



2018 PUBLIC INFORMATION ANNUAL REPORT

PREPARED FOR:

**Central Florida Expressway Authority &
Florida Department of Transportation - District Five**

PREPARED BY:



QUEST CORPORATION OF AMERICA

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I. Introduction

The Wekiva Parkway (State Road 429) is a cooperative effort between the Central Florida Expressway Authority (CFX) and the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) – District Five. The Florida’s Turnpike Enterprise provided design input and handles toll operations on FDOT sections.

The 25-mile parkway will connect to State Road (S.R.) 417 and Interstate 4 (I-4), completing the beltway around northwest Central Florida. This estimated \$1.6 billion project includes \$500 million of non-toll road improvements including:

- Widening seven miles of S.R. 46 in Lake and Seminole counties
- Rebuilding the US 441/S.R. 46 interchange in Mount Dora
- Moving County Road (C.R.) 46A out of the Seminole State Forest so wildlife can move safely between habitats
- Building parallel, non-tolled service roads for local trips in east Lake and Seminole counties.

Ultimately, the parkway will provide travel alternatives, relieve U.S. 441, S.R. 46 and other area roads of traffic congestion and make it easier to travel between Lake, Orange and Seminole counties. Authorized in 2004 by the Wekiva Parkway and Protection Act, this expressway has been heralded as an example of smart transportation planning through an environmentally sensitive area.



Parkway development has included setting aside more than 3,400 acres of land for conservation, building about 1.5 miles of wildlife bridges and other safeguards for animals (*photo, left*). The parkway will be largely elevated to reduce collisions between vehicles and wildlife.

The Wekiva Parkway is the first expressway in Central Florida to feature All Electronic Tolling (AET) for the greatest customer convenience and to keep traffic moving.

There are no toll plazas – motorists pay their tolls at safe highway and ramp speeds using E-PASS or SunPass. Both FDOT and CFX have license-plate recognition programs for those who do not have a transponder.

By the spring of 2018, the agencies had opened 13 miles of the Wekiva Parkway to traffic in Orange and Lake counties. CFX this year completed the second leg of its 10 miles of the parkway. The agency set the standard for parkway aesthetics including a color palette of warm earth tones

of brown, green and tan, stone relief with eco-staining on bridge piers and walls, “haunched” or gently arched bridge beams, decorative pedestrian railing and enhanced landscaping.

FDOT by the end of 2018 had six project sections – 3A, 3B, 5, 6, 7A and 8 – under construction, including about 13 miles along the S.R. 46 corridor. That included starting work on Section 8, the \$253.3 million parkway interchange with I-4 and S.R. 417. The department’s remaining project – Section 7B – was preparing for procurement and was expected to begin construction in mid-2019.

This report is intended to provide CFX, FDOT and other interested parties with a summary of 2018 Wekiva Parkway project milestones and community awareness activities. Consultant Public Involvement Coordinator (PIC) Mary Brooks of Quest Corporation of America (Quest) coordinates with agency and project staff, and plans and implements the community awareness initiatives for both agencies for the 25-mile corridor. She has supported the project since 2004, providing consistent messaging between the two agencies and across all local government and stakeholder groups. Also assisting in 2018 were Quest associates including Carolyn Fitzwilliam, Laurie Windham, Shari Croteau, Kathy Putnam, Lisa Mark, David Crigger, Cliff Davy, Alicia Arroyo and Melanie Hand.

CFX and FDOT over the years have remained committed to ensuring that the community has multiple and varied opportunities to provide input into the parkway’s development. Outreach activities follow the strategies of the Wekiva Parkway Corridor-wide Community Awareness Plan (CAP). Intensive and ongoing public engagement has continued via more than 30 public meetings



and hearings, well over 700 stakeholder and community group meetings and dozens of special events.

The long-term, robust communications helped fuel the development of a project that addresses diverse community and environmental needs and concerns, while also creating a transportation facility that has become a source of community pride and an example of regional collaboration.

The agencies have employed innovative and digital strategies to broaden the public’s access to project information. The project website, www.wekivaparkway.com, finished 2018 with nearly 59,000 visits for the year. Social media has been a crucial engagement tool, with the project accounts reaching a total of nearly 2,000 followers. The increased use of drone video footage also has helped elevate interest in the project.

With an increasing number of project sections under construction, communications staff have responded to thousands of queries via the project hotline, email address, social media and personal contact. All public interactions were shared with the agencies and project teams, and documented in the project database.

Coordination with project design and construction teams was critical in 2018 to get important information out to officials, the media and other community members, to answer questions and to help resolve public issues. PIC staff coordinated extensively with the agencies and following project partners as the parkway continued to move from design to full-fledged construction:

Project Section	Agency	Design Firm	Construction Oversight Firm	Contractor
Section 2A	CFX	Parsons	KCCS	Superior Construction
Section 2B	CFX	Atkins	A2 Group	Southland Construction
Section 2C	CFX	DRMP	Jacobs	GLF Construction
Section 3A	FDOT	Moffatt Nichol	RK&K	GLF Construction
Section 3B	FDOT	Lochner	RK&K	GLF Construction
Section 5	FDOT	CDM Smith	(FDOT)	Halifax Paving
Section 6 Design Build	FDOT	GAI Consultants	RS&H	Superior Construction (Design Partners: Arcadis & WGI)
Section 7A	FDOT	AECOM	Infrastructure Engineers	Astaldi Construction
Section 7B	FDOT	JMT	TBD	TBD
Section 8 Design Build	FDOT	Atkins	Metric Engineering	Lane Construction (Design Partner: DRMP)

To ensure the public had ample, advanced warning about lane closures, detours and other construction impacts, the communications team distributed more than **70 construction alerts** in 2018. Alerts are posted on the project website, social media pages and distributed via e-blast to officials, the media and those in the project database. In some cases, fliers were also distributed door to door. The increased outreach is expected to continue in 2019 as FDOT begins work on the last parkway project – Section 7B.



Outreach highlights in 2018 included hosting pre-construction public meetings for Section 7A and 8, and planning and coordinating community involvement in the Central Florida Expressway Authority’s Section 2 grand opening. The event featured the “Running Wild 5K” and Family Fun Run/Walk (photo, left) that drew 760 registrants. A couple hundred other folks enjoyed the law enforcement and high-tech vehicle displays, environmental and community booths, music and a ribbon-cutting ceremony.

a. Project Update – Florida Department of Transportation

At the dawn of 2018, FDOT had four project sections under construction: Sections 3A & 3B, 5, and 6.

Sections 3A & 3B



Sections 3A & 3B are being built as one, \$33 million project along S.R. 46 from west of U.S. 441 to Round Lake Road, and along U.S. 441 from north of Natoma Boulevard to the Lake-Orange County Line in Mount Dora. These non-tolled, road improvements – including six-laning more than 3 miles of S.R. 46 and U.S. 441 – are being made in anticipation of the increased traffic trying to get to the parkway.

Work includes converting the current U.S. 441 / S.R. 46 interchange into an at-grade, signalized intersection with a flyover ramp (photo, above), as well as utility work, installing medians, pedestrian improvements, drainage and other roadway features.

In anticipation of pile driving and other construction activities that might result in vibration, the PIC staff in 2018 coordinated **25 pre-vibration assessments** of properties within a certain distance of the select activities. PIC staff handled communications and scheduling the assessments with homeowners, landlords and real estate agents, and the contractor, geotechnical subconsultant, and construction, engineering and inspection (CEI) staff.

Critical path construction early this year focused on building a temporary, at-grade intersection to handle traffic, so the old U.S. 441 overpass could be demolished. The new flyover bridge and other permanent intersection improvements could then be built.

The new traffic pattern meant introducing a traffic signal – and “stop” condition – to motorists who were used to free-flowing U.S. 441 traffic passing over S.R. 46 (*photo, right*). The PIC worked closely with the FDOT Public Information Office staff on an education campaign to alert the community to the change.



Several media releases featuring a graphic of the new traffic pattern were distributed over the months leading up to the operation. A number of local print and broadcast media outlets helped to get the word out to the community.



Diversion information was posted numerous times on the project website, Facebook and Twitter pages, and was highlighted in numerous officials' and community presentations.

441 bridge (*photo, above*), and continued removing the old interchange embankments. This activity required ongoing, advanced communication to the public about the nighttime S.R. 46 closures and detours needed to remove the overhead structures.

Following the demolition, crews intensified building the new flyover bridge columns and retaining walls (*photo, right*). The structures feature the characteristic parkway stone relief, and will be eco-stained in a variegated pattern in warm browns and tans to give a more natural, rustic appearance. Flyover bridge beams will be painted deep green to help blend into the surroundings.



In November, crews were ready to begin installing the large, U-shaped beams for the flyover bridge. The beams ranged from 120 feet long on each end by the abutment walls, to 231 feet long spanning over S.R. 46 (*photo, below*).



Half of the beams were up by the end of December. The operation required notifying the community each week about the latest schedule for the nighttime S.R. 46 road closures and detours needed to place and secure the beams.

Elsewhere, crews focused on widening the S.R. 46 corridor to the north throughout the project limits. This included earthwork, excavating ponds, and conducting extensive underground utility and drainage work.

Frequent communications to the public were needed as lane closures were required to allow pipe crews to cross S.R. 46, side streets and driveways. The same was true when crews began installing road base, curb and asphalt.

Traffic is slated to move onto the new, permanent westbound lanes of S.R. 46 (photo, right) by spring of 2019. This will allow the rebuilding and widening of the south side of the corridor.



Other construction traffic impacts included extended closures of Sabastian Street and others to install drainage and other utilities, and to rebuild the entrances. Traffic shifted onto temporary lanes on Round Lake Road at S.R. 46 in August to allow construction of the opposite side of the road.

Crews also permanently closed Stanley Bell Drive near SR. 46 and U.S. 441, due to its proximity to the permanent intersection. A *cul de sac* is being built in that location. Access to residences remains via adjacent side streets.

All told in 2018, PIC staff distributed more than two dozen construction alerts to the public for activities on this section. Work began on Sections 3A and 3B on October 30, 2017, and is scheduled to finish in summer of 2020.

Section 5

Section 5 is a \$9.88 million, non-tolled, road improvement to relocate about a mile of C.R. 46A out of the Seminole State Forest, thereby improving habitat connectivity and reducing the risk of conflicts between vehicles and wildlife. The C.R. 46A realignment was one of the environmental protections required in the 2004 Wekiva Parkway and Protection Act.

Crews since June 5, 2017 have been building the new C.R. 46A alignment for 2.5 miles from north of Arundel Way to connect to S.R. 429, east of Camp Challenge Road, in east Lake County. Part of the new, two-lane roadway is “depressed,” or built below ground, and a vegetative buffer will be included to minimize noise and visibility impacts to the adjacent community.



The project includes extensive utility coordination, as well as close communication with adjacent major stakeholders: Encore Farms, the Red Tail community and Camp Challenge. Public

communications early on included not only letting drivers know about S.R. 46 lane closures, but also ensuring coordination to avoid conflicts with the adjacent Section 6 project operations along S.R. 46.

Work in December included opening the new, signalized T-intersection between the realigned C.R. 46A and S.R. 46 (photo, right). The PIC staff provided advanced notification using various communications channels about the new traffic pattern, which requires motorists to stop at a new flashing traffic signal before continuing on S.R. 46, in this area to be known as Sorrento Avenue. The change also provides new S.R. 46 access to Camp Challenge Road.



Section 5 construction also involves road widening, installing medians, and building a trail along part of S.R. 46. Work on this section is expected to finish by late 2019.

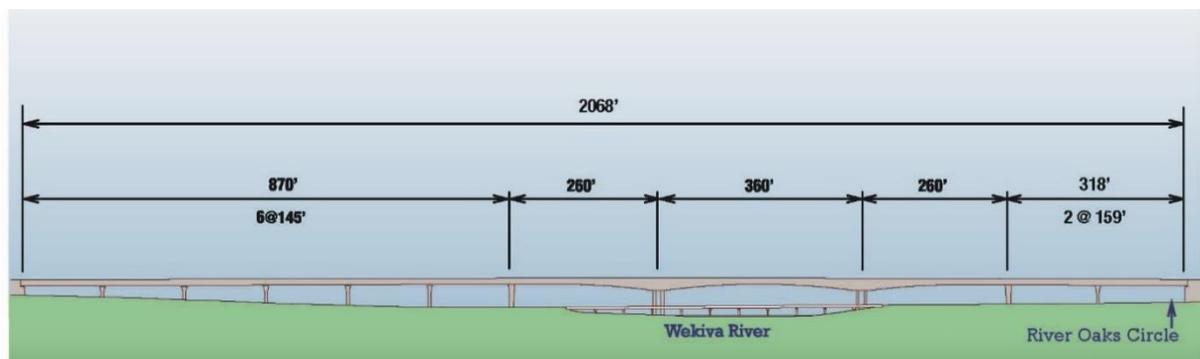
Section 6

Section 6 took huge leaps forward in 2018. This parkway stretch features extensive wildlife protections that will pass between state parks and across the Wekiva River. This \$232.4 million project involves 6 miles of limited access toll road that will be largely elevated along the existing S.R. 46 corridor. The project extends from the S.R. 429 interchange, east of Camp Challenge Road, to near Longwood-Markham Road in Sanford.

The parkway on this section will be paralleled by a non-tolled, service road for local travel, and a multi-use trail. The trail is expected to enhance access to the adjacent state conservation lands.

While crews this year continued clearing the corridor, the PIC team communicated to the public the schedule for confined, on-site burns of debris. All controlled burns were coordinated closely with the Florida Forest Service and Wekiwa Springs State Parks managers.

One of the parkway's signature features is being built along Section 6 – a new, much higher Wekiva River crossing with enhanced aesthetics. The 60-foot tall bridge puts the deck in the tree canopy to visually buffer it from surrounding communities. The higher crossing will open the river



for an enhanced user experience by kayakers and canoeists. Animals will be able to pass safely underneath along the riversides, as opposed to now having to cross S.R. 46.

Three bridges – one for the service road and one each for eastbound and westbound parkway traffic – will be built, each designed to span the river channel, with piers only on the riversides.

The current S.R. 46 bridge has eight piers in the river. This bridge will be removed once the service road bridge is completed and traffic moved onto it in 2019. Removing the existing bridge is expected to improve the river’s hydrology or flow.



Extensive coordination with local, state and national environmental agencies, environmental advocates and other stakeholders went into the concept for the Wekiva River bridges. Extreme care was taken to minimize the impacts of the bridge design, and to try to ensure that it complemented the “outstandingly remarkable values” of this National Wild and Scenic River.

Crews in 2018 began building the non-tolled, service road bridge. To protect the river, which is also designated as an Florida Outstanding Waterway, crews are using “top down construction.”



No activity or construction equipment will be working within the river channel. The bulk of the span work is being done from the top of the columns or piers.

Bridge work started with driving hundreds of concrete foundation piles (*photo, left*). Once the foundations were in, crews set about forming the bridge columns or piers (*photos, below*). Work also began on bridge abutment walls, which continue the aesthetic, stone relief found throughout the corridor.

The bridge columns feature aesthetic concrete forming meant to emulate the interwoven tree trunks found along the river’s edge.



As the columns at the river were topped out, crews set about assembling special, large cranes or “form travelers” (*photos below, orange structure*) on top to continue forming and pouring the concrete spans. When the top box culvert structure is wide enough, a second form traveler will be assembled atop the same column and the two cranes will extend the spans out in opposite directions – maintaining a careful balance – toward the next columns.



Along with the river bridges, additional Section 6 structures include three wildlife bridges that will allow animals to pass safely between the Seminole State Forest, Rock Springs Run State Reserve and Lower Wekiva River Preserve.



The wildlife bridges are located at the current wildlife tunnels in the area of Rock Springs Run State Reserve (*photos, left*). The two current tunnels have about 80 feet of clearance for animals to pass under S.R. 46.



The new wildlife bridges will total nearly 7,700 feet in length, providing nearly 100 times the safe passageway for animals as the current tunnels. All told, Section 6 involves driving approximately 1,900 concrete bridge foundation piles.

This section also will feature wildlife fencing to discourage animals from entering the corridor. The fencing is 10 feet high, with two feet underground to discourage animals from burrowing into the right of way.

As required in the 2004 Wekiva Parkway and Protection Act, about a mile of County Road

46A will be abandoned in the Seminole State Forest to reduce conflicts between vehicles and wildlife as part of this project.

Road work along Section 6 includes building connector roads between remaining sections of C.R. 46A and S.R. 46 to maintain private property access. To open additional areas to parkway construction, crews in July shifted the S.R. 46 intersection at C.R. 46A about a half mile west on S.R. 46 to a new connector road.



The intersection and signal relocation coincided with closing portions of C.R. 46A (*photo, right*). PIC staff provided extensive communications prior to the signal relocation, and also addressed dozens of resulting questions and concerns afterwards.

Throughout the work in this natural and protected area, FDOT and project staff have been coordinating closely with environmental agencies and advocacy groups. That includes close



communications with the National Park Service, Florida Department of Environmental Protection’s (FDEP) Lower Wekiva River Aquatic Preserve (*photo, left*), the Florida Forest Service, Wekiva River Basin State Parks, Wekiva River Scenic River Management Advisory Committee (WRSRMAC) and the Wekiva River Basin Commission (WRBC).

The project team has been highly vigilant about erosion control and water quality, frequently adding or adjusting turbidity barriers and other measures; employing digital water quality monitoring equipment; providing frequent data and reports; and conducting site visits for FDEP and other agency staff. Agency and PIC staff also provided regular updates to the WRBC and the WRSRMAC (*photo, left*).



The FDOT places a top priority on the safety of the traveling and adjacent public, as well as the work crews, on major transportation

projects. With the construction of a higher profile bridge over the Wekiva River, agency and project staff wanted to be sure the “top down construction” process – to be implemented at

heights of 60 feet or more – was done in close communication with emergency services personnel.

As a follow up to a December 2017 safety meeting, the PIC and project team staff coordinated a second emergency services personnel briefing on June 13. The meeting at the project trailer, followed by a site visit (*photos, below*), allowed project staff to explain the latest construction activities and schedule for the Wekiva River bridges to local fire, EMS, wildlife and law enforcement personnel.

The gathering gave emergency services personnel the opportunity to get questions answered about structure materials and access, the contractor’s safety protocols and contacts, as well as other information to allow them to understand and respond to potential incidents during construction. This was particularly important as the contractor at the time was working to top out the high columns for the new Wekiva River service road bridge. The participants also discussed the potential for coordinating future rescue drills at the bridge.



As 2018 was drawing to a close, the public was able to get a better picture of how the many Section 6 renderings they’d seen over the years were becoming reality. Crews were slated to move traffic in the spring of 2019 onto the new service road bridge, and to begin building the eastbound parkway bridge on the north side of S.R. 46. Work in 2019 also will begin on the service roads and roundabouts east of the river.

Section 7A

Work began on the adjacent parkway stretch, **Section 7A**, on April 1 along the S.R. 46 corridor from Longwood-Markham Road to Orange Boulevard in Sanford. The \$108.3 million project is building about 3 miles of limited access toll road, slip ramps to enter and exit the Wekiva Parkway and 12 bridges over side streets. A non-tolled, service road will parallel the parkway for local trips.

Roundabouts are planned as safety enhancements at the intersections under the parkway. Lighting is planned under the bridges and on frontage road approaches to the roundabouts.

Work will include building a 10-foot-wide sidewalk along the eastbound service road, bike lanes, utilities and other roadway features. Construction is scheduled to finish in 2022.

Work started with excavating and relocating gopher tortoises out of the way of construction. Gopher tortoises dig deep burrows for shelter in upland habitat throughout Florida. They share the burrows with more than 350 other species, and therefore are a protected, keystone species.



Altogether, 91 gopher tortoises were safely found in 195 burrows and relocated to a state-licensed recipient site.

Other initial work included clearing and grubbing, utility relocations, placing silt fence to protect against erosion, installing drainage and building retention ponds. A major utility coordination item along this section was the relocation of the Florida Gas Transmission line into a new 50-foot easement along S.R. 46 (photo, left).



PIC staff got the word out when Florida Gas Transmission (FGT) crews in July began closing Wayside Drive from south of S.R. 46 to Orange Boulevard for pipeline work. Traffic on S.R. 46 had to be detoured via South Orange Avenue and Center Road. It was the first of several such closures and detours needed for utility or project work in that area in 2018.

Construction along this section included the need for numerous S.R. 46 lane closures. Communications staff worked extensively with FDOT Public Information Office (PIO) staff to get the word out about the closures, particularly when daytime lane closures were switched to nighttime hours. Work also includes driving sheet pile for retaining walls along the north side of S.R. 46 across from Lake Markham Road.

Crews began building a temporary diversion road north of existing S.R. 46 from east of Longwood-Markham Road (C.R. 46A) to west of Glade Road. Then in September, traffic was diverted onto the temporary lanes. This operation allowed portions of existing S.R. 46 to be removed and the service road and parkway work to begin in those areas.



Later that fall, crews began driving bridge piles west of Orange Boulevard. PIC staff provided advanced notification of the pile driving, which can often raise noise and vibration concerns from residents.

The bridge in this area (*photo, below*) will carry parkway traffic south off the S.R. 46 corridor and towards Section 8, which will make the connection to I-4 and S.R. 417. The service road will pass under the bridge in this location to tie back into traditional S.R. 46 heading east.



In November, PIC staff communicated with the various communities along S.R. 46 as crews began placing utility lines across community entrances and side streets. Significant coordination was required for these operations, particularly with those whose gated entrances were affected.

Future activities include building the roundabouts at cross streets, installing the service road along the south side of the S.R. 46 corridor and moving traffic onto the service road to begin building the elevated parkway.

Section 7B

As design prepared to wrap up, FDOT held a public information meeting on January 30 about the Section 7B design project in Seminole County. This estimated \$19.3 million project will involve 1.31 miles of non-tolled, road improvements, including widening S.R. 46 to six lanes from Orange Boulevard to Wayside Drive-Oregon Street, just west of I-4.



Work is to be done within the existing state right of way, and includes installing medians and turn lanes, sidewalk, bike lanes, traffic signal upgrades, street lighting, drainage, utilities and other roadway features. This project includes a 10-foot wide sidewalk on the south side of S.R. 46, as



well as landscaping at some intersections and medians.

The project is slated to be advertised in early 2019, and contractor bids are scheduled to be opened in late March. Construction is likely to begin in June and to finish in 2021.

Section 8

FDOT in August selected the design-build team to build the major interchange that will connect S.R. 429 to I-4 and S.R. 417 – finishing Central Florida’s beltway. A \$253.3 million design-build project, **Section 8** involves building the parkway and interchange from Orange Boulevard to east of Rinehart Road in Sanford. This section also includes building the general use lanes for the future I-4 Beyond the Ultimate project – from south of S.R. 417 to south of S.R. 46.

The 2.63-mile project will include aesthetic walls and other features. A toll gantry will be built on this section. Work will include drainage, lighting under bridges and at the interchange, utilities and other roadway features.

Following a pre-construction public meeting on November 15 attended by nearly 100 people, crews began finding and relocating gopher tortoises (*photo, right*). All told, 26 gopher tortoises were removed from 61 burrows. The reptiles were relocated to a permitted recipient site in Osceola County.



The excavation and relocation effort required clearing vegetation (*photo, below*), using large equipment as well as video equipment to check the burrows for activity. PIC staff coordinated a site visit with FDOT PIO Manager Steve Olson for WFTV Ch. 9 reporter Raquel Asa to observe the operation and produce a story to update the public.



With the relocation complete, the contractor on December 6 began clearing and grubbing for the project in earnest.

With nearly two dozen bridges to build on this section, crews anticipated beginning driving piles for bridge foundations by the spring of 2019. The project is scheduled for completion in 2022.

With the amount of wildlife in the area, particularly bears, the project team has been coordinating closely with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Agency staff

provided a wildlife safety briefing at the pre-construction meeting for the project team. The contractor also ensures that anyone working on the project undergoes wildlife safety training.

The PIC staff also have been in communication with area residents concerned for the animals' well-being, as well as those with general questions about this major project section.

b. Project Update – Central Florida Expressway Authority

CFX achieved several parkway milestones in 2018 with the opening of its final five miles of expressway on March 31. Sections 2A, 2B and 2C are located between Kelly Park Road and State Road 46, and between Round Lake Road and County Road 435 (Mount Plymouth Road).



Work began on the nearly \$168 million parkway sections in 2016 and opened about a year ahead of the original schedule. That was possible thanks to a Federal Highway Administration/ US DOT Transportation Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (TIFIA) loan that allowed CFX to accelerate the project.

This stretch includes the systems interchange near Plymouth Sorrento Road and Haas Road-Ondich Road (*photo, above*), the former Pine Plantation – one of several large parcels purchased for conservation along the corridor – and the Coronado and Mount Plymouth all-electronic toll gantries.



The sections connect to FDOT's Sections 4A and 4B, opened in 2016. With that connection, the CFX parkway sections now facilitate two, new expressway connections to S.R. 46 for communities throughout Lake, Orange and Seminole Counties.

The latest CFX opening marked another major corridor-wide milestone: more than half of the 25-mile parkway was now open to traffic.

To mark the occasion, the communications team coordinated with the agency to host a grand opening celebration including a 5K race and Family Fun Run/Walk, environmental and community booths, emergency service and high-tech vehicles, music and a ribbon cutting ceremony.

Officials and environmentalists during the ceremony praised the collaboration that went into making sure the parkway helped protect the vital natural resources surrounding the Wekiva River, while helping to complete the beltway. Speakers also lauded the parkway for not only making commutes easier, but also paving the way for bringing in more clean industry and jobs to the region.



More than 760 people registered for the races (*photo, above*); about 200 others attended the ceremony.

Event participants in the event cut across a broad swath of the community. Sponsors and exhibitors included: the cities of Mount Dora and Apopka, Lake County, LYNX, Apopka High School Jazz Ensemble, East Lake Historical Society, Florida Forest Service, East Lake Chamber of Commerce, FHP, Mount Dora High School Honor Guard, local businesses and, firms associated with the project.



Holding true to the environmental protections of the project, the race and sponsorships raised \$27,000 (including funds tallied after the event) for the Florida Wildlife Corridor (*photo, above right*). This organization strives to protect 300,000 acres of a statewide network of lands and waters that support wildlife and people by the end of 2020.



CFX later that year landscaped Section 2C from the Lake-Orange County line to S.R. 46 near Round Lake Road. The PIC provided numerous construction alerts to travelers as crews conducted lane closures on S.R. 453 and S.R. 46 to facilitate the plantings (*photo, left*).

The agency used drought tolerant and Florida friendly trees, plants and ground cover to enhance the parkway users' experience and

honor the long-standing commitment to give the corridor that “parkway feel.”

CFX’s parkway sections have been a game-changer for many in Central Florida. From Orlando to Mount Dora, and from Sanford to the attractions, those using the parkway praise its ease and convenience. Some drivers report shaving 10-15 minutes from their commutes.

Traffic has been steady on the sections opened in 2018. The Coronado toll gantry on this stretch has registered more than 1.73 million one-way trips since opening. The parkway in this area has helped relieve congestion on local roads including U.S. 441 and Round Lake Road.

The Mount Plymouth toll gantry – located east of the systems interchange, between Plymouth Sorrento Road and County Road 435 (Mount Plymouth Road), tallied more than 1.23 million trips through December 30.

Portions of the CFX parkway already have been honored for engineering excellence. The American Council of Engineering Companies of Florida (ACEC-FL)’s 2019 Engineering Excellence Awards acknowledge engineering firms for their ground-breaking applications and intricate projects.

The design of CFX’s systems interchange, done by Atkins North America, Inc., was recognized in December with one of eight Grand Awards designated statewide. Judges rated 30 projects and studies on criteria including uniqueness and innovative applications; perception by the public; social, economic, and sustainable development considerations and complexity.



Also in 2018, CFX finished landscaping its first five miles of the parkway (*photo, left*). Sections 1A and 1B, from U.S. 441 to Kelly Park Road in Apopka, opened July 27, 2017.

Traffic on this first stretch has nearly tripled original projections (6,300 trips per day), with the Ponkan toll gantry (*photo, below*) registering an average of more than 16,000 trips per day. All told, since the section opened, more than 6.32 million trips had been registered at that gantry by December 30, 2018.

This section has alleviated morning tie-ups on Plymouth Sorrento Road that used to stretch a mile or more north of the Connector Road interchange to S.R. 429.



II. Joint Agency Public Involvement Coordination

Since 2012, the agencies have worked in tandem to provide consistent project messaging to the public throughout the 25-mile corridor. An important element of that has been regular Joint Agency Public Involvement Coordination meetings, of which **47 meetings** were held through January 2018. The meetings concluded with the opening of the final CFX parkway sections.

Organized by Quest, the meetings were attended by agency and engineering directors, construction engineers, communications and project management staff for both agencies, as well as the corridor consultant, CH2M/Jacobs.



During the meetings, agency staff members shared information about progress on their respective sections, discussed milestone and major project activities, reached consensus on key messaging, jointly planned media and special events, and discussed all facets of community outreach and other coordination for the parkway.



The joint meetings were also used to discuss the development and updating of project resources such as the www.wekivaparkway.com website, collaterals including the project fact sheet, FAQs and talking points. The meetings facilitated further development and strengthening of the corridor-wide branding for the parkway. This uniform branding throughout the corridor made the project – and related information resources – easily recognizable to the public.

Key project participants in the joint agency meetings over the years have included:

Alan Hyman, FDOT Director of Transportation Operations
Glenn Pressimone, CFX Director of Engineering
Michelle Maikisch, CFX Chief of Staff & Public Affairs Officer
Ben Dreiling, CFX Director of Construction
Don Budnovich, former CFX Resident Engineer (now Director of Maintenance)
Brian Hutchings, CFX Senior Communications Coordinator
Steve Olson, FDOT District Five Public Information Manager
Ashraf Elmaghraby, FDOT Constructability & Design Services
Kevin Moss, FDOT Design Project Manager
Matt Hassan, former FDOT Design Project Manager
Hatem Aguib, FDOT Design Project Manager
Scott Bear, Corridor Consultant, CH2M/Jacobs
Mary Brooks, Consultant Public Involvement Coordinator, Quest

In May of 2018, the agencies honored the passing of a great parkway champion, FDOT Design Project Manager Kevin Moss, after a brief, but aggressive illness. Mr. Moss had a great way with people, and spoke to hundreds of people at design update public meetings for Sections 6, 7A and 8. He also was the FDOT design manager on Sections 4A/B that opened in 2016. At various times he oversaw the design of about 12 miles of the 25-mile parkway.

He was an essential player in coordinating with environmental agencies and advisory groups on project matters. He was known for his sense of humor, his signature tropical shirts and livening up many meetings. He was always responsive, knowledgeable and provided great perspective.

Kevin began his career with the Florida Department of Transportation – District Five in June 2012 as a Project Manager in Consultant Project Management, and joined Program Management as the District Estimates Engineer in January 2018. Prior to joining the department, he spent 19 years working in the consultant industry and spent two years working at the Florida’s Turnpike Enterprise.



III. Elected & Agency Officials’ Coordination

The agencies in 2018 continued to proactively communicate with and involve area officials as design wrapped up and more projects moved into construction. The goal continues to be to keep state and local leaders informed of the progress made on the various sections, to address any questions or concerns, and to also make them aware of community outreach and concerns from their constituents.

Elected and agency officials’ coordination over the years has been accomplished through strategies including: Commissioners’ Briefing Reports, one-on-one meetings, and presentations to city and county councils and at officials’ town hall meetings. Additionally, PIC staff in 2018 addressed extensive officials’ emails and calls regarding the project sections and related constituent concerns.

There was close communication in particular with various City of Mount Dora, Lake County and Seminole County officials and staff on their respective project sections. For example, FDOT and PIC staff, with support from Section 6 project staff, met with State Senator David Simmons on July 19 to address and resolve concerns from residents in the Wekiva Pines Estates area. PIC staff also coordinated frequently with Seminole County Commissioner Brenda Carey’s aide on various resident questions and concerns. PIC and project staff also worked closely with Lake County on the S.R. 46 and C.R. 46A signal relocation and timings, as well as new connector roads and related address changes.

IV. Media Relations

With another five miles of the expressway opening in 2018, the Wekiva Parkway continued to be portrayed as a success story in broad media coverage. The communications team has worked diligently over the years to build positive, trusting and constructive relationships with area media outlets. The agencies have worked in transparency over the long-term in providing parkway information to the media; their coverage reflects their understanding and trust in key project messages.

The PIC staff was able to continue to maximize earned media, a cost-effective method of communicating with the public, to get the word out about new sections opening, as well as construction starts, traffic pattern changes and milestone events on other parts of the parkway.



One of the over-arching goals in using the media to publicize project news has been to show the agencies were honoring the commitments to improve regional mobility, while trying to minimize community impacts, help protect surrounding wildlife and create a facility that has an iconic “parkway feel.”

Parkway coverage continues to be overwhelmingly positive, with a number of the stories dealing with new project section starts and the important role the expressway will play in local municipalities’ economic development and jobs creation plans. There was also advanced coverage of public workshops, helping to generate continued healthy attendance.

Through the agencies’ proactive media strategies, transparent operations and positive, constructive relationships with media members, the project has largely been successful in getting the media to disseminate accurate key messaging – and positive coverage – to the public.

V. Public Meetings

The agencies in 2018 held **3 public meetings** for Sections 7A, 7B and 8 in Seminole County. The gatherings drew more than **390 attendees**. All state and other requirements were met with regard to noticing the meetings, including the Florida Administrative Register (FAR) and legal advertisements and the notices mailed to property owners, officials’ notifications, media releases and the like.

Meeting notification fliers were also distributed to businesses and others on the relevant sections. Feedback at the meetings was largely positive, with questions increasingly related to when the parkway would be open and public access points. Meetings were attended by state and local officials, property owners, environmentalists, realtors, developers, attorneys and other interested parties.

1) FDOT Section 7B Design Update Public Meeting – January 30, 2018

The Wekiva Parkway Section 7B Design Update public workshop on January 30, 2018, was attended by 120 people in Sanford. The FDOT held the meeting to review the latest design for these non-tolled, road improvements.

The project is funded for construction to begin in summer of 2019. The project limits are S.R. 46 from Orange Boulevard to Wayside Drive-Oregon Street. This design project involves 1.31 miles of improvements, including roadway widening, safety medians, 10-foot-wide sidewalk, bike lanes, traffic signal upgrades, drainage, sign and pavement markings, utilities and other roadway features.

The meeting was held at Lakeside Fellowship United Methodist Church, at its new location at 121 N. Henderson Lane in Sanford. In addition to Seminole County Public Works and Fire and Rescue officials, attendees included residents from neighborhoods including Terracina, Lake Forest, Astor Farms, Capri Cove and Terra Bella. Attendees were able to view exhibits and an audiovisual presentation, and to ask questions of project staff. A number of comments were submitted, dealing with right turn lanes, landscaping, signal timings and requests for fencing.



2) FDOT Section 7A Pre-Construction Public Meeting – February 22, 2018

The FDOT's Wekiva Parkway Section 7A pre-construction public meeting on February 22, 2018 drew 184 people. This project involves building the elevated parkway along the S.R. 46 corridor from near Longwood-Markham Road to Orange Boulevard, as well as parallel, non-tolled service roads for local trips.

Attendees at the meeting at Lakeside United Methodist Church, 121 N. Henderson Lane in Sanford, submitted eight comment forms and 10 public involvement performance surveys. Comment topics included how to access the parkway, fencing, landscaping, concerns about road closures, noise and lane transitions at S.R. 46 and International Parkway.

Among the officials attending were Jean Jreij and Matt Hassan of Seminole County Public Works, Tony Matthews of Seminole County Planning, and a number of Seminole County Fire and Rescue personnel.



3) FDOT Section 8 Pre-Construction Public Meeting – November 15, 2018

The FDOT’s pre-construction public meeting for Wekiva Parkway Section 8 on November 15, 2018, drew 90 attendees. The project from Orange Boulevard to Rinehart Road will connect S.R. 429 to I-4 and S.R. 417, thereby completing Central Florida’s beltway. Work also will include building more than 20 bridges and the general use lanes for the future I-4 Beyond the Ultimate project.



Attendees at the meeting at Lakeside United Methodist Church, 121 N. Henderson Lane, were able to view a multi-media presentation and speak directly with staff to get their questions answered and to express their concerns. Among the communities represented were: Tall Trees, Savannah Park, Berington Club, Wekiva River Oaks and Shadow Lake Woods.

Question and comment topics included: Noise and sound walls; visibility and/or proximity of parkway; the height of bridges; saving trees in the floodplain compensation pond; fencing around the floodplain comp pond; landscaping; and, completion schedules for Section 8 and other sections.

Among the officials attending were: Gary Huttman, executive director of MetroPlan Orlando; Jean Jreij, Seminole County Utilities and Public Works Director; Matt Hassan, Seminole County Public Works and Bill Wharton, also with Seminole County.



The PIC also participated as requested in local government public meetings, including Lake County’s Round Lake Road Extension PD&E Study public meetings on March 8 and October 25.



VI. Environmental Coordination

Coordination continued in 2018 with state and federal environmental agencies, local governments and advisory committees. Communications included close coordination on finalizing gopher tortoise relocation permits, project debris burning and prescribed park fires, water quality monitoring and construction activities, as well as addressing questions from agency personnel.

FDOT also communicated with environmental advocates while meeting with the Wekiva River Scenic River Management Advisory Committee meetings (*photo, right*).



CFX and FDOT continued to adhere to the Parkway and Protection Act requirements to brief the roughly 30 members and staff on the **Wekiva River Basin Commission (WRBC)** periodically on project progress and other matters. Those presentations in 2018 occurred on February 6 and August 21.

Attendance at the meetings was in addition to communications that also occurred throughout the year with individual WRBC members as questions or other matters arose.



VII. Community Presentations

Project communications staff continued to seek out – as well as accommodate requests for – community presentations in 2018. The agencies continued to get positive feedback during such engagements, which make accurate, up-to-date information directly available to community members.

The consultant public involvement coordinator and other project staff in 2018 presented project updates to **19** homeowners associations, business groups, cultural, civic and fraternal

organizations and trade associations, directly educating and engaging more than **370 community members**.



The presentations also serve as an excellent opportunity to reinforce the availability of project information resources, including the website, where a number of the presentations have been posted, and the project Facebook and Twitter pages. The following is a sampling of meetings we participated in for 2018:

Neighborhoods, HOAs & Businesses

- Wekiva River Oaks HOA – Feb. 16
- Southernaire MHP Managers Noise Wall Field Meeting – Jan. 23
- Southernaire MHP HOA Update – Feb. 6
- Sunset Pond Field Meeting – Mar. 15
- Summerbrooke HOA – Mar. 19
- Rock Springs Ridge HOA – Apr. 3
- Southernaire MHP Managers’ Briefing – Apr. 12
- Wekiva Park Drive Residents’ Field Meeting – May 23
- Capri Cove HOA – May 30
- Estates of Wekiva Park Town Hall – Sept. 11
- Sylva Glade HOA – Oct. 8
- Wekiva Park Estates HOA Board Field Meeting – Oct. 20
- Summerbrooke HOA President Natoma Entrance Field Meeting – Oct. 20



Civic/Community Group Presentations

- Orlando Rotary Breakfast Club – Jan. 17
- First Presbyterian Men’s Club of Mount Dora – Feb. 10
- Golden Triangle Rotatory Cub – Feb. 20
- Altamonte Rotary Club – Mar. 15
- Mount Dora Kiwanis Club – Aug. 30
- Professional Education Organization for Women of Mount Dora – Oct. 10



VIII. Youth Education Program

The Wekiva Parkway Youth Outreach and Education Program continues to achieve its goals to:

- Educate young people on the unique environmental protections encompassed in the project;
- Encourage youngsters to view transportation as a potential career opportunity;
- Enlist youngsters to become advocates for the project and its unique environmental character, and share that information with their parents and other adults; and,
- Motivate students to encourage their families to stay safe in work zones.

Youth outreach has included agency or community youth programs with a conservation or environmental mission, schools on or near the corridor, as well as those with engineering magnet programs.

Public Involvement Coordinator Mary Brooks always seeks the advice of youth program leaders in developing talking points and multimedia presentations for the students. She also asks students at the end of each event how we could improve the materials and presentations; a number of the students' suggestions have been incorporated or helped refine program strategies.



This year agency, project and communications staff participated in class presentations, field trips and project tours, and in large-scale, back-to-school events. All told, we interacted with nearly **1,000 teachers, students and their families** using this strategy.

1. Lyman High School Engineering Student Tour – March 29, 2018

For the third straight year, CFX and Atkins led a project partnership with the Lyman High School magnet engineering program. The public involvement coordinator and project staff on March 29 toured the students through both completed CFX sections, as well as the systems interchange and all electronic toll operations at the Mount Plymouth gantry, both of which were scheduled to open just two days later.

About 40 students received a safety briefing and took part in interactive survey demos (*photo, right*). The CEI – construction engineering and inspection project manager – and the design engineer of record also pointed out various aspects of bridge and other construction at the systems interchange at Plymouth Sorrento Road and Haas-Ondich Road.



Students got to see wildlife protections up close on FDOT Section 4A, as a wildlife biologist explained the construction and need for wildlife jump-outs, bat houses and wildlife fencing. During the lunch break at Wilson’s Landing Park on the Wekiva River, the PIC provided an overview, multi-media presentation. Wildlife biologists also presented additional information about the many species on the corridor and efforts to protect them including the relocation of gopher tortoises, a protected keystone species.

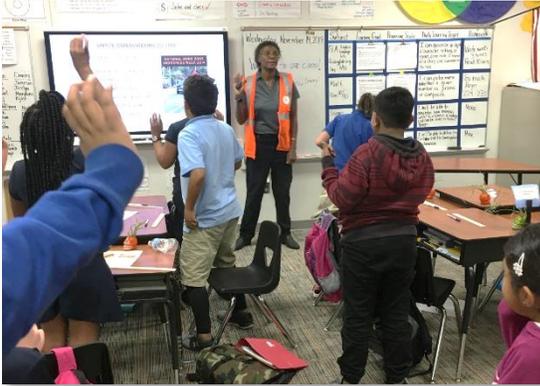


2. Back to School Expo, Seminole Towne Center – August 4, 2018

More than 800 parents and students stopped by the CFX-sponsored E-PASS and Wekiva Parkway booth at the Seminole Towne Center's Back to School Expo on August 4. Kids loved the school supplies and hard hats. Parents loved the stress relief construction hats and finding out about the parkway and E-PASS. Several parents said the new sections have saved them lots of time in their travels.



3. Zellwood Elementary Teach-In – November 14, 2018



About 75 Zellwood Elementary School students on November 14 got to learn about the Wekiva Parkway during the Orange County Public Schools' Annual Teach-In. Youngsters got to learn about the project's many environmental protections, as well as about possible careers in transportation.

Students also took the safety ambassador pledge (*photo, left*) to help their friends and families stay safe in work zones.



IX. Special Events

The Wekiva Parkway booth has become a fixture over the years at various community special events. The events provide opportunities to raise awareness of the Wekiva Parkway amongst a broader audience and help to build positive relationships with the communities hosting the events, as well as with individual members of the public.

Many event-goers thanked staff for making parkway information readily available, and allowing them to get their questions answered about E-PASS and SunPass. The communications team staffed the following special events in 2018, all together interacting with more than **2,650 event goers**:

1. Mount Dora Arts Festival – February 3-4, 2018

Nearly 1,500 people visited the CFX-sponsored Wekiva Parkway and E-PASS booth at the wildly popular Mount Dora Arts Festival February 3-4. Many people inquired about the project schedule and other details, as well as about the difference between E-PASS and SunPass. Many were excited to learn that CFX the following month would be facilitating two expressway connections

to S.R. 46, meaning drivers would soon be able to quickly get between Mount Dora, Apopka Maitland and Orlando.



2. 17th Annual Spring Fling at the East Lake County Library – April 28, 2018



About 70 people stopped by the Wekiva Parkway booth at the 17th Annual Spring Fling at the East Lake County Library on April 28. Folks enjoyed being able to view project exhibits and get their questions answered at the event.

3. Mount Dora Police Department’s National Night Out – October 2, 2018

A fledgling event growing bigger each year, project staff participated in the Mount Dora Police Department’s National Night Out in the Target parking lot on October 2. Dozens of people visited the project booth to find out the latest about the parkway. Many event-goers praised the time savings since CFX connected the expressway to S.R. 46. Others were also interested to learn about the parkway’s environmental protections – and the kids loved the bear fans and wildlife coloring sheets.



4. Easter Seals Camp Challenge Walk with Me – October 6, 2018

After years of accepting the offers to use Camp Challenge’s lodge for project public meetings at no cost, the project gave back to this worthwhile endeavor by sponsoring a booth at the Easter Seals Camp Challenge “Walk with Me” event on March 6. Project staff answered questions about the parkway at this inaugural event with a big heart.



5. Mount Dora Craft Festival – October 27-28, 2018

About 1,000 people visited the CFX-sponsored Wekiva Parkway and E-PASS booth at the Mount Dora Craft Festival on October 27-28. Event-goers were happy to get the latest information on the parkway, to see large exhibits up close and to get their questions answered.



X. Project Materials



With all but one FDOT section under construction in 2018, project materials focused on providing updates on the latest work activities and traffic impacts. Section fact sheets for Sections 7A, 7B and 8 were revamped to focus on the start of construction.

Communications and creative staff crafted dozens of traffic impact maps for various construction operations on the sections underway. The public involvement coordinator consistently updated multimedia presentations, and other materials to highlight project progress, benefits and traffic volumes on the open sections. The overall corridor map and project fact sheet were updated to reflect the opening of the last CFX sections, and as other schedule

details became available.

Project materials were provided at public meetings, community presentations and special events, as well as were posted on the project website and social media pages.

Extensive collaterals were developed for the grand opening of CFX's Section 2, spanning five miles and completing connections to S.R. 46. The event logo, T-shirt, environmental charity check, sponsor banners, and the race medal, flyers and map were all branded to highlight the project's natural protections, aesthetic features and milestone accomplishment.



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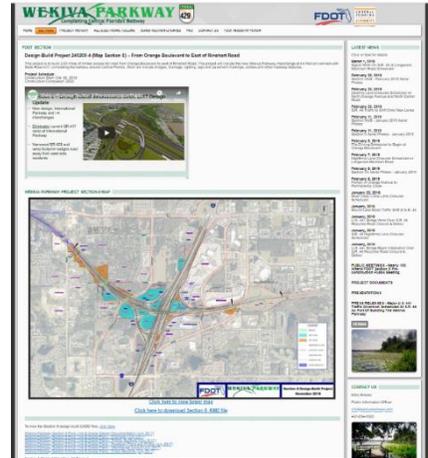


XI. Website

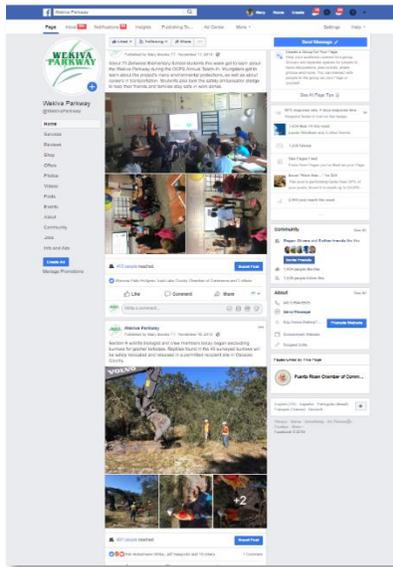
The project website www.wekivaparkway.com in 2018 received 58,947 visits from 45,884 unique visitors. Since it launched on June 15, 2012, the site has received **273,078 visits** from **207,443 visitors**. The site continues to be an invaluable resource for community members interested in the details, benefits and progress of the project.

In the last year even more videos, animations and exhibits were added to the site. Updated plans, aerial exhibits and other documents continued to be posted. Monthly web traffic reports continued to be compiled and provided as requested.

Cross promotion of the website by including webpage links in social media posts also contributed to increased use of the site as an information resource in 2018.



XII. Social Media



The Wekiva Parkway social media accounts continued to draw followers in 2018, a testament to the relevance and current nature of the postings. The parkway Facebook page had **1,447 followers** and the Twitter page had **489 followers** by the end of 2018.

Videos, animations, photos, public meeting notices, construction alerts, burn notices, community meeting and event recaps all worked to continually engage community members in project activities. Most posts are shared extensively by followers, further expanding the reach of project information.

The PIC also responded to hundreds of questions and concerns posted on Facebook, coordinating with the agencies and project teams as needed.

XIII. Outreach Totals

The following table provides a snapshot of the minimum number of people reached using each communications strategy. The numbers do not reflect the number of times an individual might have visited the website, the number of shares for various social media posts, the number of

people who forwarded to others the information received about the project, nor the voluminous number of project calls and emails received:

2018 Communications Strategies	Min. No. of People Engaged
Community Presentations	370
Public Meetings	390
Construction Alert E-blasts (70 alerts)	42,000
Youth Outreach	1,000
Community Special Events	2,650
CFX Section 2 Grand Opening	900
Website Visitors	45,884
Social Media Followers (Facebook & Twitter)	1,936
TOTAL	95,130

For more information contact:

Mary Brooks
Quest Corporation of America
Public Involvement Coordinator
C: 407-694-5505
E: Info@wekivaparkway.com
W: www.wekivaparkway.com