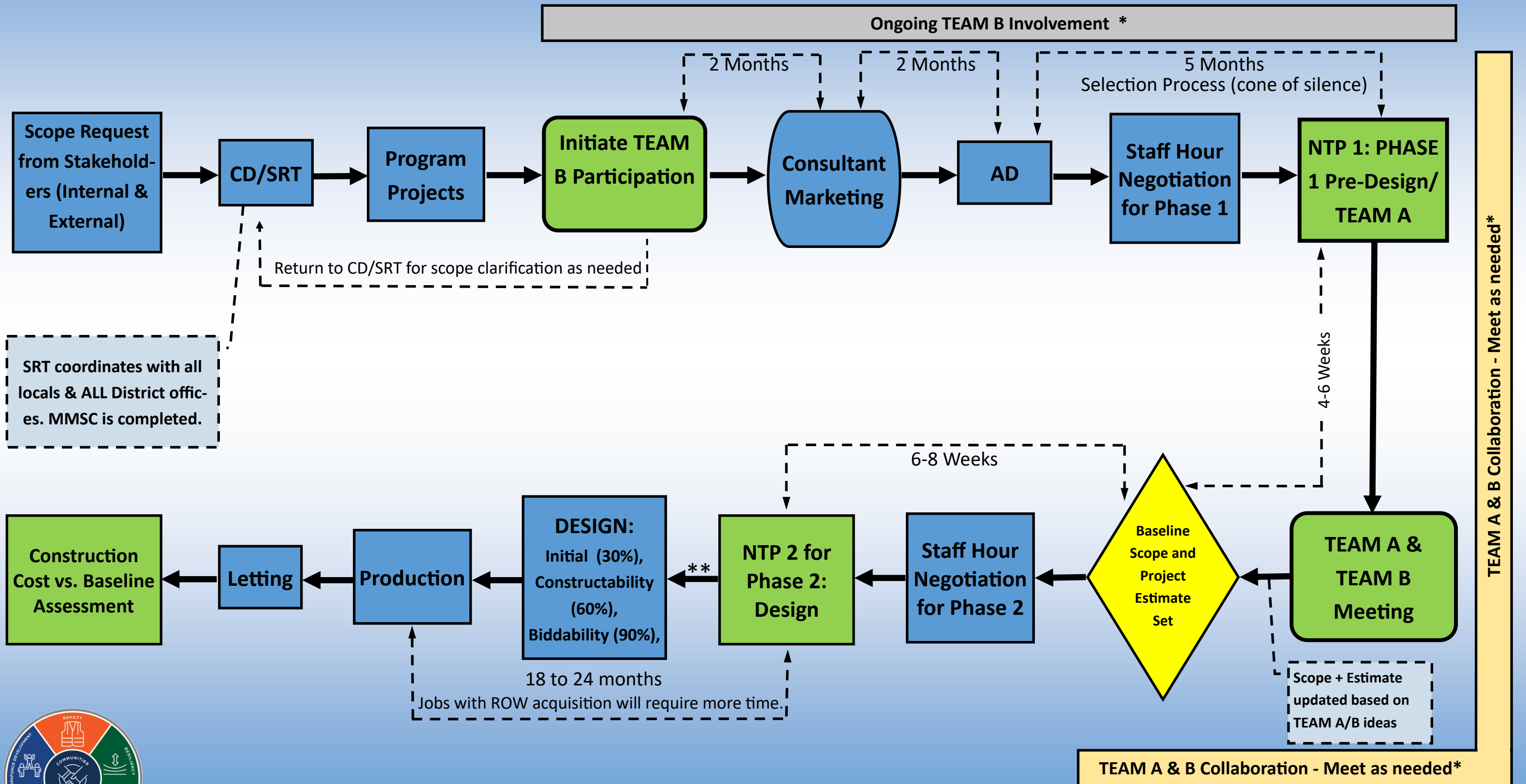
### 5) General Discussion:

- Next Meeting date/time: July 24<sup>th</sup>, 1:30pm (4<sup>th</sup> Friday – every three months)

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

- FDOT – **Steve Braun, Paul Lampley, John Krane, John Olson, Matt Carlock, Kereisha Ottey, Anson Sonnett, Tyler Furrey**
- ACEC – **Mel Pollock (Chair), Coriann Salas, Lisa Dykstra, Javier Manso, Tony Piedra, Janette Lachowski, Guest FELI Attendee Christina Yero**

# D-4 DRIVE D/C PROCESS



# D-4 DRIVE D/C PROCESS



## TEAM A: Selected Design Consultant

## TEAM B:

- Experienced FDOT staff
  - Design
  - Construction
  - Maintenance
  - PLEMO
  - OMD
  - Survey
  - Program Management
  - Materials
  - Traffic Operations
  - Safety
  - Bridge Maintenance
  - ROW
- Consultants (supporting FDOT staff)
- Design PM
- CD/SRT: Concept Development/Scope Refinement Team
- Internal Project Originator/Liaison: Not intended for external agencies

## Project Tiers (Recommended by the CD/SRT):

Tier 1, Simple: less than \$10M

Tier 2, Moderate: \$10-50M

Tier 3, Complex: more than \$50M; (VE done at Initial Engineering)

**\*\*TEAM A & B meet in advance of Initial and Constructability submittals**

# Any cost or scope increase must be presented before the TEAM B standing meeting for concurrence prior to D4 secretary approval/baseline re-set.

# Any changes to safety funded projects need concurrence from the Safety Review Committee

# DIRC (District 4 Interchange Review Coordination) meetings as necessary

**\*Multiple TEAM B meetings might be needed.**

## TEAM B Meeting:

- Primavera activities added for DRIVE (Pre-advertisement & During Design)
- Biweekly standing meeting
  - Multiple projects may be discussed at one meeting, depending on tier complexity
- Design PM puts project on agenda
- Project originator presents scope
- Happens July to Dec. prior to the design year





# FDOT UPDATES

American Council of Engineering Companies

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*March 23, 2026*



The FDOT logo features the letters 'FDOT' in a bold, white, sans-serif font. To the right of the text is a white outline of the state of Florida. Below the text and the state outline are three white, curved lines that suggest motion or a road surface.



# OVERVIEW

- Setting the Stage
- Small Business Growth Program
- FDOT's DRIVE Initiative



# Transforming the Industry

*We can't let the machine continue to run on autopilot.*



**Innovation in Project Delivery**



**Workforce Development**



**Research & Innovation**



**Emerging Technology**

# Fostering Small Business Growth

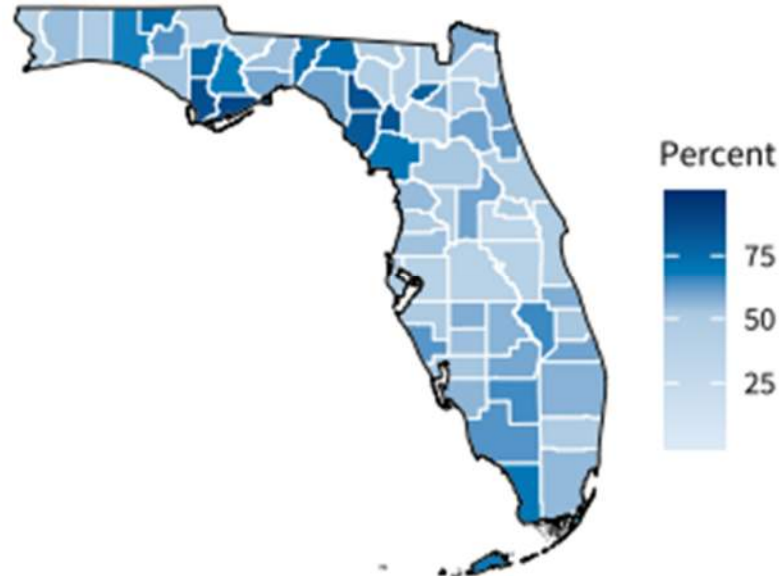


**Focusing on  
Strengthening Businesses  
& Growing the Economy**

# Florida 2025 Small Business Profile

**3.5 million** small businesses  
99.8 percent of Florida businesses

**3.8 million** small business employees  
39.6 percent of Florida employees



## Share of employees working at small businesses by county

Sources of original data: [Nonemployer Statistics](#) (Census), [Statistics of U.S. Businesses](#) (Census)

# Program Evolution

Began in 2008

2014 & 2021 Program Assessments

2025 Program Assessment  
USDOT DBE Program & SB1662

New Policy Direction



# Methodology



## Regulatory Review

US DBE Program  
US SBA Program  
Florida Statutes



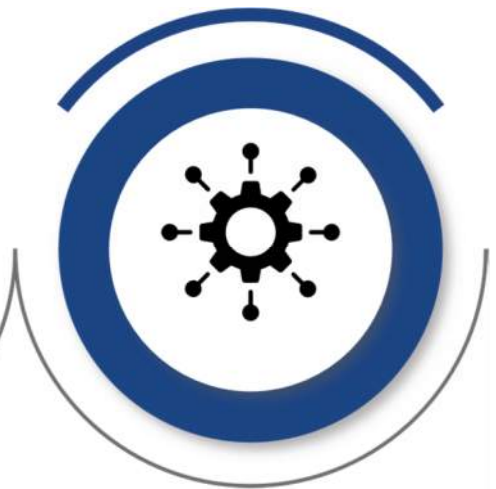
## State Program Review

Evaluation of the  
existing program



## National Scan

Eligibility criteria  
Types of SB support  
Special provisions



## Policy Recommendations

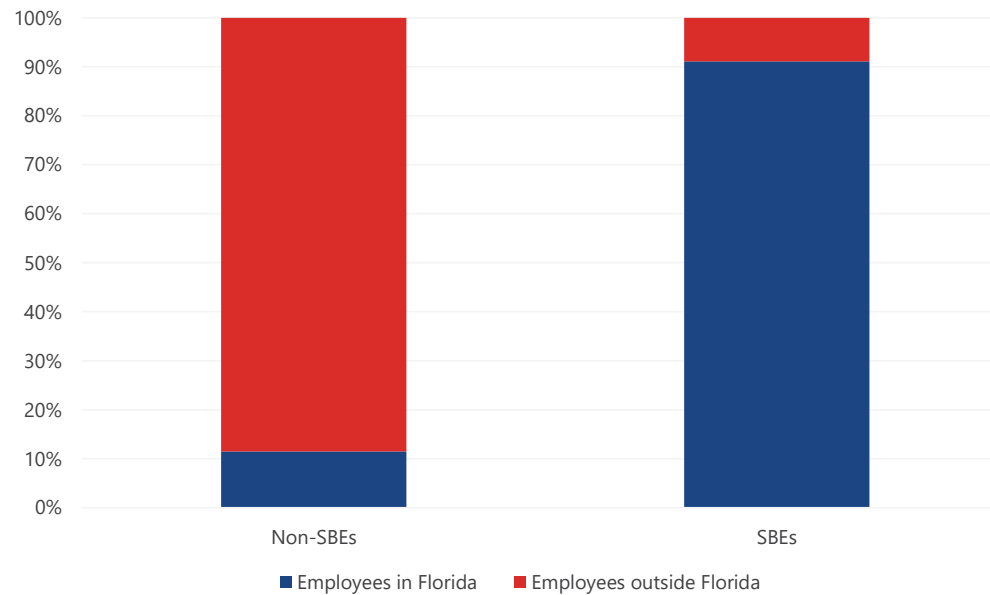
Policy  
recommendations  
to consider  
moving forward

# Professional Services Firms (2024 – 25)



	Total Number of Firms	SBE Only		DBE Only		DBE and SBE		Non-SBE/DBE	
<b>Professional Services</b>	723	80	11%	150	21%	118	16%	375	52%

# Professional Services Firm Employees



	Employees in Florida		Employees outside Florida		Total Employees	
	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage	Count	Percentage
<b>Professional Services (ALL)</b>	45,791	12%	330,784	88%	376,575	100%
<b>Non-SBEs</b>	42,875	11%	330,499	89%	373,374	100%
<b>SBEs</b>	2,916	91%	284	9%	3,200	100%

# Recommendation 1: Establish Tiered Growth SBE Program Structure

Consider adopting a three-tier program structure that differentiates firms by gross receipt, creating an incentive-based growth pathway.

## Tier 1 SBE – Emerging, Start Up, Specialty, or Small-by-Design SBE:

- Three-year average gross receipt: professional services - <\$7.0M
- These firms can remain small if they choose and still have access to the SBE program

## Tier 2 SBE – Growth SBE

- Three-year average gross receipt: professional services - \$7.0M - \$10M
- Higher three-year average gross receipt will incentivize firms to grow
- Firms may stay in Tier 2 for a maximum of 5 years.

## Tier 3 SBE – Mature SBE

- Gross receipt: Any single year >\$10M
- Firms will be required to graduate within 3 years

**Implementation Schedule:** Effective when signed

# Recommendation 2: Incentivize Growth SBE Operating Efficiency

Incentivize SBE operating efficiency and growth trajectory by providing higher multipliers.

 **Tier 1 SBE:**

audited overhead rate or statewide average (to be decided by the firm)

 **Tier 2 SBE:**

audited overhead rate or 10% above statewide average (to be decided by the firm)

 **Tier 3 SBE:**

audited overhead rate or 20% above statewide average (to be decided by the firm)

**Implementation Schedule:** Effective when signed

# Recommendation 3: Establish 15% SBE Utilization Goal as Prime Consultant

Consider establishing 15% SBE utilization goal as prime consultant, calculated by total yearly (with or w/o SBE contract designation) advertised amount minus GECs and mega projects. Prime contract size can be as follows to incentivize firms to grow and eventually graduate out of the program:



### Tier 1 and Tier 2 SBE:

will be allowed to pursue contracts <\$5M (with or w/o SBE contract designation)



### Tier 2 and Tier 3 SBE:

will be allowed to pursue contracts \$5M - \$10M (with or w/o SBE contract designation)



SBEs may sub up to 50% to non SBEs

**Implementation Schedule:** Effective when signed

## Recommendation 4: Establish 20% SBE Utilization Goal as Sub-Consultant



### Recommendation:

consider establishing utilization goal of 20% SBE participation through standard notes in professional services advertisements.



**Implementation Schedule:** Effective when signed

# Next Steps



## January 2026:

Meet with FDOT Secretary and COO to confirm program direction and priorities.



## February 2026:

Developed near-term policy recommendations.



## March-April 2026:

Engage external stakeholders, including ACEC and Small Business Development Councils, and conduct district-level listening sessions for feedback.



## April 2026:

Present final program recommendations and implementation plan to FDOT Secretary and COO for approval.

# FDOT'S DRIVE INITIATIVE

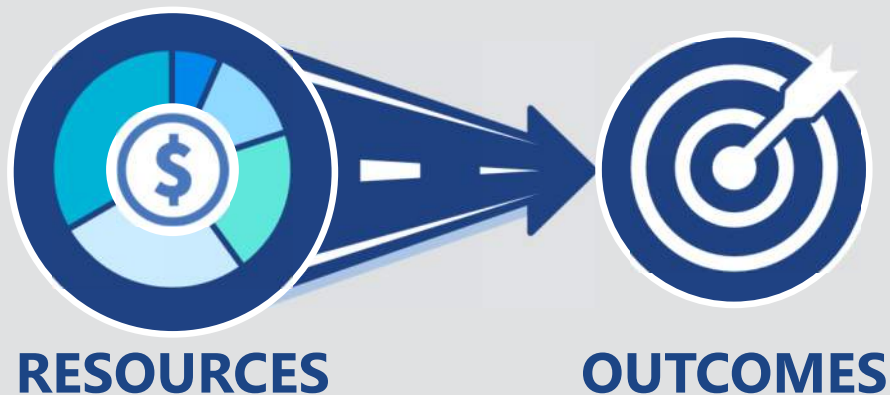


# DRIVE-ing Innovations Forward

## DEPARTMENT'S REVIEW FOR INNOVATION AND VALUE ENHANCEMENT (DRIVE)

Bringing more value to our communities through cost-savings & innovative project delivery methods

### DOING MORE WITH LESS



### WE ALL PLAY A ROLE

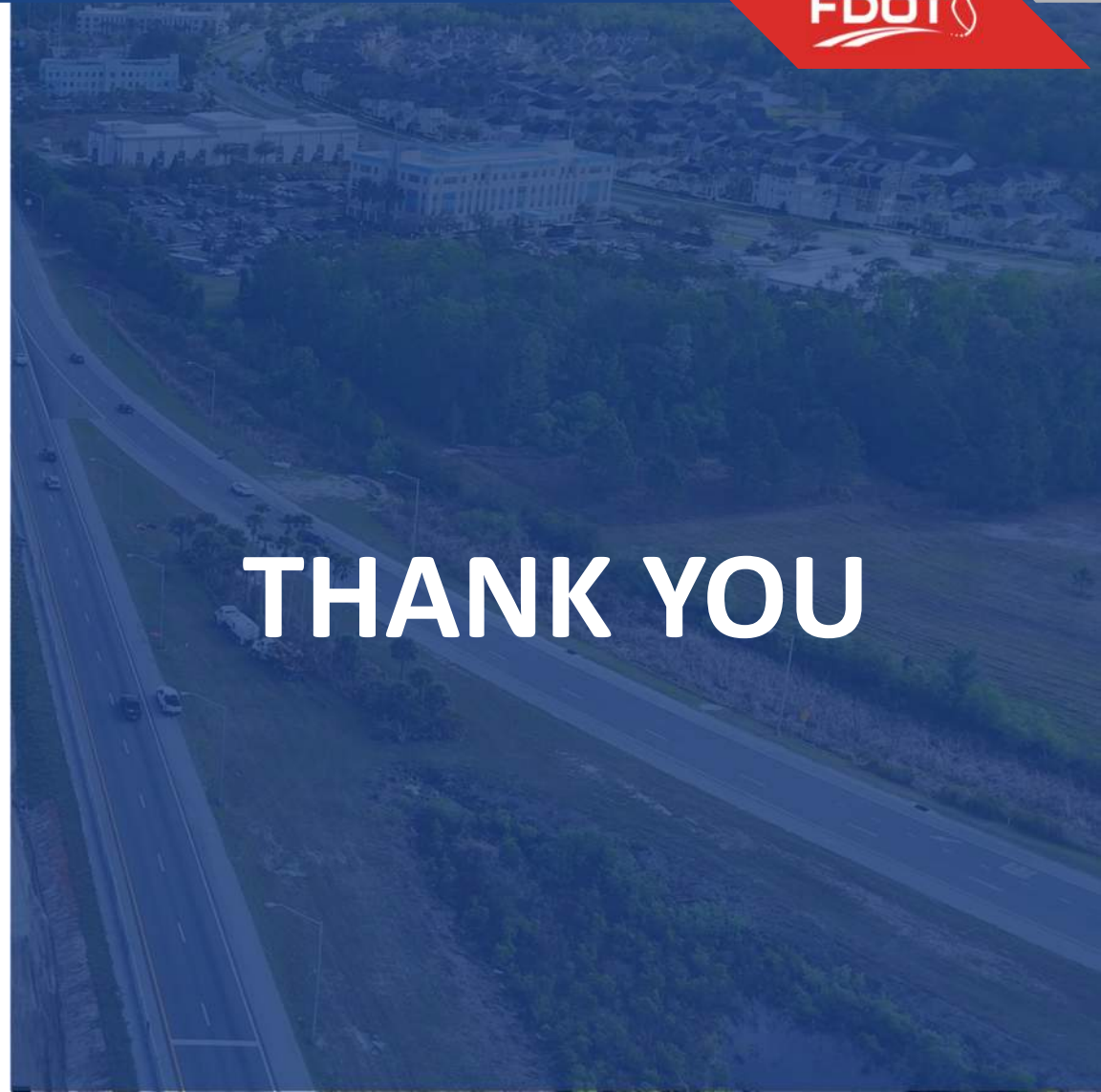
-  **FDOT Central Office & Districts**
-  **Contractors**
-  **Consultants**



# DRIVE Initiative Next Steps



IMPLEMENTATION  
BEGINS MAY 1, 2026



**THANK YOU**



*Florida Department of Transportation*

RON DESANTIS  
GOVERNOR

605 Suwannee Street  
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450

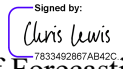
JARED W. PERDUE, P.E.  
SECRETARY

**FORECASTING AND PERFORMANCE BULLETIN 26-01**

*(FHWA Approval: N/A)*

DATE: April 24, 2026

TO: District Directors of Transportation Operations, District Directors of Transportation Development, District Design Engineers, District Construction Engineers, District Maintenance Engineers, District Consultant Project Management Engineers, District Geotechnical Engineers, District Traffic Operations Engineers, District Program Management Engineers, District Drainage Engineers, District Materials Engineers, District Specifications Engineers, District Estimates Engineers, District Safety Engineers, District Safety Administrators

FROM: Chris Lewis, P.E.   
Director, Office of Forecasting and Performance

COPIES: Will Watts, Jennifer Marshall, Rudy Powell, Will Potter, Tim Lattner, Katasha Gruver, Jose Hernando, Brenda Young, Mark Mathes, Ben Goldsberry, Derwood Sheppard, Patrick Overton, Scott Arnold, Daniel Strickland, Ashley Anderson, Sam Samford, Carla Perry, Ryan Asmus, Sue Zheng, Irene Cabral, Carlos Martinez

SUBJECT: **Department's Review for Innovation and Value Enhancement, Design/Construction (DRIVE-D/C)**

**BACKGROUND**

The Department's Review for Innovation and Value Enhancement (DRIVE) is a Florida Department of Transportation (Department) initiative across all program areas to identify and implement efficiencies and innovations. The initiative is intended to capture savings in a financially constrained environment to do more of what our customers expect. DRIVE involves everyone- Central Office, Districts, consultants, and contractors. Everyone is responsible and accountable for DRIVE.

This bulletin announces the release of DRIVE-D/C, which is one of the program areas of the DRIVE initiative. The DRIVE-D/C program focuses on design to strengthen project discipline and influence cost savings for construction of projects under \$100 million scheduled for design advertisement on or after May 4, 2026. The DRIVE-D/C framework will establish a Baseline early in the project development through collaboration among the District, the Prime Project

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## DRIVE D/C

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Design Consultant/Engineer of Record (EOR) (Team A), and a Multidisciplinary Team (Team B) to establish project scope and construction cost.

The Prime Project Design Consultant/EOR (Team A) is the selected design firm through the standard design contract procurement process. The Multidisciplinary Team (Team B) may be a combination of consultants, contractors, and in-house FDOT staff teamed together, as determined by the District, to strategize and innovate for scope refinements and cost savings. Team B is to be an independent team not comprised solely of District in-house staff. Potential Team B team members should include but not be limited to Construction, Design, Maintenance, Traffic Engineering/Operations, Safety, and Program Management staff. Team B shall consist of the same team members throughout the life of the project.

## **REQUIREMENTS**

### ***Baseline Establishment Phase***

- The Baseline Establishment Phase starts when the standard design contract procurement process is initiated to select Team A.
- During the District's procurement of Team A, Team B will be contracted by the District under a District General Engineering Consultant (GEC) Task Work Order (TWO) to identify cost-saving strategies and design innovations and support all proceeding phases of DRIVE-D/C.
- Once Team A is selected, a TWO (limiting amount) for DRIVE-D/C assessment will be issued within 5 working days by the District after the Notice to Proceed (NTP) is issued to Team A. The assessment is intended to identify and evaluate ideas, review the District's and Team B's findings, and identify any conflicts or concerns.
- Within 15 working days of the executed TWO for Team A, a DRIVE-D/C partnership and collaboration meeting will be conducted by the District, where the District, Team A, and Team B review all cost-saving strategies and develop recommendations. The recommendations are accepted by the District Design Engineer and District Program Management Engineer/Administrator, within 15 working days from the DRIVE-D/C Partnership meeting, to lock the project scope and construction cost, establishing the Baseline. Any recommendations that are not accepted, must be approved by the District Director of Transportation Development.
- The District will then use the Baseline to negotiate the staff hours for the design contract with Team A.
- The District will submit the established Baseline to the Forecasting and Performance Office. The Forecasting and Performance Office will upload the information into the DRIVE-D/C dashboard.

### ***Design Development Phase***

- The Design Development Phase starts following the establishment of the Baseline described in the previous phase.
- Team A will produce the plans and ensure QC/compliance.

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### DRIVE D/C

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- Team B will review milestone submittals for project efficiency and innovation.
- The District will manage the design production of the project.
- Team A, Team B, and the District will collaborate on plans production and innovation during the design development phase.
- The District Design Engineer and District Program Management Engineer/Administrator will assess and approve any accepted innovations and cost savings. The District Director of Transportation Development must approve any innovations that are not accepted.
- The District Secretary must approve any scope additions resulting in cost increases. The District will submit the modified Baseline to the Forecasting and Performance Office.
- Team A, Team B, and the District will compare the project scope and construction cost to the Baseline at each project milestone as scoped (i.e. 30/60/90%).

#### ***Construction Cost Evaluation Phase***

- The Construction Cost Evaluation Phase starts with the award of the construction contract.
- The Forecasting and Performance Office will adjust the Baseline (original or modified) from its present-day cost to the date of the construction contract award to create the final Baseline. The Forecasting and Performance Office will then compare the construction contract awarded amount to the final Baseline.
- The Forecasting and Performance Office will individually measure Team A, Team B, and the District using a Pass/Fail rating per project based on whether the final Baseline construction cost was met. Consideration may be given for unforeseen market conditions.

#### ***Performance Phase***

- The Performance Phase starts following issuance of the Pass/ Fail rating per project.
- The Forecasting and Performance Office will track the performance of the District, Team A, and Team B over time.
- Team A, Team B, or the District will be required separately to provide a Recovery Plan to the Forecasting and Performance Office if a trend of not meeting the final Baseline (Fail rating) develops. A trend is specific to Team A, Team B, or the District based on the Construction Cost Evaluation of their projects. A Recovery Plan is not anticipated to be on a per project basis.
- A Recovery Plan must address at least the following questions:
  - Why did a trend of not meeting the final Baseline develop?
  - What will be done to avoid future occurrences of not meeting the final Baseline?
  - What are the lessons learned?
- As DRIVE-D/C progresses, a library of successful innovations, cost savings ideas and lessons learned by project type will be recorded by the Forecasting and Performance Office. This information will be included in the DRIVE-D/C Dashboard.

### **IMPLEMENTATION**

The DRIVE-D/C program is effective for all projects with construction cost less than \$100 million scheduled for design advertisement on or after May 4, 2026.

Forecasting and Performance Bulletin 26-01

DRIVE D/C

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**CONTACT**

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