

Appendix A

Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR) Advisory Board Meeting

Minutes of the Meeting

via MS TEAMS

November 18, 2025 · 1:00 – 3:48 PM ET

- Call to Order: Meeting called to order by Chair Ron Howse at 1:00 PM ET.
- Roll Call

Advisory Board Members and Designees (P = Present, T = Teams, A = Absent)

	Name	Title	Organization	Designee	
P	Ron Howse, Chair	Chair	Florida Transportation Commission		Statute
P	Jared Perdue, P.E. (A)	Secretary	Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT)	Justin Hall, Secretary FDOT, District 7 (T)	Statute
P	Kimberlee DeBosier	Vice President, Transportation Division	WGI, Inc.		
T	J. Alex Kelly (A)	Secretary	Florida Department of Commerce	Scott Rogers, FDEO (T)	
A	Ram Kancharla	Vice President, Planning and Development	Port Tampa Bay		
T	Alexis A. Lambert (A)	Secretary	Florida Department of Environmental Protection	Lindsey Weaver (T)	Statute
P	Thornton J. Williams	Managing Partner	Williams Law Group, P.A.		
P	Ysela Llort	Principal	Renaissance Planning Group, Inc.		
A	Ralph Yoder	Executive Director	Florida Transportation Commission		Ex-Officio
A	Lisa Bacot	Executive Director	Florida Public Transportation Association		Ex-Officio

Guests

CUTR Leadership

- Dr. Fred Mannering, CUTR Director
- Lisa Staes, CUTR Associate Director

CUTR Program Directors

- Chanyoung Lee
- Jeff Kramer
- Julie Bond
- Martin Catala
- Pei-Sung Lin
- Sara Hendricks
- Sisinnio Concas

Guests

- Dean Levy Thompson

Agenda

Welcome and Introductions. *Ron Howse, CUTR Advisory Board Chair*

Topic #1: Approval of Minutes. *Ron Howse, CUTR Advisory Board Chair*

- Quorum is met for the meeting.
- **Motion:** Approval of prior meeting minutes
- **First:** Justin Hall
- **Second:** Ysela Llort
- **Outcome:** Motion passed unanimously without revisions

Topic #2: Dean Welcome and Introductory Remarks *Levy Thompson, USF College of Engineering*

Strategic Vision and Remarks from Dean Thompson

- Dean Thompson introduced his background and collaborative leadership approach.
- He emphasized experiential learning, student engagement, and CUTR's role across **Learning, Discovery, and Community**.
- CUTR was identified as a critical asset supporting applied research, basic research, and statewide impact.
- Dean Thompson stressed increasing CUTR visibility statewide and invited continued board feedback.

Board Feedback on CUTR Positioning and FDOT Alignment

- Ron Howse noted CUTR's strong national reputation but limited statewide visibility.
- Ysela Llorca encouraged highlighting faculty subject matter expertise.
- Thornton Williams stressed strengthening CUTR and FDOT alignment.
- Justin Hall noted increasing infrastructure pressures and CUTR's opportunity to lead research.
- Members supported improved branding, communication strategies, and clearer statewide alignment.

Infrastructure Research Needs and Opportunities

- Justin Hall described pressures from population growth, resiliency challenges, and infrastructure demand.
- Ysela Llorca emphasized the need for advanced congestion and mobility analytics.
- Ron Howse encouraged CUTR to define specialty research areas.
- Opportunities identified included electrification, connected and autonomous vehicle systems, air mobility, and structural monitoring.

Topic #4: FDOT District 7 Update *Justin Hall, Secretary, FDOT D7*

- Justin Hall provided updates on the Howard Frankland Bridge, I-4 express lanes, and the SunTrax vertiport.
- He described improved operational response to flooding events.
- Hall reiterated ongoing engineering workforce shortages and stressed timely COE faculty communication with FDOT and USF's support for student placements/engagement.

Topic, Other: CUTR Strategic Discussion

Workforce Development and Student Engagement

- Thornton Williams emphasized statewide workforce shortages.
- Justin Hall noted that delays in faculty responsiveness continue to hinder opportunities.
- Ysela Llorca stressed the importance of early applied learning pathways and expanded technical skill building.
- Discussion focused on increasing faculty participation and strengthening student exposure to FDOT projects.

Research Funding and Operational Challenges

- Lisa Staes noted instability caused by delayed or canceled RFPs.
- Ron Howse described employee shortages in engineering fields, including in areas such as geotechnical, hydrology, structures, etc. and noted that new graduates lack in the field experiential learning, both of which limit project readiness and proposal capacity.
- Board discussed internal processes, staffing constraints, proposal workload, and academic labor limitations.
- Members encouraged pursuit of UTC partnerships, expanded collaborations, and more flexible hiring structures.

Policy, Legislative, and Structural Considerations

- Thornton Williams questioned the restrictions preventing CUTR from serving as a subconsultant on FDOT consultant agreements.
- Ysela Llorca and Fred noted these limitations reduce collaboration with private firms.
- Board reviewed implications of new legislative requirements for the advisory board.
- Members supported exploring regulatory updates to reduce barriers.

Strategic Planning and Next Steps

- Ron Howse summarized priorities including stronger CUTR / FDOT alignment and expanded statewide visibility.
- He proposed a future board retreat to support long term strategic planning.
- Members reaffirmed support for CUTR's statewide mission.

Topic #4: CUTR Advisory Board Updates/Business

Board Appointments, Bylaws, and Governance

- Thornton Williams referenced the appointment of LK Nandam and reappointment of existing members as a part of the bylaw updates.
- He will lead a bylaw review once appointments are finalized.
- Lisa Staes stated that she would make the updates to correspond to the recent legislatively-required updates.
- Ron Howse emphasized the importance of effective oversight and governance.

Adjournment

- The meeting was adjourned at 3:48 p.m.