



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Greetings from Lake County and on behalf of the FACERS Board, I hope you all had a great first quarter of the year.

I want to make everyone aware that FACERS is looking for local projects to recognize. Please submit your project at the following website: <https://facers.net/facers-awards/>. We want to recognize great County/City employees for the hard work they do every day.

I attended the International Association of Emergency Managers conference in Savannah, GA as a guest of NACE last November. We wanted to start a relationship with this organization as we have some similar goals when it comes to FEMA. We all know the difficulty of working with FEMA, so we have started conversations on how NACE and IAEM can work together to benefit Counties on how to improve communication and relationships with FEMA.

The FACERS Signal Committee received an updated Traffic Signal Maintenance and Compensation Agreement to review. The Committee has provided comments to FDOT and they have made some changes. We expect the final agreements to come out soon as FDOT is looking to get those out for the new fiscal year.

As a reminder, our upcoming FACERS Annual Meeting will be held at the Hilton Orlando Bonnet Creek from June 28th – June 30th and I encourage all members to attend as this is a great way to network and obtain PDHs. Additional information will be coming out soon on how to register. I hope to see you all there.

Sincerely,

George

2023 ANNUAL MEETING

Hilton Bonnet Creek



INFORMATION & REGISTRATION

2023 ANNUAL MEETING SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

EXECUTIVE LIAISON REPORT

FACERS Message Board

The FACERS Message Board is available on the FACERS website to post questions and see responses from other members. Questions and other messages may be posted directly on the Message Board, but members are encouraged to continue to send questions to John Goodknight, Executive Liaison (jgoodknight@facers.net), who will post the question and circulate a copy using FACERS's mass email system. Responses should be posted on the Message Board.

First time users of the Message Board will need to register following the simple prompts on the website. There may be a brief delay for approval of the registration, but once approved, posting a response should be straightforward.

Audible /Vibratory Treatments (AVT) for lane markings

In the last newsletter, we reported on FDOT's Statewide Rumble Strip Initiative. FDOT reported a Benefit/Cost ratio of 32:1 and 42:1 respectively for Audible/Vibratory Treatments (AVT) on state roads and other public roads with posted speeds of 50 mph or greater. FDOT is now working on major program to retrofit edge line and centerline rumble strips on state roads.

FDOT expects to extend this initiative to county and other local roads in the future, but additional work is required to identify the roads to be upgraded. We anticipate that this program will be funded by federal safety funds, and FDOT's District staff will be working with counties in their districts to identify these roads. FDOT has advised that counties that have already identified candidate roads for retrofit should contact their FDOT District Safety Office to request funding (HSIP) in the existing federal safety program. FDOT has advised that the statewide B/C ratio of 42.1 for local roads can be used to support requests for funding AVT treatments so a separate B/C analysis should not be required.

Greenbook update

FDOT has proposed language to require AVTs for all new roads (including resurfacing and reconstruction) with posted speeds of 50 mph or greater. During the last year, FDOT has worked with FACERS to address concerns raised about the language as initially proposed. The current version of the language reflects adjustments recommended by FACERS.

2023 Legislative Session

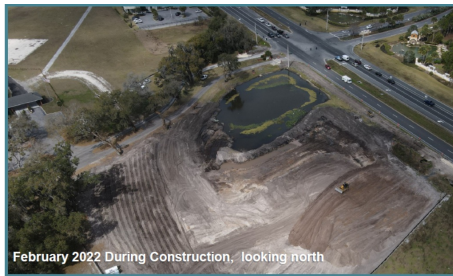
The Florida Legislature is currently in session. This link provides the status of bills for this session. [2023 Bill Tracker – Florida Association of Counties \(fl-counties.com\)](https://www.fl-counties.com/bill-tracker)

Traffic Signal Maintenance and Compensation Agreement

FDOT has updated the Traffic Signal Maintenance and Compensation Agreement. The update includes adjustments to compensation for certain devices, addition of eligible devices, and several other changes. Based on input from the FACERS Signal Committee, FDOT made several changes to the agreement to respond to FACERS' concerns. FDOT reports that the language of the agreement has been finalized and it will be officially posted and available for execution soon.

While this version of the agreement provides some additional benefits, it does not address the issue of replacement of equipment that has reached the end of service life. Some agencies have also reported a significant gap between the compensation and actual cost of maintenance for the system. The Signal Committee expects to address these with FDOT as a potential future update to the agreement.

PROJECT SPOTLIGHT



February 2022 During Construction, looking north



June 2022 During Construction, looking south



During Construction, October 2022



During Construction June 2022, looking south

Sumter County Buena Vista Boulevard Extension

Sumter County identified a need for a new transportation corridor in the area south of SR 44 to support continued economic development and growth. A Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) was commissioned in 2018 to evaluate engineering and environmental impacts of multiple alternatives. The Sumter County BOCC selected a Preferred Alternative in September 2019.

In December 2019, Kimley-Horn was contracted by Sumter County to complete the engineering design, environmental evaluations, permitting, and construction plan development for the selected alternative. The final project design is for a four-lane divided collector roadway with three drainage retention areas, two floodplain compensation areas, two bridge structures, new mast arm traffic signal, two roundabouts, lighting, landscaping, and irrigation.

Right-of-way acquisition was required from 11 parcels for the project improvements. Sumter County worked with affected property owners to acquire the necessary properties during the design phase to expedite the construction and completion of the Project and meet the growing transportation needs of the community.

Construction of the improvements began in January 2022 on an expedited schedule and the roadway was open to traffic in January 2023.

REGULATORY AGENCY PERMITTING: Permitting and coordination was needed with

Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD), US Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS), US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and City of Wildwood.

SAFETY PERFORMANCE: Design elements to improve public safety included new marked pedestrian crossings and pedestrian signal equipment at the signalized intersection with SR 44; roundabout control to reduce intersection conflicts and traffic speeds; lighting along the corridor to provide nighttime vision; and appropriate access control to establish safe crossing maneuvers.

ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION: Environmental protections were established during permitting and put in place for several listed species occurring and potentially occurring on-site. A 100% gopher tortoise survey was conducted prior to construction, eastern indigo snake information was provided to all workers on-site, and measures were implemented to minimize impacts to the adjacent active bald eagle's nest.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS UNDER ADVERSE CONDITIONS: Several other development and construction projects were occurring simultaneously with the BVB Extension including the adjacent Meggison Road project and associated stormwater ponds, a milling and resurfacing project on SR 44 by FDOT, new lift station and associated force main by City of Wildwood, and adjacent private developments under construction. Sumter County and Watson Civil partnered with FDOT to coordinate overlapping construction limits to allocate which contractor would perform portions of the overlapping project on SR 44 and ultimately save time and tax dollars.

The soils beneath the planned bridge structures and retaining walls contained clay content that required improvement prior to installation of the retaining walls and bridge structures. Soil stabilization columns were designed and constructed to provide the best system for the existing condition, while meeting the design intent within the allotted construction timeline.

Hurricane Ian and Hurricane Nicole traversed through Central Florida during active construction activities. Watson Civil along with Eisman & Russo tracked the forecasted storms and ensured safety measures were taken to protect not only the traveling public, but the project itself. Prior to the storms, on-site materials were secured from the high winds and potential flooding. All MOT were evaluated to ensure public safety. After the storms, project staff quickly mobilized to evaluate and repair any storm damage and safety concerns.

PROJECT RESULTS: The BVB Extension is a key regional transportation corridor for Sumter County. The project need was identified nearly 10 years ago by Lake-Sumter MPO and Sumter County. The planning process to identify the recommended corridor alternative resulted in a project that had reduced public, social, and environmental impacts. Through continued coordination with partners, permitting agencies, design professionals, and the public - the BVB project was constructed and open to traffic on schedule. As a critical project identified by Sumter County and the MPO, the newly constructed roadway provides a safe transportation alternative for the region with enhanced aesthetic and safety elements and allows for expansion of support utilities to existing and future development areas.

This project recently won the Project of the Year Award by the West Coast Branch of the American Public Works Association, Florida Chapter.





NACE is in full swing as we hit the spring of 2023. With a new infrastructure bill has come many new funding opportunities, which I know many of you have already applied. If you chose to remain on the sidelines last year, remember these programs for FY23 are now rolling out very quickly, for example the March 30 release of the FY22 Safe Streets for All program grant application for FY23, which NACE members receive notifications and reference materials.

After a COVID hiatus, NACE held its 3rd annual legislative fly-in this past February. FACERS was represented, as NACE Former Leader Ramon Gavarrete attended our meetings with the United States Department of Transportation, The House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, and at the White House with multiple executive office departments.

As always, I am thrilled to be joining you all again this June. As I have mentioned, we are now officially certified by the Florida Board of Professional Engineers as a certified professional development provider. This news couldn't have come at a more opportune time as we prepare for our 2023 Annual Conference, a mere three miles from the Florida border in Orange Beach, Alabama. We are mere weeks away and I hope you have taken advantage of this opportunity closer to home. Remember, FACERS members will be able to apply their professional development hours from our event for official credit. For those of you who have debated attending a NACE conference, it's not too late!

As the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act enters its second fiscal year, NACE has begun to branch out to other agencies important to our members mission, but has been historically been underrepresented with at the NACE level. With the FAST Act extended through FY26, we are turning our attention to establishing and enhancing relationships with FEMA, EPA, and the Army Corp of Engineers. Over the next few years, I look forward to sharing our progress.

As part of this effort, NACE has begun a strategic partnership with the International Association of Emergency Managers (IAEM) to ensure county priorities are met in times of crisis. NACE sent a delegation, which included Lake County's own George Gaidel, to the IAEM annual conference in Savannah. After a productive collaboration, we look forward to welcoming their delegation to Orange Beach later this month.

As always, if NACE can be of any assistance to your efforts at home, please do not hesitate to call upon us.

Best,

Kevan Stone
Kevan Stone

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Nikesh (Nik) Patel joined the City of Sarasota in 2021 as the City Engineer after working with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for over 17 years. While at FDOT, he served as Heartland Operations Engineer, Interim Traffic Operations Engineer, and Interstate Resident Engineer. Nik is a graduate of the University of South Florida (USF) and holds a Master of Science in Engineering Management and dual Bachelor of Science degrees in Civil



Engineering and Mechanical Engineering. He is licensed as a Professional Engineer, General Contractor, and Real Estate Broker and holds certifications as a Traffic Operations Engineer (PTOE), Planner (AICP), and Public Manager (CPM).

Nik provides oversight, direction, and support to the Infrastructure Maintenance, Capital Projects, Transportation Planning, Engineering, and Surveying divisions within the City's Public Works Department. Nik has implemented multiple infrastructure projects within the state of Florida; City projects include Ringling Trail (Lane Repurposing), Sarasota's Smart City

initiative on Connected and Automated Vehicle (CAV) infrastructure; Lido Beach and Sand Renourishment; and multimodal transportation options like the Bay Runner Trolley and E-Scooter program. While working for FDOT, Nik implemented Florida's first Diverging Diamond interchange at I-75 at University Parkway, I-75's Caloosahatchee River Bridge Widening, the US 27 at SR 64 Concrete Reconstruction Project, and widened six lanes of I-75 from CR 951 in Collier County to the Manatee County Line.

In his spare time, Nik enjoys spending time with his wife, Kinsey, and children, Ayaan (2) and Leilah (1), on his farm in Myakka City. They stay busy caring for multiple animals around the farm, which consists of four dogs, two cats, two donkeys, eight goats, eight cows, and twelve chickens. You might also see them strolling Sarasota Farmers Market or enjoying the beach.

*Thank!
You!*

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