Speaker: Mary McGehee

Good evening. The Florida Department of Transportation, FDOT, would like to welcome you to the public hearing for the US 301 Project Development and Environment, or PD&E, Study. My name is Mary McGehee. I am the District Five Project Manager for the Florida Department of Transportation. This public hearing is for Financial Management Project Number 430132-1-22-01. This environmental study has been conducted by FDOT District Five in compliance with all applicable federal environmental laws and pursuant to Title 23 United States Code Section 327 and the implementing Memorandum of Understanding between FDOT and the Federal Highway Administration signed on December 14, 2016; the FDOT Office of Environmental Management in Tallahassee is the approving authority.

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Speaker: Mary McGehee

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The proposed improvement involves widening US 301 from County Road 470 East to State Road 44, realigning a portion of US 301 south of the City of Coleman, and reconstructing the Florida’s Turnpike Interchange at US 301. This hearing is being held to provide you with the opportunity to comment on this project.

Here with me tonight are:

Jeff Arms, Consultant Project Manager to FDOT

Other representatives from FDOT and consultant team.

At this time, we would like to recognize any federal, state, county, or city officials who may be present tonight. Are there any officials who would like to be recognized? (pause)

We will now begin the presentation.
**Speaker: Mary McGehee**

The purpose of this public hearing is to share information with the general public about the proposed improvement, its conceptual design, all alternatives under study, and the potential beneficial and adverse social, economic, and environmental impacts upon the community. The public hearing also serves as an official forum providing members of the public to express their opinions regarding the project.
Speaker: Mary McGehee

Public participation at this meeting is encouraged and solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability or family status. Persons wishing to express their concerns relative to FDOT compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 may do so by contacting Jennifer Smith, the Title Six Coordinator for FDOT District Five, by e-mail at Jennifer.smith2@dot.state.fl.us. All inquiries or complaints will be handled according to FDOT procedure and in a prompt and courteous manner.
The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) pursuant to 23 U.S.C. §327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 14, 2016 and executed by the Federal Highway Administration and FDOT.

**Speaker: Mary McGehee**

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Speaker: Jeff Arms

There are three primary components to tonight’s hearing:

• First, the open house, which occurred prior to this presentation, where you were invited to view the project displays, speak directly with the project team, and provide your comments in writing or to the court reporter.

• Second, this presentation, which will explain the project purpose and need, study alternatives, potential impacts, both beneficial and adverse, and proposed methods to mitigate adverse project impacts.

• Third, a formal comment period following this presentation, where you will have the opportunity to provide oral statements at the microphone or you may provide your comments directly to the court reporter or in writing.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

This public hearing was advertised consistent with the federal and state requirements, including:

- **Section 120.525 Florida Statute** for meetings, hearing, and workshops;
- **Section 286.011 Florida Statute**, Government in the Sunshine Law;
- **Section 335.199 Florida Statute**, Access Management;
- **Section 339.155 Florida Statute**, Transportation Planning;
- **49 Code of Federal Regulations Part 24**, Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition;
- and the **Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990**.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

The Project Development and Environment, or PD&E, Study is a process to analyze a transportation project to determine if there is an engineering and environmentally feasible alternative to meet the project need. This process is mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and State law. It represents a combined effort by technical professionals who analyze information and document the best alternative to meet the transportation needs of a community.

A PD&E study has three main parts: Engineering, Environmental, and Public Involvement.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

A lot of growth and development is occurring in Sumter County, with many active and planned transportation projects.
**Speaker: Jeff Arms**

The US 301 PD&E team coordinates with these other project teams.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

The study area begins at County Road 470 East and ends at State Road 44, a total of 7.8 miles. The roadway has been divided into 6 analysis segments.
The purpose of the project is to increase capacity and address the future traffic demand and congestion along US 301, accommodate the high volumes of truck traffic, and support social and economic development opportunities within the area.
**Speaker: Jeff Arms**

The PD&E Study considered many potential solutions and formally evaluated three alternatives.
**Speaker: Jeff Arms**

The “No Build” alternative would leave US 301 as it is today, and would not make any improvements to the roadway.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

Alternative 1 would widen US 301 to four lanes along its existing alignment from County Road 470 to State Road 44, including through the City of Coleman.
实惠: Jeff Arms

Alternative 2 is the recommended alternative, and widens US 301 to four lanes within the study area north of County Road 468 and south of County Road 525 East. A portion of US 301 would be realigned south of the City of Coleman with a new four lane roadway to avoid construction impacts to the city. Warm Springs Avenue and Commercial Street would remain the same, and both streets would connect to the realigned portion of US 301.
The recommended alternative is comprised of two different roadway typical sections.

The first is the Suburban Typical Section, which is recommended to be applied on US 301 from County Road 470 East to County Road 525 East, follow the proposed realignment, and then from County Road 468 to the Turnpike.

This typical section allows for a speed limit of up to 55 miles per hour. The lanes are complemented by paved inside shoulders, plus paved outside shoulders that may accommodate bicycle use. Stormwater will drain into grass swales with inlets just beyond the roadway shoulder. Space for sidewalks is also included near the edge of the right-of-way.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

The second typical section is the Urban Typical, and is recommended from the Turnpike to State Road 44 and accommodates a design speed of up to 45 miles per hour.

Each side of the roadway includes bicycle lanes. The roadway also includes an outside-lane curb and gutter with drainage inlets followed by the sidewalk along with room for utilities, a drainage swale and pipes.
**Speaker: Jeff Arms**

Segment one begins at County Road 470 East and goes to Shady Brook Drive. The suburban typical section is recommended, and includes a right-side widening.

Please note that numerous proposed stormwater ponds and floodplain compensation locations are also shown on the following segment slides.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

Segment two begins at Shady Brook Drive, where a right-side widening would be applied until reaching Shady Brook Park. US 301 would transition to a left-side widening to prevent any impacts to the park.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

Segment two continues from the park to County Road 525 East with a left-side widening.
**Speaker: Jeff Arms**

The proposed roundabout at County Road 525 East includes two travel lanes in each direction. The design accommodates large semi-trucks and allows for expansion to accommodate future growth in traffic.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

A new roadway alignment using a suburban typical section is recommended to connect County Road 525 East to County Road 468. The new roadway connects proposed roundabouts at each of these intersections, and maintains connections to the City of Coleman from both approaches.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

The proposed multi-lane roundabout at County Road 468 accommodates large semi-trucks, maintains a direct connection to Warm Springs Avenue and the City of Coleman, and may be expanded to accommodate future traffic growth.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

Segment four begins at County Road 468, continuing with the suburban typical section. Right-side widening is recommended along the entire segment.
**Speaker: Jeff Arms**

Segment four continues towards Florida’s Turnpike, still using the recommended suburban typical section.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

Segment four ends at Florida’s Turnpike.
**Speaker: Jeff Arms**

A Diverging Diamond Interchange, or DDI, is recommended for the interchange with the Florida’s Turnpike. The DDI has a greater crash reduction potential than the other alternatives studied, and would create signalized intersections where the ramps merge with US 301. Vehicles traveling along US 301 through the new interchange would follow a new traffic flow, represented by the red and blue lines. With this design, cars exiting the Turnpike and merging onto US 301, shown in maroon, would merge directly with traffic and would not need to cross over opposing traffic. Vehicles entering the turnpike, shown in navy, would not have to cross opposing traffic either.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

Segment five begins after the interchange and extends to State Road 44. An urban typical section is recommended, along with reconfigured median openings and turn lane improvements.
**Speaker: Jeff Arms**

Many evaluation factors were considered when evaluating the study alternatives.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

These factors include: social and economic, cultural, natural, physical, roadway/traffic, and cost.
**Speaker: Jeff Arms**

The social and economic category includes a review for consistency with local transportation plans and improvements, identifies potential relocations, and estimates the right-of-way needed. The recommended alternative is consistent with local plans at the City of Coleman, City of Wildwood, Sumter County and the Lake~Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization.

One of the unavoidable consequences on a project such as this is the necessary relocation of families or businesses. On this project, we anticipate the relocation of four families and three businesses. All right-of-way acquisition will be conducted in accordance with Florida Statute 339.09 and the federal Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970, commonly known as the Uniform Act.
If you are required to make any type of move as a result of a Department of Transportation project, you can expect to be treated in a fair and helpful manner and in compliance with the Uniform Relocation Assistance Act. If a move is required, you will be contacted by an appraiser who will inspect your property. We encourage you to be present during the inspection and provide information about the value of your property. You may also be eligible for relocation advisory services and payment benefits. If you are being moved and you are unsatisfied with the Department’s determination of your eligibility for payment or the amount of that payment, you may appeal that determination. You will be promptly furnished necessary forms and notified of the procedures to be followed in making that appeal.

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A special word of caution – if you move before you receive notification of the relocation benefits that you might be entitled to, your benefits may be jeopardized.

The relocation specialists who are supervising this program are Amy Weinbender and Gillian Bernard. They will be happy to answer your questions and furnish you with copies of relocation assistance brochures. Amy and Gillian, please stand so that anyone who is involved in relocation on this project will know that they need to see you regarding their property. (**pause**)

The recommended alternative would require approximately 118 acres of right-of-way acquisition.
The purpose of the cultural and historic resources survey is to identify historic resources and archaeological sites eligible to be registered with the NRHP, the National Register of Historic Places. 32 historic resources were identified as either eligible for the NRHP or eligible as contributors to the Coleman Historic District. The recommended alternative is expected to have a minimal impact to one historic site and an adverse impact to one archaeological site. Data recovery efforts are planned to mitigate adverse impacts to the archaeological site.

Section 4(f) refers to a portion of the U.S. Department of Transportation Act of 1966 which requires the consideration of parks, recreational lands, wildlife and waterfowl refuges, and historic sites in transportation project development. The recommended alternative will have a *de minimis*, or minimal, impact on one eligible site.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

The recommended alternative would impact 7.11 acres of wetlands and 10.55 acre-ft of floodplains.
A Natural Resource Evaluation was performed, and determined that the recommended alternative may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the wood stork and eastern indigo snake. No affects are expected to other wildlife or habitat with the recommended alternative.
**Speaker: Jeff Arms**

The recommended alternative is not predicted to exceed National Ambient Air Quality Standards.

A detailed noise study was conducted in accordance with Title 23, Code of Federal Regulations, Section 772: Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction; Part Two Chapter 18 of the FDOT Project Development and Environment Manual, and Chapter 335.17 Florida Statutes. This assessment also adhered to current Federal Highway Administration traffic noise analysis guidelines contained in *Highway Traffic Noise: Analysis and Abatement Guidance*.

The study identified potential noise sensitive receiver sites. Traffic congestion from the expected traffic growth would impact 40 receptor sites if no improvements are made to US 301. The recommended alternative would impact an additional 10 noise sensitive sites. Based on the noise analysis performed, there appear to be no apparent, economically feasible solutions to mitigate the noise impacts with the recommended alternative. Therefore, no noise walls will be included with the recommended alternative.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

A contamination screening evaluation was performed to identify locations where contamination may be present. Of the 48 sites evaluated, the recommended alternative may impact ten low risk sites, ten medium risk sites, and eight high risk sites. These sites will be further evaluated and mitigated as required by state and federal law prior to construction.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

There are multiple utilities located throughout the project area. We have coordinated with the utility companies to minimize impacts, and this coordination will continue during the design phase.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

A stormwater drainage analysis evaluated nearly 60 potential pond locations based on its constructability, maintenance requirements, and environmental factors. Of the 60 locations considered, 14 pond sites and 5 floodplain compensation sites were selected as part of the recommended alternative.
Access Management is a systematic approach to determine the locations of driveway connections, median openings, and traffic signals to improve safety and traffic flow by reducing vehicle conflict points. A full median opening allows for left and right turns in all directions. A directional median allows left turns from the main roadway into driveways and u-turn maneuvers. Section 335.199 of Florida Statutes requires a Public Hearing whenever access management changes are proposed. These include the modification, addition, or closure of existing median openings, intersections, or interchanges. This Public Hearing also serves to satisfy this requirement.

The recommended alternative establishes Class 3 from County Road 470 East to County 525 East, along the realignment, and from County Road 468 to Florida’s Turnpike. The segment from Florida’s Turnpike to State Road 44 is currently Class 5 and is recommended to remain as such.
**Speaker: Jeff Arms**

The recommended alternative includes 15 full median openings and 14 directional median openings. All of the full median openings meet Access Class Requirements, except for two locations.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

The first location is between County Road 470 and Shady Brook Drive. The access management standards will be met with the implementation of the County Road 470 PD&E and the recommended alternative for the US 301 PD&E.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

The second location is at the intersection of County Road 521 where a full median opening is proposed in order to maintain full access to US 301 for the fire station. This substandard spacing is also mitigated because the County Road 468 intersection is proposed to be a roundabout.
**Speaker: Jeff Arms**

Roundabouts are included as part of the recommended alternative at both the County Road 468 and County Road 525 East intersections with US 301.

Roundabouts are designed to reduce the number of crashes, improve traffic flow with fewer stops, and safely operate during a power outage. Other full access median openings can also be considered for roundabouts in the future as development occurs.
**Speaker: Jeff Arms**

Future traffic conditions are also evaluated for each of the alternatives, including the average daily traffic anticipated and the level of service. Level of service measures the travel delay of vehicles, and provides a “grade” based on the delay. An “A” grade represents free flowing traffic, while “F” is considered failing and highly congested.

Based on the analysis, US 301 is expected to become congested by the design year of 2042 if no actions are taken. The recommended alternative would provide relief to the traffic congestion.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

The project cost estimate includes the major cost components for the recommended alternative and is estimated to cost $112 million.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

There are a few steps remaining for the US 301 PD&E Study.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

We have already completed several steps in the PD&E process, and are currently at the Public Hearing. The study will be complete in Summer 2019.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

Once this PD&E Study is complete, the project will move to the Design Phase. Currently, the design phase is funded in 2021. Right-of-way purchases and construction costs have not been funded.
Speaker: Jeff Arms

The next step is to incorporate your input on this public hearing into our decision-making process. After the comment period closes and your input has been considered, a decision will be made and the Final PD&E document will be sent to the FDOT Office of Environmental Management which, based on the Memorandum of Understanding signed with FHWA on December 14, 2016, has approval authority on this project granting location and design concept acceptance. This project has and will continue to comply with all applicable state and federal rules and regulations.

This concludes our presentation. We will now offer you the opportunity to make a public statement. Anyone desiring to make a statement or present written views regarding the location, conceptual design, or social, economic, and environmental effects of the improvements will now have an opportunity to do so.

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Speaker: Jeff Arms

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If you are holding a speaker card, please give it to a member of the project team. If you have not received a speaker card, and wish to speak, please raise your hand so you can receive a card to fill out.

Written statements may also be submitted in lieu of, or in addition to, oral statements. All written material received at this public hearing and at the Florida Department of Transportation office located at 719 South Woodland Boulevard, DeLand, Florida 32720 with attention to Mary McGehee, postmarked no later than December 13, 2018, will become a part of the public record for this hearing. All written comments should be addressed to Mary McGehee. Comments may also be e-mailed to Mary.McGehee@dot.state.fl.us, or submitted online through the project website at www.us301sumter.com.
**Speaker: Jeff Arms**

Additional information about the project, including this presentation, meeting materials, and study documents are available on the project website. You may also contact the study team directly by phone or e-mail.
**Speaker: Jeff Arms**

We will now take a 10 minute intermission. If you have any questions, please speak with a project team member. You may also use this time to fill out a speaker’s card if you wish to make a statement at the microphone, or you may provide your oral comments directly to the court reporter.

Thank you.

(10 minute intermission)
Speaker: Jeff Arms

We will now begin the formal comment period. We will call upon those who have turned in speaker’s card in the order they were received. When you come forward, please state your name and address. If you represent an organization, municipality or other public body, please provide that information as well. We ask that you limit your input to three minutes. Please come to the microphone so the court reporter will be able to get a complete record of your comments.

We will announce the speaker and indicate who is speaking next so they may come closer to the microphone to wait until their turn.
**Speaker: Jeff Arms**

***Read the name of each speaker’s card in the order it was received. Start timer as each person begins their comment at the microphone***

After the last speaker’s card is called, continue with the following statement:

Does anyone else desire to speak? If so, state your name and address, and complete a speaker’s card after you’ve given your statement for the public record.

If there are no further comments, I will turn the meeting over to Mary for closing remarks.
Speaker: Mary McGehee

The verbatim transcript of the Hearing’s oral proceedings, together with all written material received as part of the hearing record and all studies, displays, and informational material provided at the hearing will be made a part of the project decision-making process, and will be made available at the District Office for public review upon request.

Thank you for attending the US 301 PD&E Study Public Hearing and providing your input into this project. It is now (state time). I hereby officially close the public hearing for the US 301 Project Development and Environment Study. Thank you again, and have a good evening.