

August 15, 2005

Welcome to the I-75 PD&E Study Public Information Workshop

George Mullen Community Activity Center

Introduction

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is conducting a Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study to evaluate the widening of I-75 in Charlotte, DeSoto and Sarasota Counties. The limits of the PD&E Study are from north of Kings Highway in Charlotte County to North River Road in Sarasota County. A project location map is shown below.



Project Location Map

Public Information Workshop

The objectives of this Public Information Workshop are to provide residents, business owners and other interested persons the opportunity to review project information and to provide input for the decision making process. Maps, display boards and other project information are on display this evening. Representatives will be available this evening to discuss the study and answer questions. Information, including this handout, will be circulated and posted on the project web site. Visit the project web site at: www.i75.info. The FDOT welcomes comments at any time during this Study.

Project Background

Planning for improvements to I-75 began with the preparation of a Multi-Modal Interstate Master Plan in 1998 by the FDOT. The Master Plan identified the need for additional lanes based on projected traffic growth in this area. The traffic analysis that was conducted for the 1998 Master Plan has been updated as part of the current PD&E Study to reflect the rapid development that is occurring in Southwest Florida.

The results of the updated analysis indicate that existing average daily traffic volumes range from 45,000 to more than 54,000 vehicles per day through the project limits. The results also indicate that eight lanes will be needed throughout the PD&E Study limits to accommodate the projected traffic volumes of more than 111,000 vehicles per day by the year 2032. No new interchanges are recommended; however, there will be minor improvements to the existing interchanges. Without the proposed improvements, it is anticipated that the traffic demand will exceed the acceptable level of service for the four-lane Interstate as early as the year 2012.



North River Road Interchange

I-75 is a part of the primary Federal Highway System and the Florida Intrastate Highway System. The FDOT recognizes the importance of I-75 as a critical hurricane evacuation route for the people living in Florida. The Interstate is currently a four-lane divided freeway with a posted speed limit of 70 miles per hour. The 2000 U.S. Census indicates that the land use along the study corridor is primarily rural with isolated areas of residential developments.

PD&E Study Process

A PD&E Study is an extensive process conducted by FDOT in order to determine environmental and socioeconomic impacts associated with proposed transportation improvements. This process, mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), is a combined effort by professionals who analyze the project related information to develop the best alternative for a community's transportation needs.

Several improvement alternatives will be developed that will meet future travel demand and attempt to minimize impacts to the community and the natural environment. These alternatives will be evaluated with input collected from the public, local governments and environmental agencies throughout the study process. The alternatives developed will be compared based on community and environmental impacts and costs for design and construction, engineering inspection, right-of-way acquisition, construction and wetland mitigation.



Sumter Boulevard Interchange

Public comment and sentiment are also considered during this analysis. Several environmental studies are conducted and used in this analysis. Once the analysis of the viable alternatives, including the No Build Alternative, is complete and the public has had the opportunity to comment on these alternatives, a recommendation will be made. The recommended alternative, along with the supporting project documentation and summary of public input, will be presented to the Federal Highway Administration for Location and Design Concept Acceptance.

Proposed Improvements

The proposed improvements include widening the existing four-lane facility to eight general-use lanes by either of the following two alternatives:

Build Alternative 1 - Adding two lanes to the inside in each direction where a wider existing median allows as well as adding one lane to the inside and one lane to the outside in each direction where the existing median is more narrow; or

Build Alternative 2 - Adding one lane to the inside (within the existing median) and one lane to the outside in each direction for the entire length of the project limits.

The proposed typical sections for Build Alternatives 1 and 2 are included in this handout. In general, the proposed typical section will include four 12-foot travel lanes in each direction and 12-foot inside and outside shoulders (10-foot paved). No additional right-of-way will be acquired for the Interstate mainline widening. However, right-of-way will be required for the construction of stormwater ponds. The proposed locations of these ponds will be evaluated as this PD&E Study progresses.

The No Build Alternative is considered a viable alternative and will remain so throughout the remainder of the PD&E Study. The No Build Alternative consists of canceling the project, postponing improvements to I-75 beyond the Design Year of 2032 and limiting work in the project area to routine maintenance.

Environmental Evaluations

Potential environmental effects associated with the Build Alternatives are being evaluated. The environmental areas being studied include wetlands, floodplains, threatened and endangered species, water quality, hazardous materials, recreational sites, noise, air quality, historic structures, and archaeological sites. Based on data developed during the PD&E Study, no significant impacts are anticipated as a result of the proposed Build Alternatives. Impacts are listed on the Evaluation Matrix display board and in this project handout. Widening within the existing right-of-way avoids or minimizes environmental impacts for the length of the project.



Deer Prairie Creek

Title VI and Related Statutes

The proposed project is being developed in accordance with Title VI and Related Statutes of the Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1968. Any person or beneficiary who believes they have been discriminated against because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, disability, or familial status may file a complaint with:

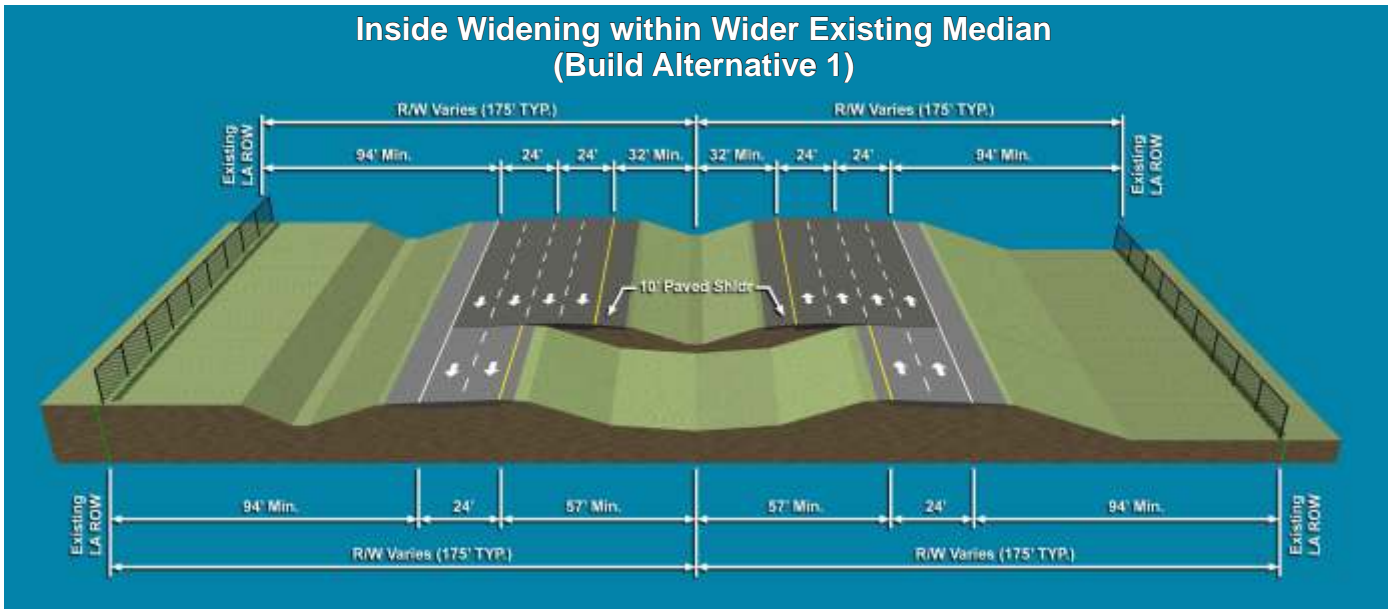
Ms. Jacquelin Brown
District One Title VI Coordinator
Florida Department of Transportation
Post Office Box 1249
Bartow, Florida 33831

Or call Ms. Brown at (863) 519-2757

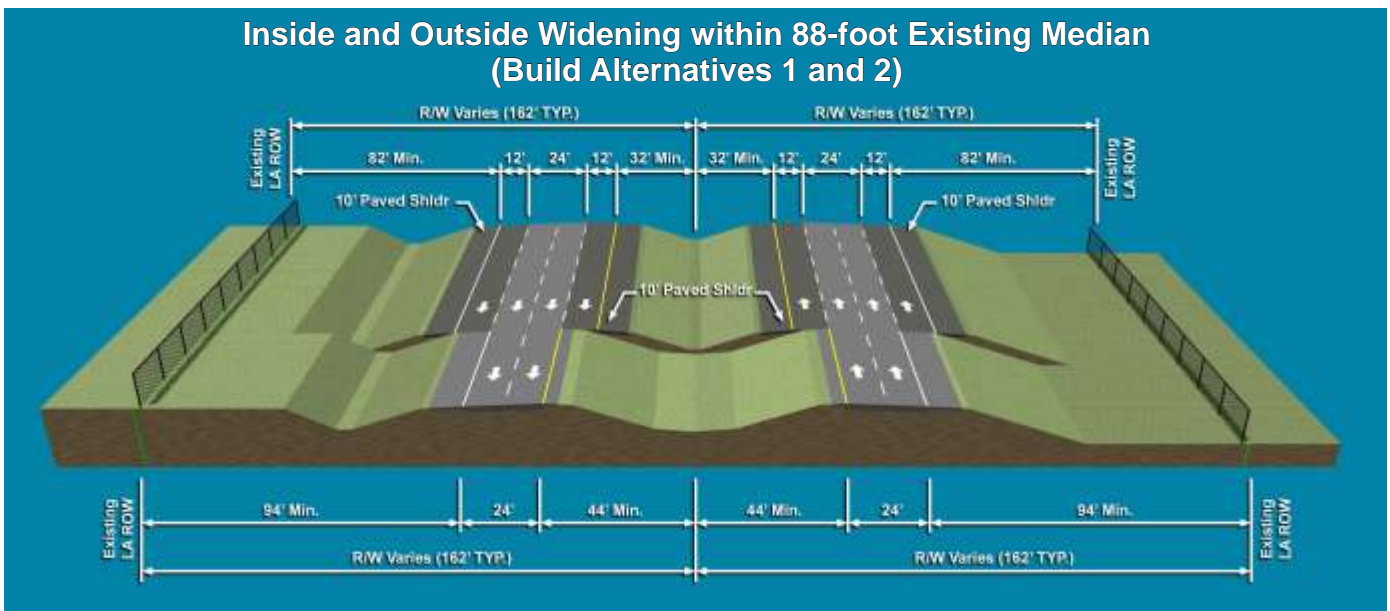
All inquiries or complaints will be handled according to Department procedures and in an expeditious manner.

Proposed 8-Lane Typical Sections

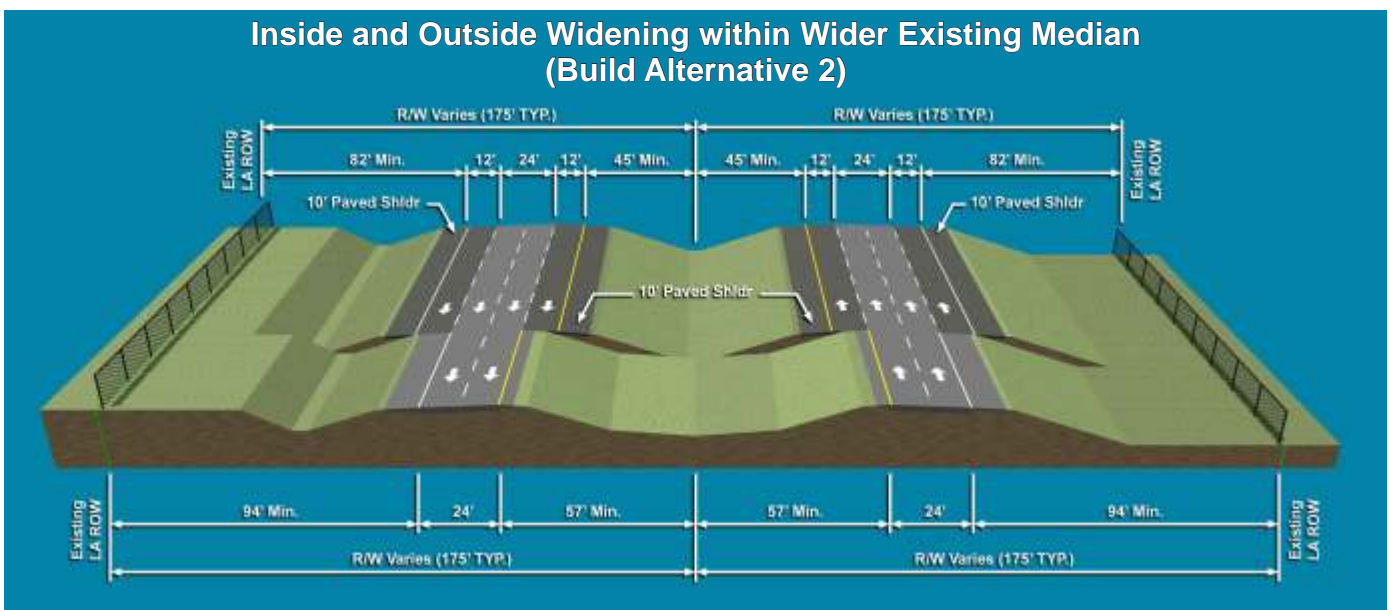
**Inside Widening within Wider Existing Median
(Build Alternative 1)**



**Inside and Outside Widening within 88-foot Existing Median
(Build Alternatives 1 and 2)**



**Inside and Outside Widening within Wider Existing Median
(Build Alternative 2)**



Evaluation Matrix

Evaluation Criteria ⁽¹⁾	No-Build Alternative	Build Alternative 1	Build Alternative 2
Business Impacts			
Number of business relocations	0	0	0
Residential Impacts			
Number of residential relocations	0	0	0
Environmental Impacts ⁽²⁾			
Archaeological/historical sites (potential)	None	None	None
Section 4(f)	0	0	0
Noise (potential)	None	Low	Low
Wetland (acres)	0	55.6	58.1
Floodplains (acres)	0	45.9	77.0
Threatened and endangered species (potential)	None	Low	Low
Petroleum sites	4	4	4
Hazardous material sites	1	1	1
Right-of-Way Impacts			
Right-of-way to be acquired for roadway (acres)	0	0	0
Right-of-way to be acquired for stormwater ponds (acres)	0	168	168
Estimated Total Project Costs (2005 costs in million \$)			
Right-of-way acquisition for stormwater ponds	\$0	\$72.8	\$72.8
Wetlands Mitigation	\$0	\$5.2	\$5.5
Construction Costs	\$0	\$154.1	\$172.8
Design (15% of Construction Costs)	\$0	\$23.1	\$25.9
Construction Engineering & Inspection (15% of Construction Costs)	\$0	\$23.1	\$25.9
PRELIMINARY ESTIMATE OF TOTAL PROJECT COSTS	\$0	\$278.3	\$302.9

Note:

- (1) The above matrix does not include information for floodplain compensation areas that may be required.
- (2) The above matrix does not include potential impacts associated with stormwater ponds.

