FLORIDA MOTORCYCLE SAFETY COALITION

COALITION MEETING REPORT

April 30 – May 1, 2026

PREPARED FOR

Florida Department of Transportation

PREPARED BY

Center for Urban Transportation Research
University of South Florida

Florida Motorcycle Safety Coalition Meeting Report

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Prepared by

Center for Urban Transportation Research

3808 USF Alumni Drive,

Tampa, FL 33620

Meeting notes taken by

Savana Wright

Date

April 30 – May 1, 2026

1.0 Attendees

Name	Agency
Lana Lang	American Bikers Aimed Toward Education (ABATE)
Griz Deaver	American Bikers Aimed Toward Education (ABATE)
John Makal	American Legion Riders
Cali Bogan	Element Engineering Group, FDOT D7 Consultant
Alexis DiBlanda	Florida Department of Health
Eric Kruizenga	Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles
Leilani Gruener	Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles
Andrew DeVault	Florida Department of Transportation
Brandy French*	Florida Department of Transportation
Chris Craig	Florida Department of Transportation
Clay Whitaker	Florida Department of Transportation
James Landini	Florida Department of Transportation
Nicole Giordano	Florida Department of Transportation
Ohhoon Kwon	Florida Department of Transportation
Rupert Giroux	Florida Department of Transportation
Joe Glorioso	Florida Department of Transportation D1
Sergio Contreras	Florida Department of Transportation D1
Shieda Castillo	Florida Department of Transportation D6
Emmeth Duran	Florida Department of Transportation D7
Kelly Farabee	Florida Department of Transportation D7
Shaun Vanbeber	Florida Law Enforcement Liaison (LEL) Program D6
Mark Welch	Florida Highway Patrol
Jason Harris	Florida State University Police Department
Megan Hawkins	HCA Florida Blake Hospital
Hildi Brooks	Quest
John Pretti	Retired (Florida SafeRider Inc. Motorcycle Training Academy)
Provenzano Joel	Retired (Florida Department of Transportation)
Michael Dobbs	RideSMART Florida Outreach
Aida Leiva Gonzalez	Survive the Ride - University of Miami
Patricia Byers	Survive the Ride - University of Miami
Mariaugusta Montealegre	Survive the Ride - University of Miami
Edward Lineen	Survive the Ride - University of Miami
Alexandria Roeder	Tampa General Hospital
Keith Brown	Tampa Police Department
Sebastian Meyer	Tampa Police Department
Chanyoung Lee	USF Center for Urban Transportation Research
Elizabeth Chedester	USF Center for Urban Transportation Research
Jamie Bohn	USF Center for Urban Transportation Research
Savana Wright	USF Center for Urban Transportation Research
Siwon Jang	USF Center for Urban Transportation Research
Young Keun Yang	USF Center for Urban Transportation Research

* Florida Motorcycle Safety Program Manager

2.0 Meeting Summary

From April 30 – May 1, 2026, the Florida Motorcycle Safety Coalition (FMSC) held its third meeting for the 2025-2026 subgrant cycle. The May 2026 Coalition Meeting was open to all members, guests, and the public. The meeting was held at Hyatt Place Tampa Wesley Chapel.

Annual Emphasis Area (EA) Leaders' Meeting (April 30): The annual Emphasis Area Leader's Meeting was held in the morning prior to the May FMSC Meeting. Leaders from each area received updates and engaged in conversation about their group's tasks and progress towards addressing the National Highway Traffic Administration (NHTSA) Motorcycle Safety Program Assessment Recommendations. Conversation centered on identifying priorities for the new five-year Florida Motorcycle Safety Strategic Plan (MSSP). The leaders were provided with instructions on how to lead their respective groups in discussions to update their MSSP Business Plan.

Day One (April 30): The first half of the May Coalition Meeting was held in the afternoon of Day One. Mrs. Brandy French, Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), welcomed the Coalition, shared the agenda for the day, and reviewed housekeeping items. EA Leaders provided updates on key achievements since the last Coalition meeting. Next, Dr. Chanyoung Lee, Center for Urban Transportation Research (CUTR), gave a presentation on the latest Florida Motorcycle Crash data. After a break, Dr. Siwon Jang, CUTR, updated the Coalition on "May is Motorcycle Safety Month" efforts. Next, Dr. Ohhoon Kwon, FDOT, presented on US301 rigid pavement texture sections. Last, Dr. Chanyoung Lee provided an overview of findings from a Motorcycle Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) Study. The meeting concluded with closing statements, an announcement of upcoming meeting dates, and a public comment period.

Day Two (May 1): On Day Two, Mrs. Brandy French made general announcements. Next, Dr. Siwon Jang gave a presentation on model language for a novice motorcyclist helmet law. The Coalition broke out into their EA groups to review their business plan and determine what tasks they would accomplish before the next Coalition meeting. Leaders from each group reported out a summary of the discussions to the Coalition. The meeting concluded with closing statements, an announcement of upcoming meeting dates, and a public comment period.

Figure 1. May 2026 Florida Motorcycle Safety Coalition Meeting, Day 1.

Emphasis Area Leaders' Meeting: Day 1

Thursday, April 30, 2026 (8:30 am – 11:30 am)

Time	Topic	Speaker(s)
8:30-8:45 am	Emphasis Area Leaders Welcome & Introductions	Brandy French
8:45-10:00 am	New MSSP Discussion (2024 Assessment Review)	CUTR
10:00-10:15 am	Break	
10:15-11:30 am	Goals and Objectives for FY 2026/27 Discussion	

Florida Motorcycle Safety Coalition Meeting: Day 1

Thursday, April 30, 2026 (1:00 pm – 5:00 pm)

Time	Topic	Speaker(s)
1:00-1:15 pm	Welcome & Introductions	Brandy French
1:15-1:45 pm	Florida Motorcycle Safety Program Update	Dr. Siwon Jang & EA Leaders
1:45-2:15 pm	Florida Motorcycle Crash Update	Dr. Chanyoung Lee
2:15-2:30 pm	Break	
2:30-3:30 pm	Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month Updates	Dr. Siwon Jang
3:30-4:00 pm	US301 Rigid Pavement Texture Sections	Dr. Ohhoon Kwon
4:00-4:45 pm	Motorcycle VMT Study Presentation	Dr. Chanyoung Lee
4:45-5:00 pm	Public Comment Period & Closing Statements	Brandy French

Florida Motorcycle Safety Coalition Meeting: Day 2

Friday, May 1, 2026 (9:00 am – 12:30 pm)

Time	Topic	Speaker(s)
9:00-9:15 am	Review of Day One and Discussion	Brandy French
9:15-10:00 am	Helmet Model Language Update	Dr. Siwon Jang
10:00-10:45 am	Emphasis Area Breakout: MSSP Discussion	
10:45-11:00 am	Break	
11:00-12:00 pm	Report Out/Group Discussion	EA Leaders
12:00-12:30 pm	Future Coalition Meeting Dates, Closing Statements, & Public Comment Period	Brandy French

3.0 Coalition Meeting Notes

April 30th, 2026

Florida Motorcycle Safety Coalition Emphasis Area Leaders' Meeting

Figure 2. May 2026 Emphasis Area Leaders' Meeting

The annual Emphasis Area Leaders' Meeting focused on the upcoming publication of the new Florida State Highway Safety Plan (SHSP) and the development of a new five-year Motorcycle Safety Strategic Plan (MSSP).

Discussion centered on the "Safe Systems" approach and the newly introduced "Pathways to Safer Streets" initiative as foundations for the development of a new MSSP. The group also reviewed Florida motorcycle crash data and national trends to inform decision making.

Looking back at motorcycle crash data over the past twenty-four years, Dr. Chanyoung Lee, CUTR, shared that motorcycles have become more powerful while passenger vehicles have become progressively safer over time. Based on Florida motorcycle crash and citation data, the group discussed the need for the new MSSP to prioritize several topics:

(1) **New riders (all ages):** Given that the risk of crashing is highest in the first-year post-endorsement, the group discussed promoting a mandatory helmet requirement for a rider's first year of riding. The group discussed that a novice rider helmet law could encourage lifetime helmet usage and shift the perception of risk.
(2) **Young sport bikers:** Despite representing only 15% of the motorcycle population, sport bikes account for 38% of fatalities. The group noted that while these riders often wear high-quality gear, high speeds frequently negate its effectiveness. Plans were discussed to engage track day programs and to conduct focus groups with young riders on speeding behaviors and the influence of social media on their risk-taking behaviors. The group discussed engaging more young riders on the coalition.
(3) **Aging riders:** Discussions centered on "safe riding vs. riding retirement" and the rising prevalence of impaired riding in the 65+ demographic, particularly regarding the interaction between alcohol and prescription medications.
(4) **Scooter body-type motorcycles:** a critical focus was placed on the miscoding and non-compliance issues surrounding motor scooters and mopeds. Based on the crash data, scooter body-type motorcycles remain a significant issue in Florida compared to other states.
(5) **Impaired riding:** A large portion of fatal motorcycle crashes in Florida involved an impaired rider. The group discussed challenges with enforcing impaired driving laws among motorcyclists, and that DUI charges involving motorcyclists without crashes are relatively uncommon.

(6) **Motorcycle traffic law enforcement:** The group discussed general challenges with enforcement of traffic laws among motorcyclists. While there are known challenges with conducting traffic stops on motorcyclists, citation data also shows that only 30% of unendorsed motorcycle riders involved in a crash received a citation for riding without endorsement and only 4.7% of unhelmeted riders under age 21 received a citation for not wearing a helmet when involved in non-fatal crashes.

Next, the group reviewed recommendations from the 2024 NHTSA Motorcycle Safety Program Assessment to track progress and identify additional areas of focus for the new plan. The EA leaders were given their sections of the current Business Plan to review and revise with their EA group during the Coalition meeting.

Florida Motorcycle Safety Coalition Day 1 Welcome and Program Updates – Mrs. Brandy French, FDOT & Emphasis Area Leaders

Mrs. Brandy French, FDOT, opened the FMSC meeting with introductions. All attendees were provided with an agenda and RideSMART Florida folder with additional materials. Mrs. French reviewed housekeeping items, including the online meeting sign-in system. Members were reminded to fill out their travel surveys at least a month prior to each meeting. Next, Emphasis Area (EA) leaders provided an overview of the Coalition's efforts since the February 2026 meeting:

- **Program Management** held meetings to review and update the old MSSP plan with the CUTR team. The Business Plan format was updated to improve functionality and printability.
- **Advocacy & Policy** drafted model language on a 'novice motorcycle endorsement helmet requirement,' a time-limited helmet requirement for the first 12 months following issuance of a motorcycle endorsement. The CUTR team also attended the Traffic Adjudication Lab for Judges in April. The team is looking into developing a curriculum for judges to share at the next Traffic Adjudication Lab held in 2027.
- **Communications & Outreach** has finalized a new Florida Motorcycle Operator Handbook as recommended by the 2024 NHTSA Florida Motorcycle Program Assessment. The Handbook will be available for free online. Coalition members suggested developing a tip card with a QR code linking to the Handbook. The CUTR Team also updated the RideSMART Florida website to meet Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) standards. Since the previous Coalition Meeting, the outreach team conducted several large outreach events. The team reported record-breaking engagement at Daytona Bike Week, with over 2,000 RideSMART Challenges completed.
- **Data & Analysis** completed the motorcycle Vehicle Miles Travel (VMT) study. A presentation on the findings will be shared with the Coalition. County level motorcycle crash factsheets for 2025 were also completed.
- **Law Enforcement** evaluated a new sign-in system for the Motorcycle Education Program for Every Rider (MEPER) curriculum designed for Law Enforcement. The team will work to promote the module. Additionally, the team will work to educate agencies on properly citing motorcyclists for riding without a motorcycle endorsement and for violating Florida's motorcycle helmet law.

- **Rider Licensing & Training** finalized the Florida Motorcycle Operator Handbook. The group is still monitoring changes to the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles (FLHSMV) knowledge testing vendor.
- **Roadway Engineering** pitched a new 'motorcycles use caution' sign be added to the Traffic Engineering design manual and standard plans. The sign will be used ahead of construction zones or permanent hazards. The team also updated rub rail guidance and added to the FDOT Design Manual. The team submitted a research proposal for counting motorcycles using Artificial Intelligence and traffic cameras. The team will be presenting at the County Engineers Conference in June.
- **Trauma & Emergency Services** is continuing its Teachable Moments program with motorcycle crash patients. The team is looking into adding Jackson South to the program. The team attended the American Legion Summit and trained over 100 people, trained John A Ferguson Highschool, Broward County Police, and Litas Ft. Lauderdale. The team has trained a total of 181 first responders since the last meeting. The team also gave a presentation on frailty at the national Life Savers Conference.

Figure 3. Coalition members providing Emphasis Area updates.

Florida Motorcycle Crash Data Update – Dr. Chanyoung Lee, CUTR

Dr. Chanyoung Lee, CUTR, presented a stark contrast between the safety trajectories of passenger vehicles and motorcycles over the last twenty-four years. While the passenger vehicle fatality rate dropped by 29% between 2000 and 2024, motorcycle fatalities surged by 215%, a trend driven largely by a shift toward high-performance motorcycles with increased horsepower and lighter chassis. In 2012, Florida surpassed California as the leading state for motorcyclist fatalities.

Next, Dr. Lee addressed behavioral and demographic shifts within Florida's riding population. While helmet use among younger riders has improved, the state has seen a rise in unendorsed operators and a sharp increase in impaired riding among operators aged 65 and older, with impairment rates in this age group rising from 13% to 33%.

Figure 4. Dr. Lee presenting Florida motorcycle crash data.

Finally, Dr. Lee shared that an analysis of motorcyclist citation data highlighted a gap in enforcement of motorcycle traffic laws, as nearly 60% of unendorsed riders in non-fatal crashes were not cited, and only 4.7% of unhelmeted riders under the age of 21 who were involved in non-fatal crashes received citations.

Motorcycle Safety Awareness Month, 2026 – Dr. Siwon Jang, CUTR

Dr. Siwon Jang, CUTR, highlighted the ongoing statewide "Watch for Motorcycles" yard sign campaign, which aims to reduce fatalities and serious injuries by placing signs at the sites of motorcyclist fatalities from the previous year. This initiative builds upon a successful pilot program conducted in the Tampa Bay area the previous year. Using Florida motorcycle fatality data for 2025, the CUTR team identified 354 eligible locations to place signs, after filtering out interstates and private roads. The campaign rolled out during the final week of April to create a wave of awareness leading into May. Volunteer engagement was significant, with 53 individuals across the state signing up to cover over 82% of the designated sites. The CUTR team encouraged Coalition members to volunteer for remaining sites.

Figure 5. Dr. Jang thanking volunteers.

Additionally, Dr. Edward Lineen, Ryder Trauma Center, and his team, placed signs at critical hotspots in Miami. The team also scheduled a May Injury Prevention Press conference, where Dr. Patricia Byers, Ryder Trauma Center, will speak.

Finally, to further extend the campaign's reach, RideSMART Florida developed a corresponding social media campaign to promote volunteers' efforts. RideSMART Florida also launched a "I Watch for Motorcycles" social media profile frame for members of the public to add to their social media profiles during the month of May.

Concrete Pavement Surface Textures – Dr. Ohhoon Kwon, FDOT

Dr. Ohhoon Kwon, FDOT, presented on concrete pavement surface textures. The FDOT U.S. 301 test road was opened in 2010. It was designed to conduct pavement experiments to improve the performance of concrete pavements and maintenance techniques. The road uses real traffic and conditions to test several variables. The U.S. 301 Test Road is a critical corridor carrying 21,000 vehicles daily with a 30% truck factor. Key discussions focused on structural experiments involving concrete thicknesses of 6 to 10 inches and various base types, as well as drainage studies investigating edge drains and joint sealants.

Figure 6. Dr. Kwon sharing pavement textures.

Performance analysis centered on surface textures, specifically distinguishing between microtexture for dry friction and macrotexture for hydroplaning prevention. Longitudinal Diamond Grinding (LDG) and Next Generation Concrete Surface (NGCS) were highlighted for their superior noise reduction compared to standard bridge textures. Safety data through 2026 indicates that NGCS maintains high friction levels comparable to state standards, while motorcyclist safety is optimized by utilizing narrow 1/8" grooves to minimize tracking sensations.

Figure 7. Brandy French sharing the Day 2 meeting agenda.

The presentation concluded with an update on asphalt innovations, noting that longitudinal grooving is being applied to dense-graded asphalt to enhance drainage. Testing will continue through 2026, using Locked-Wheel Friction Trucks and Onboard Sound Intensity (OBSI) sensors to monitor long-term durability and acoustic performance.

May 1st, 2026

Day 2 Welcome – Mrs. Brandy French, FDOT

Mrs. Brandy French, FDOT, welcomed the Coalition back for Day 2 of the May FMSC meeting. Mrs. French shared the agenda for the day and reminded the Coalition about the public comment period at the conclusion of the meeting.

Helmet Model Language Update – Dr. Siwon Jang, CUTR

Dr. Siwon Jang, CUTR, presented a proposal for new model language that would recommend the implementation of a mandatory helmet requirement for first-year motorcyclists. The presentation highlighted a significant "novice spike" in crash involvement immediately following licensure, noting that risk levels are disproportionately high as new riders develop essential hazard perception and handling skills. Dr. Jang emphasized that while Florida law currently permits riders over the age of 21 to operate

motorcycles without a helmet, provided they carry at least $10,000 in medical insurance, this existing legislation fails to differentiate between experienced and novice operators. To address these safety concerns, the proposed legislative language seeks to amend Florida Statute 316.211 by mandating that any individual issued a motorcycle endorsement within the preceding 12 months must wear protective headgear, regardless of their age or insurance coverage. Scientific evidence supported this shift, indicating that helmets are approximately 37% effective in preventing rider deaths and reduce head injury risk by roughly 69%. The proposal is designed to align Florida with global graduated licensing principles, aiming to foster long-term helmet-wearing habits, reduce preventable traumatic brain injuries, and lower uncompensated trauma care costs while maintaining the optional helmet law for experienced riders. A draft model language document was shared with the coalition for review.

Figure 8. Dr. Jang presenting new helmet model language.

Following the presentation, the Coalition engaged in a discussion regarding the practical application and enforcement of the proposed novice helmet requirement. Members raised questions concerning license reciprocity, specifically regarding how the 12-month requirement would apply to riders moving from states like Alabama, which does not have a license reciprocity agreement with Florida. Members also discussed how the law would impact riders who obtain an endorsement but delay active riding. Next, the Coalition discussed enforcement strategies, with the consensus that the initiative would mirror Florida's Graduated Driver Licensing (GDL) system in its focus on fostering a "culture of safety" rather than relying solely on enforcement. To facilitate roadside compliance, the group discussed technical solutions such as including an issuance date on the physical license or integrating the restriction into the Driver and Vehicle Information Database (DAVID), similar to the protocols used for Ignition Interlock Devices (IID). Acknowledging that Florida would be the first state to implement such a model, the coalition viewed this as a significant first step toward a broader graduated licensing framework and noted that an American Legion Riders (ALR) lobbyist is currently designated to carry the proposal forward working with John Makal, ALR.

Emphasis Area Breakout Session Discussions

Members broke out into groups to discuss their section of the Business Plan. EA groups were instructed to complete a worksheet identifying tasks for each priority. Once complete, emphasis areas had time to review their section of the Business Plan and discuss any ongoing action items. Upon returning from the breakout sessions, each area leader provided the Coalition with a summary of their group's discussions.

Advocacy & Policy will prioritize the promotion of the new helmet law. It was noted that Senate Bills regarding minor passengers and SB 1384 died in committee. While HB 243 concerning e-bicycles passed, it has been placed on hold pending the creation of a task force. The subcommittee remains engaged in clarifying motorcycle definitions and intends to collaborate with the Pedestrian and Bicycle Coalition to address growing e-bike concerns. Future projects include the development of safety tip cards specifically for motorcycle passengers.

Figure 9. Advocacy & Policy breakout.

Data & Analysis anticipates receiving motorcycle injury data from the Florida Department of Health (FDOH) by the November meeting. A statewide motorcycle data fact sheet is scheduled for publication prior to the next meeting. Ongoing efforts include the acquisition of citation and trauma center data. Additionally, the team successfully concluded the motorcycle Vehicle Miles Traveled (VMT) study project and reported the findings to the Coalition.

Communications focused its recent efforts on a final review of the new Motorcycle Operator Handbook. Looking toward the next subgrant cycle, the group intends to emphasize speeding and law enforcement initiatives. Additionally, they plan to work on producing the supplemental tip cards identified by the Advocacy and Policy subcommittee.

Law Enforcement confirmed they will maintain all current goals and strategies in their Business Plan. The group discussed the recent analysis from CUTR that revealed low citation rates for unendorsed riders and helmet violations among those under 21. To improve officer education, the group proposed utilizing Power DMS to distribute updated information on helmet laws, endorsements, and "super speeder" violations, noting that current motorcycle-related presentations in the system are outdated and limited in scope.

Figure 10. Law Enforcement breakout

Rider Licensing & Training is in the process of updating the new rider survey and managing a transition to a new electronic testing vendor, though the implementation date has been deferred to September 2026. In collaboration with CUTR, the team obtained rear-end crash data to distribute to Florida Rider Training Program (FRTP) sponsors. FRTP sponsor updates have been moved to an online format. The emphasis area is working with the Learning and Development Office to identify funding for RiderCoach training opportunities. Furthermore, new FRTP staff have completed the Basic RiderCourse (BRC), and the team continues to participate in Virtual Rider Education Training System (VRETS) sessions. Recent achievements include updating the Florida Motorcycle Operator Handbook and the successful mail-out of endorsement tip cards, which will resume next year to maintain a biennial schedule.

Figure 11. Engineering breakout

Roadway Engineering reported the completion of updates to the design manual and has identified additional manuals for future revision. The group is currently evaluating various software options for the public to report maintenance issues that could impact motorcyclists. Preparations are underway for the FDOT Design Symposium, where the group intends to host a table on motorcycle safety. A request for staffing assistance was issued to ensure adequate coverage during the event.

Trauma & Emergency Services continues to promote the "Survive the Ride" training, with a strategic focus on motorcycle rider groups, including the Latin American Motorcycle Association (LAMA) and motorcycle racing organizations, to reach younger demographics. The group plans to develop a training video to supplement hands-on instruction at events and will implement post-training surveys to guide program expansion. Efforts are also underway to launch a dedicated "Survive the Ride" website for improved user tracking. Other initiatives include analyzing Law Enforcement Liaison (LEL) hotspot data, publishing a study on the efficacy of motorcycle leg plates, and comparing injury severities between motorcyclists and passenger car occupants. The group is also investigating a law enforcement trial in the Florida Keys regarding trauma alerts.

Meeting Closing Statements – Mrs. Brandy French, FDOT

Mrs. Brandy French, FDOT, closed out the meeting with a reminder about upcoming Coalition meeting dates. The floor was open for questions and comments from the public. No additional comments were made.

Next meetings:

- August 11th – 12th, 2026
- November 4th- 5th, 2026
- February 3rd – 4th , 2027