

**Official Minutes of
MARION COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

October 7, 2025

CALL TO ORDER:

The Marion County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) met in a workshop session in Commission Chambers at 3:03 p.m. on Tuesday, October 7, 2025 at the Marion County Governmental Complex located in Ocala, Florida.

INTRODUCTION OF WORKSHOP BY CHAIRMAN KATHY BRYANT

Chairman Bryant advised that the workshop was scheduled this afternoon to discuss the Marion Oaks Manor Extension Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) Study.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag of our Country.

ROLL CALL

Upon roll call the following members were present: Chairman Kathy Bryant, District 2; Commissioner Craig Curry, District 1; Commissioner Matthew McClain, District 3; and Commissioner Michelle Stone, District 5. Vice-Chairman Carl Zalak, III, District 4, was absent due to a prior commitment. Also present were County Attorney Matthew G. Minter, County Administrator Mounir Bouyounes, and Assistant County Administrator (ACA) Tracy Straub.

The Deputy Clerk was in receipt an 18 page Agenda packet to follow along with the PowerPoint presentation.

WORKSHOP PRESENTATION

1. Introduction to the Marion Oaks Manor Extension Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study (Budget Impact - None)

County Engineer Steven Cohoon, Office of the County Engineer (OCE), presented the following recommendation:

Description/Background: Marion County, in coordination with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), is advancing the Marion Oaks Manor Extension project from the Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) phase into the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study phase. The Marion Oaks Manor Extension project from the Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) phase into the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study phase. The Marion Oaks Manor Extension project is to create a 4-lane corridor by widening existing 2-lane roads, constructing new 4-lane roads and constructing a bridge over Interstate 75 (I-75). The new 4-lane corridor will connect SW 49th Avenue in Marion Oaks to South Highway 475. The PD&E process includes environmental analysis, engineering evaluations, public involvement, and coordination with state and federal agencies.

As part of the FDOT Public Involvement process, staff and the consultant team have prepared a presentation summarizing the study's purpose and need, alternatives analysis, environmental considerations, and next steps. These materials are proposed to be presented at a public meeting scheduled for

Thursday, October 23, 2025, 5:30 to 7:00 PM at the Marion Oaks Community Center. Prior to this, staff wishes to share the materials with the Board and seek their input.

Budget/Impact: None.

Recommended Action: Board discussion and direction regarding the Marion Oaks Manor Extension PD&E Study presentation materials.

County Engineer Steven Cohoon, OCE, advised that the consultant team of Kimley-Horn and Associates (KHA) have prepared a presentation for the Board, noting the materials and information will also be presented at a public meeting scheduled for Thursday, October 23, 2025, 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Marion Oaks Community Center. He stated the presentation will include information about the various typical sections, the future fly-over, drainage retention areas (DRAs) locations, etc.

Ali Brighton, KHA, referred to the map on page 2 of the PowerPoint presentation, which shows the project location. She advised that the western terminus of the project is at the connection point where the future SW 49th Court Road will connect. The project begins around SW 47th Avenue Road and goes east over Interstate 75 (I-75), continuing along the alignment of the existing County Road (CR) 42 and ends at the intersection of CR 475. Ms. Brighton provided a brief overview of the PD&E Study components, which include public involvement and stakeholder coordination; engineering considerations including traffic, drainage and right-of ways (ROWs); as well as environmental considerations such as natural resources, wetlands, noise, social impacts, and contamination.

Ms. Brighton addressed the existing conditions along SW 47th Avenue Road to SW 18th Avenue Road corridor, noting it is mostly a 2 lane roadway (1 lane in each direction) with a paved shoulder and a very wide grass median. She advised that there are currently some small sections with sidewalks, but for the most part it does not have pedestrian facilities along this corridor. Ms. Brighton stated further to the east towards I-75 the grass median narrows down and is eventually eliminated, becoming a 2 lane undivided roadway with no shoulder (as it approaches the back of the SummerGlen neighborhood). She advised that the roadway closer to I-75 eventually becomes a dirt road with a 75 foot (ft) tree buffer along the southern edge of the SummerGlen neighborhood.

Ms. Brighton addressed the existing conditions along the frontage roads at I-75 (east and west), noting the Board needs to consider how it wants to connect to those roadways in order to continue access to the north and south frontage roads. She stated the proposed plan includes an overpass in this area. Ms. Brighton commented on the existing conditions east of I-75 along the current alignment of CR 42, noting this is a 2 lane road with no shoulders or median. She stated the project ends at the intersection of CR 475.

Ms. Brighton advised that the need for the project has been identified in several previous planning studies, as well as the recently adopted 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). She stated the proposed project would provide a connection between Marion Oaks and The Villages via an overpass over I-75 and widen the existing roadway to meet future traffic demand from the overpass connection. Ms. Brighton advised that currently anyone coming to or from the Marion Oaks area has to travel via CR 484 to get to these areas to the east.

Ms. Brighton provided a brief overview of Typical Section Alternatives 1, 2 and 3. She stated the starting point was to look at the Typical Section for the future SW 49th Court Road and SW 49th Avenue connection. Ms. Brighton advised that the elements for these three Typical Sections are the same and include a 12 ft shared use path, paved shoulders,

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2 travel lanes in each direction, a wide median, curb and gutter, as well as a sidewalk on the south side. The difference between the 3 Alternatives and the 3 Typical Sections is how the County wants to accomplish that Typical Section (center widening, northern widening, southern widening). She advised that Typical Alternative Section 1 (center widening) keeps the center line the same as it is today and adds the additional widening on each side. This would require additional ROW on both sides, as well as additional temporary construction easements. Ms. Brighton advised that Typical Alternative Section 2 (northern widening) considers the same elements, but accomplishes it by widening all to the north. Typical Alternative Section 3 (southern widening) considers the same elements, but accomplishes it by widening to the south.

Ms. Brighton stated early in the process when considering Typical Alternative Section 1, KHA determined that it would not recommend moving forward with this Alternative at this time as it has significant impacts to properties on both sides, requires ROW acquisition on both sides, as well as significant temporary construction easements and future setbacks. She stated after removing Typical Alternative Section 1 from consideration, it chose to change the options from Typical Alternative Sections 1, 2 and 3 to Alternative A (widening to the north) and Alternative B (widening to the south). Ms. Brighton referred to page 9, which reflects a comparison of the build alternatives for Alternatives A and B.

Ms. Brighton advised that the next page reflects the different Alternatives along the Marion Oaks Course intersection, as well as different Alternatives along the Marion Oaks Boulevard intersection. She advised that the Marion Oaks Boulevard intersection currently is a 2-way stop control intersection, noting both Alternatives reflect a roundabout and 2 lanes in each direction. Ms. Brighton addressed the intersection at Marion Oaks Lane, which currently has 1 lane in each direction. She advised that both Alternatives reflect added turn lanes along Marion Oaks Lane as it approaches the proposed roundabout. She advised that although Alternative A widens to the north, there is a small section that goes to the south due to the need for school access for the future high school. Ms. Brighton clarified that per previous approvals for the future high school, there is a requirement that the existing vegetation between the SummerGlen neighborhood and the future school be maintained and any future roadway access be south of the 75 foot (ft) tree buffer. She advised that relating to the school access there are 3 driveways being built for the school, noting the western driveway aligns with SW 15th Court, the center driveway is a right in and right out, and the far eastern driveway (where most of the school traffic will go in and go out) is on the far eastern side of the school. Ms. Brighton noted these accesses have been discussed and approved by the Marion County School Board (MCSB).

Ms. Brighton provided a brief overview of the I-75 overpass section of the roadway project, noting the Typical Section would narrow as it goes over the I-75 bridge, noting the majority of the roadway will be 120 ft wide and this section will be a little less than 100 ft. She stated it will still maintain a shared use path, 12 ft lanes, center median, etc. Ms. Brighton stated future designs will accommodate the required overpass height.

Ms. Brighton commented on frontage roads and how connections will continue to be maintained, noting the County cannot cut off those connections. She addressed the intersection at CR 42 and CR 475, noting this would be a signalized intersection rather than a roundabout. Ms. Brighton clarified that all the alternatives and recommendations presented have not been finalized, noting these are only the current concepts. She stated as part of this process there will public input, which will be considered as this project moves forward.

Ms. Brighton commented on the drainage portion of the project and where the DRAs will be located. She advised that depending on which Alternative the Board decides on will determine those locations, noting some will be located in same areas on both options and some will shift to one side or the other. Ms. Brighton provided a brief overview of the DRA design, landscaping and amenities that will be surrounding those future drainage areas. Ms. Brighton advised that a full alternatives evaluation for both options would be conducted that will include natural and physical environmental impacts; social and cultural impacts; engineering impacts; property impacts, public input and costs. Ms. Brighton addressed the projects schedule and the next steps to be taken. She advised of a public meeting scheduled for Thursday, October 23, 2025, 5:30 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. at the Marion Oaks Community Center, followed by the environmental analysis, alternative analysis, FDOT PD&E oversight review, and providing the BCC and public the updates of those analyses and the completion date of this project is in the beginning of 2027.

BOARD DISCUSSION AND CLOSING COMMENTS

In response to Commissioner Curry, Chairman Bryant stated the BCC will not know the impact to property owners until the Board determines which option it wants to move forward. Ms. Brighton advised that once those property impact projections have been determined, it will help the County decide which route it would want to take (north or south).

In response to Chairman Bryant, Ms. Brighton stated the only impact to the residents of SummerGlen, as it relates to the back gate (by the future school site), would be that those residents would not be able to make a left out of that back entrance.

General discussion ensued.

Mr. Cohoon advised that staff have received a lot of good feedback from the communities, are doing everything possible to streamline the project. He commented on the design-build concept, which could shave approximately 2 to 5 years off the construction of this project by moving directly into the design-build.

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting thereupon adjourned at 3:28 p.m.

Kathy Bryant, Chairman

Attest:

Gregory C. Harrell, Clerk