

Question and Answer (Q&A) Forum

Below is a summary of the questions received during first Community Meeting series for NOWOCATS, along with corresponding responses. Two meetings were held during the first Community Meeting series, on Monday, January 26, 2026, and Wednesday, January 28, 2026. Comments were received in several forms including written comment forms, verbal comments following the live presentations held during each meeting, and emails and website entries. Comments for this forum were captured through February 6, 2026. Comments received after February 6th will be recorded as part of the study record.

Project Overview – Scope, study area, timeline

Question:

What is the overall project timeline, and how was the study area defined? Are known congestion and safety problem areas included? (specifically, congestion issues near Wild Oaks development and the new Orange County Park; and pedestrian safety concerns near Sadler Road and US 441 intersection.)

Response:

An existing conditions inventory is currently underway, with future conditions to be evaluated in later phases of the study. Approved developments from recent years are being incorporated into the analysis to establish baseline and future traffic conditions. Additional findings and potential improvements will be presented at future community meetings, and public input will continue to be considered throughout the study.

In coordination with Commissioner Moore and inspired by the recently completed North East Orange County Areawide Transportation Study (NEOCATS), the study area encompasses the northwest portion of Orange County and includes the majority of District 2.

While the existing conditions inventory and analysis for the study are extensive, the purpose of this first meeting series is to get local input on other known congestion and safety problem areas for further consideration as part of the study. We will look further into the specific locations identified from local feedback.

Question:

When did this planning study begin, and could growth-related impacts have been addressed earlier?

Response:

The study officially began in 2025, with preliminary discussions occurring about a year prior. Transportation improvements are closely tied to development timing impact fees, and evolving growth patterns, which influence when projects can be implemented.

Traffic Forecasting and Developments Impacts

Question:

Are traffic projections verified after development occurs, and how does this align with safety goals such as reducing fatalities? (specifically area near Harmon and Binion)

Response:

Transportation agencies conduct studies both before and after development, including pre-development traffic analysis and ongoing monitoring of roadways and intersections. These efforts help identify safety concerns and establish priorities for improvements. If residents raise concerns, locations may be studied further and monitored over time to inform future projects. We will look further into the specific locations identified from local feedback.

Question:

Are traffic studies required prior to approving new developments, and how can the public access these studies?

Response:

Traffic studies are typically required as part of the development review process for new subdivisions and major developments. These studies are reviewed by the lead jurisdiction during project evaluation. Opportunities to view public documents vary by project, and information on approved developments is available through County planning and public records processes.

Question:

Why does development continue when infrastructure appears to lag behind?

Response:

Transportation improvements are influenced by multiple factors, including development timing, impact fees, and funding availability. Community members are encouraged to engage with elected officials regarding growth and infrastructure policies.

Question:

How is truck traffic from existing or future industrial development considered, particularly where congestion is already a concern? (specifically along US 441)

Response:

This is one of several factors the County monitors as part of the overall evaluation process. Truck percentages and traffic from approved but not-yet-built developments are evaluated as part of traffic forecasting. Expected traffic from these developments is included in future projects and roadway performance assessments.

Roadway Improvements

Question:

What does roadway widening involve, and how are decisions made about adding lanes?

Response:

This study will identify roadways that have a need for added capacity, and document it in the needs plan. Each project will go through a project development life cycle. If a particular roadway is recommended for widening, a study will be performed to analyze that roadway in more detail. Multiple widening alternatives will be developed and compared to determine the most feasible solution. The overall process will involve evaluating the transportation network, followed by detailed design and ultimately construction.

Question:

Does widening a roadway mean simply adding lanes to the existing road, with cost for just the additional lanes?

Response:

No. Widening typically requires full reconstruction of the roadway, including drainage system to meet current design standards. While there are cost savings for widening an existing roadway over a newly constructed roadway, the cost for the widening includes reconstruction of the existing road.

Question:

What is the timeline for design and construction of improvements on Kelly Park Road west of Plymouth Sorrento Road?

Response:

A funding agreement is in place for the construction of the segment from Kelly Park Road to Waypointe Boulevard. The design phase is approximately 90% complete. Construction is expected to proceed following completion of final design activities.

Question:

Are improvements planned for unpaved roads that currently lack utilities or emergency access? (specifically Foliage Way)

Response:

Orange County noted the request and will discuss it with the city staff.

Funding

Question:

Are near-term improvements already funded, and how will longer-term needs be addressed?

Response:

Improvements programmed within the next five years are funded. Additional improvements identified through this study will be prioritized into short-, mid-, and long-term categories based on available funding. No funding has been identified at this stage of the study for the needs plan.

Question:

If development accelerates, can roadway improvements be moved up in the funding schedule? (specifically Kelly Park Road, which a portion is planned for improvements in the five-year plan, but the remainder needs work sooner than long-term).

Response:

The existing conditions analysis identified a limited number of roadways operating at failing conditions, though others are expected to worsen over time without improvement. As government agencies, we must identify needs, review budgets, assess fees and funding sources, and collaborate across jurisdictions to address these challenges. Ongoing coordination with partner agencies will continue, and future meetings will provide additional information on funding strategies.

Question:

How would transportation projects be affected if major funding sources changed?

Response:

If funding sources are altered, agencies would need to reassess budgets and re-evaluate project priorities.

Question:

Is funding for traffic safety projects still active and can I make a request for safety improvements?

Response:

Yes, the Accelerated Transportation Safety Program (ATSP) funding is still active, and the public can make requests for safety improvements to be incorporated into next year's budget.

Right-of-Way Acquisition

Question

How is right-of-way acquired for transportation projects?

Response:

Once a public need is identified and approved by elected officials, coordination begins to advance the project, including right-of-way acquisition. This process can be challenging and follows a right-of-way acquisition process involving surveying, appraising property, and negotiating with owners based on fair market value.

Lighting and Short-Term Safety Enhancements

Question:

Can lighting be implemented quickly to improve safety? (specifically high school traffic areas)

Response:

Some improvements, such as lighting, can often be implemented faster than major roadway projects. These efforts are coordinated with utility providers and depend on available funding.

Access and Network Connectivity

Question:

How will access and circulation issues for neighborhoods and the several new developments be addressed? (Specifically Bear Island Lake access)

Response:

Local agencies continue to coordinate with regional and state partners to improve connectivity. Many projects must be included in long-range transportation plans before funding can be secured. Due to funding constraints, it can be challenging to keep pace with the level of growth occurring in the area, as traffic demand may increase significantly by the time funding becomes available. Collaboration across agencies remains ongoing to address these challenges and advance improvements where feasible. We will look further into the specific locations identified from local feedback.

Question:

What improvements are planned for areas where access from neighborhoods conflict with heavy traffic volumes? (specifically difficulty of exiting the development onto Welch Road, which conflicts with I-4 exiting traffic)

Response:

Orange County has recently conducted operational reviews at several key intersections to identify improvements that maximize efficiency within existing right-of-way. Larger improvements requiring additional right-of-way will take more time. These locations remain a priority, and agencies are continuing to coordinate on feasible near-term and long-term solutions.

Question:

Are there improvements planned to help emergency vehicles navigate congested corridors? (specifically fire department attempting to travel on US 441 from Boy Scout Road)

Response:

Operational improvements such as Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) are being considered. These may allow emergency vehicles to pre-empt traffic signals to reduce delays when responding to incidents. We will look further into the specific locations identified from local feedback.

Question:

Did major regional road projects reduce traffic through local communities as anticipated? (specifically SR 429 reducing traffic passing through Apopka)

Response:

Some freight traffic was expected to divert; however, traffic patterns will continue to be evaluated to better understand outcomes and identify future needs.

Community Involvement and Advocacy

Question:

How important is public participation in including transportation decisions? Noted in addition to the events and community meetings, TransMAC meetings are another opportunity to provide local input.

Response:

Public participation is critical. Attending meetings, submitting comments, and engaging with elected officials helps agencies understand community priorities and informs decision-making, especially given funding and timing constraints. It is important to show up at meetings/events to better understand the planning process.

Question:

When is the next community meeting, and will there be updates on issues raised during this meeting series?

Response:

The next community meeting is tentatively planned for Spring 2026. While an exact date has not been set, updates on previously raised topics are anticipated at that time.

Question:

How will community input from these meetings be used, and are project decisions already determined?

Response:

The purpose of these meetings is to share information, answer questions, and gather community input that will help inform future planning and decision-making. No final decisions have been made at this stage. Feedback received through these meetings is documented and considered as the study progresses to ensure the planning process and needs plan is meaningful and responsive to community concerns. Questions and concerns beyond the scope of this study are being forwarded to appropriate departments and agencies to continue engagement.

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

Question:

What is being done to improve pedestrian and bicycle safety in areas with high traffic and limited facilities? (specifically Nelson Park, no crosswalks over Park Avenue and Sadler Road where a new park is coming)

Response:

Several corridors have been identified as high priority for safety improvements. Ongoing and future studies will evaluate options such as crosswalks, sidewalks, bike facilities, and other safety enhancements, which will be reflected in the needs plan. We will look further into the specific locations identified from local feedback.

Intersection Operations and Safety

Question:

Can specific intersections be recommended for improvements due to safety concerns? (specifically Sadler Road)

Response:

Yes, we will look further into the specific locations identified from local feedback.

Question:

Can the intersection of Apopka Boulevard and South Lake Pleasant Road be converted from a two-way stop to a four-way stop to improve safety and address difficulties existing South Lake Pleasant Road?

Response:

A four-way stop may be considered as part of a broader operation and safety review. Based on documented crash patterns, additional safety measures, such as enhanced curve warning signage, flashing beacons, improved pavement markings, and lighting, may also be effective in improving driver awareness and nighttime visibility. Due to ongoing concerns about traffic gaps and access from South Lake Pleasant Road, this intersection will be included on the evaluation list for further review. Coordination with traffic engineering staff will occur as part of the assessment process.

Question:

What safety improvements are being considered for the areas along US 441 at Sadler Road, where residents have raised concerns about limited access, lack of pedestrian facilities, and recent crashes?

Response:

US 441 is a state roadway, and coordination with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is required for any improvements. As part of this study, the County will coordinate with FDOT and review the concerns internally to determine appropriate next steps. The safety issues identified, including turning movements, signage, lighting, and pedestrian infrastructure, are valid and will be considered as the evaluation process moves forward.

Question:

As part of the proposed widening of Golden Gem Road, will this study evaluate the need for a dedicated left-turn movement at Jespersen Street to prevent potential traffic bottlenecks as traffic volumes increase?

Response:

This comment has been noted and will be shared with the City for review and consideration as part of their future planning and coordination efforts for the Golden Gem Road widening project.

Environmental Protection

Question:

How are environmental resources being protected as part of transportation planning? (specifically Lake Ola and the surrounding natural resources, highlighting the impact of drainage on the lake)

Response:

The County acknowledges the importance of environmental protection in the area, noting that Lake Ola falls within the Wekiva Protection Zone, which has strict regulations and significant oversight. The existing environmental features have been cataloged as part of this study and are being considered on a broader level as the needs plan progresses and potential future projects are identified. Future phases will include detailed evaluation of drainage, natural resources, and regulatory compliance for specific corridors, as applicable.

Question:

What is the status of the proposed multi-use trail extension along Welch Road, and how are environmental impacts, particularly within Wekiwa Springs State Parking being addressed?

Response:

The trail extension was evaluated as part of a previously completed study that included public outreach. NOWOCATS is focused on the broader project area, and identifying needs and potential future projects. If the trail advances into design, additional public engagement will occur, and environmental considerations, including impacts to the state park, will be addressed in detail.

Transit Opportunities

Question:

Are rail projects being considered for this area? (specifically extending SunRail into Apopka)

Response:

The Orange Blossom Express was previously studied as a rail alternative by FDOT. However, the projected ridership, based on projected population growth, was not enough to support the funding requirements. The project remains in planning and could move forward if future growth increases potential ridership.