



Florida Department of Transportation

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Bartow, FL 33830

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SECRETARY

October 27, 2016

SUBJECT: Project Status Update
SR 29 LaBelle: CR 80A (Cowboy Way) to north of CR 731 (Whidden Road)
ETDM Number: 5531
Federal Aid Project Number: TBD
Work Program Item Segment Number: 417878-1-22-01
Hendry County and Glades County, Florida

To Whom This May Concern:

This Project Status Update is to inform you that the limits for the above referenced project have changed, reducing the overall length of the project. This Project Status Update provides background on the reasons for this modification. **Please note that this material is for reference only; no comments are required.**

In 2008, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District One commenced a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study for a section of SR 29 extending approximately 15 miles from CR 80A (Cowboy Way) to US 27 in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The section of SR 29 under study is located in the City of LaBelle and unincorporated Hendry County and Glades County, Florida. The purpose of the project is to improve traffic operational conditions along the SR 29 corridor to accommodate projected travel demand, specifically increased freight and commuter traffic. The current Class of Action for the project is an Environmental Assessment.

Note that the Advance Notification Package for the project was originally distributed on May 1, 2008. At the time, the limits of the project extended from CR 80A (Cowboy Way) to US 27. Since the original distribution and the commencement of the PD&E Study, several traffic updates have been conducted. The traffic updates have indicated that there is no longer an immediate need for additional capacity on SR 29 north of CR 731 (Whidden Road). **As such, the limits for the SR 29 LaBelle PD&E Study have been revised to reflect a shorter corridor extending from CR 80A (Cowboy Way) to north of CR 731 (Whidden Road), a distance of approximately 3 miles.**

The project was also screened for review through the Environmental Screening Tool (EST) as part of the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) Programming Screen phase. The project was listed originally in the EST as ETDM #5531 SR 29 (Hendry/Glades) from CR 80A to US 27 [Hendry and Glades Counties]. A Preliminary Programming Screen Summary Report was published on June 25, 2007; the latest version of the Programming Screen Summary Report was published on July 6, 2009.

The Programming Screen Summary Report can be viewed by the Environmental Technical Advisory Team (ETAT) members on the ETDM website. Non-ETAT agencies can view the Programming Screen Summary Report on the public access website located at: <http://etdmpub.fl.a-etat.org/est>.

Enclosed information pertaining to this Project Status Update will be sent to both ETAT members and Non-ETA T agencies via a link within an email or through hardcopy by mail. Please note that **Non-ETAT agencies receiving an email with a link to the Project Status Update material will first receive a "Welcome" email with website log-in instructions.**

The enclosed Project Status Update material includes:

- 1) Updated Project Description/Purpose and Need Statement
- 2) Updated Project Location Map
- 3) Updated Project Schedule
- 4) Project Status Update Transmittal List

Note that the Project Status Update material will only be available for review for a period of thirty (30) days from the date of this notification.

Please address any questions pertaining to the enclosed information to:

Ms. Gwen G. Pipkin
District Environmental Administrator & ETDM Coordinator
Florida Department of Transportation District One
P.O. Box 1249
Bartow, Florida 33831

We appreciate your cooperation pertaining to this matter.

Sincerely,



Gwen G. Pipkin
District Environmental Administrator & ETDM Coordinator

Enclosures

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PROJECT STATUS UPDATE
Project Description/Purpose and Need Statement

ETDM Project #5531 / FM #417878-1-22-01
SR 29 LaBelle: CR 80A (Cowboy Way) to north of CR 731 (Whidden Road)
Hendry and Glade Counties, Florida
Project Development and Environment Study
FDOT District One

PROJECT BACKGROUND

This Project Status Update is to inform you that the limits for the above referenced project have changed; the overall length of the project has been reduced. This Project Status Update provides background on the reasons for this modification.

In 2008, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) commenced a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study for a section of SR 29 extending approximately 15 miles from CR 80A (Cowboy Way) to US 27 in accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). The section of SR 29 under study is located in the City of LaBelle and unincorporated Hendry County and Glades County, Florida.

Since the PD&E Study commenced, the Heartland Regional Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) was established. Several traffic updates have also occurred. The traffic updates have indicated that there is no longer an immediate need for additional capacity on SR 29 north of CR 731 (Whidden Road). **As such, the limits for the SR 29 PD&E Study have been revised to reflect a shorter corridor extending from CR 80A (Cowboy Way) to north of CR 731 (Whidden Road), a distance of approximately 3 miles.**

PROJECT DESCRIPTION

SR 29 is a Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) facility from SR 82 in Collier County to US 27 in Glades County. Within the City of LaBelle in Hendry County, SR 29 (Main Street) from CR 80A (Cowboy Way) to SR 80 is a three-lane urban facility with one travel lane in each direction and a two-way center left-turn lane; this roadway section is typically contained within 60 to 75 feet of right-of-way. SR 29A (Bridge Street) is also a three-lane urban facility with an existing right-of-way width of 60 feet. At SR 80, the designation of SR 29 shifts from Main Street to Bridge Street. From SR 80 to the Caloosahatchee River Bridge (a bascule structure), within the Downtown LaBelle Historic District and Hendry County, SR 29 (Bridge Street) continues as a three-lane urban facility with an existing right-of-way width of 60 feet; the existing right-of-way width for Main Street, west of SR 29 from SR 80 to the south side of the Caloosahatchee River Bridge, is 50 feet. As SR 29 (Bridge Street) crosses the Caloosahatchee River, it is classified as a two-lane urban facility. Main Street, in this area, is also a two-lane urban roadway. From north of the Caloosahatchee River Bridge to CR 731 (Whidden Road), SR 29 is a two-lane rural facility with an existing right-of-way width of 200 feet.

The project involves evaluating the widening of the existing two and three-lane undivided segments of SR 29 between CR 80A (Cowboy Way) and CR 731 (Whidden Road) to four lanes in order to improve traffic operational conditions. The project is approximately three miles in length. Additional right-of-way may be necessary to accommodate the widening.

TRANSPORTATION PLAN CONSISTENCY

Transportation planning consistency is being coordinated and will be completed prior to the finalization of the PD&E phase. The project is currently included in the Heartland Regional Transportation Planning Organization's (HRTPO) 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Roadway Project Group 2.

PURPOSE and NEED STATEMENT

The purpose of this project is to improve traffic operational conditions along the SR 29 corridor from CR 80A (Cowboy Way) to north of CR 731 (Whidden Road) to accommodate projected travel demand, specifically increased freight and commuter traffic. SR 29 is a designated Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) facility. Traffic flow within the corridor is of particular concern given the high percentage of heavy trucks and their unique acceleration and deceleration characteristics which cause vehicular travel delay and, ultimately, impact the movement of freight and commuter traffic on the two- to three-lane roadway.

The project also enhances interregional connectivity between key economic regions in Florida as well as regional emergency response and evacuation needs while improving safety for the efficient movement of people and freight. The need for the project is based on the following primary and secondary criteria:

PRIMARY CRITERIA

CAPACITY/TRANSPORTATION DEMAND: Improve Operational Conditions

This project is anticipated to improve traffic operations and preserve operational capacity along SR 29 to address increased travel demand (particularly increased commuter and freight traffic) spurred by projected population and employment growth along the corridor and higher volumes of heavy trucks on the corridor due to increased industrial and agricultural activities in the area.

The six-county region of the Heartland Regional Transportation Planning Organization (HRTPO) is expected to experience a 33% population increase from 253,399 in 2010 to 336,600 in 2040. Similarly, total employment for the region is expected to grow from 101,721 in 2011 to 134,178 in 2040, a 32% increase. Future traffic volumes for the region are anticipated to increase based on the generated population and employment forecasts.

If the projected capacity deficiency is not addressed for the project segment (particularly for the portion within Hendry County), it is anticipated that the facility volume-to-capacity (V/C) ratio will increase to 1.59 V/C by 2040. A roadway is deemed deficient if the volume-to-capacity ratio exceeds 0.9 as it has surpassed its designated service volume and level of service (LOS) standard. Given that SR 29 is a designated SIS facility, and the project portion of the roadway is located outside of an urban area, the LOS standard for the facility is LOS "C". Without the proposed improvements, travel conditions along the corridor will continue to deteriorate resulting in a failing LOS by 2040. This will contribute to higher levels of congestion and delays, particularly hindering the north-south movement of freight traffic in the southwest portion of the State.

SECONDARY CRITERIA

SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC DEMAND: Enhance Freight Mobility and Economic Competitiveness

The project predominantly occurs within Hendry County, which is a designated Rural Area of Opportunity [a Florida Legislature designation that encourages and facilitates the location and/or expansion of major economic development projects of significant scale in designated rural communities]. In addition, the project falls within the Hendry County Enterprise Zone and the Glades County Enterprise Zone as well as within a Foreign Trade Zone designation (implemented to assist companies in streamlining the process and minimizing costs associated with qualified importing, exporting, manufacturing and distribution activities), further emphasizing the importance of goods movement and trade. Based on the H RTP 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan, the “region’s future economic climate” is projected to be supported by agriculture, healthcare, mining, warehousing, ecotourism, and services industries as well as energy and trade focused economies.

Designated as part of Florida’s SIS network and classified as a regionally significant freight roadway by the H RTP, SR 29 serves regional through movements for long-haul truck volumes, as well as provides regional freight access to agriculture and ranching operations, industrial/commercial areas, and freight distribution facilities throughout southwest Florida, principally due to its connections to I-75, SR 80, and US 27. According to the SIS Highway Component for *Current and Future Heavily Congested Corridors Report* prepared in 2014 by the Florida Department of Transportation, the SR 29 project segment is anticipated to become a heavily congested corridor by year 2040 if it remains a two-lane undivided facility. Furthermore, the need for increased capacity or widening of SR 29 is classified as a very high priority investment in the Florida Freight Mobility and Trade Plan Investment Element dated September 2014.

Currently, the project segment of SR 29 has truck volumes that range from 12% to 15%. Florida’s SIS Highways are the backbone of the highway transportation network; this network consists of nearly 4,400 miles of roadways. While this mileage represents only 3% of the total state roadway mileage, the network supports 54% of all traffic and 70% of all truck traffic on the State Highway System. These significant corridors connect all of Florida’s economic regions including economic markets beyond Florida. Within the State, this network facilitates the movement of passengers and goods between the major airports, seaports, rail facilities, and notable intermodal hubs. As travel demand along SR 29 is expected to continue to increase, improvements to traffic operational conditions along the corridor will:

- Alleviate congestion along this critical southwest Florida link, and
- Enhance and sustain overall access to local and regional freight distribution centers and the circulation of goods.

SAFETY CONDITIONS: Enhance Safety along the Corridor

Crash data reviewed for the 2011-2013 period along the project corridor revealed a total of 133 incidents, including 51 injuries and 1 fatality. The high percentage of heavy trucks on the corridor and their unique acceleration and deceleration characteristics may have contributed to the reported crashes. It should be noted that as the volume of traffic increases along the corridor, the opportunity for vehicle movement conflict is expected to increase.

SR 29 is also a designated H RTP emergency evacuation route, which is consistent with the evacuation route network established by the Florida Division of Emergency Management.

The proposed project is anticipated to:

- Improve safety characteristics of the facility, which are particularly exacerbated by the high truck percentages, by enhancing overall traffic operations, and
- Enhance evacuation and response times by improving overall evacuation capacity and traffic circulation.

PROJECT STATUS UPDATE
Project Location Map

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Original Project Limits



NEW Project Limits



PROJECT STATUS UPDATE
Project Schedule

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Hendry and Glade Counties, Florida
Project Development and Environment Study
FDOT District One



Project Status Update Transmittal List

Official Transmittal List

	Organization	Name
1.	Bureau of Indian Affairs	* Regional Director, Franklin Keel,
2.	City of LaBelle	Akin, Daniel W.
3.	City of LaBelle	Boyle, Michael A.
4.	City of LaBelle	Lyons, David
5.	City of LaBelle	Smith, Thomas
6.	City of LaBelle	Wilkins, Julie
7.	City of LaBelle	Zimmerly, Hilda L.
8.	Collier County MPO	McLaughlin, Anne
9.	FDOT District 1	Pipkin, Gwen G.
10.	Federal Aviation Administration	* Airports District Office
11.	Federal Aviation Administration	Vernace, Bart
12.	Federal Emergency Management Agency	* Mitigation Division, Chief
13.	Federal Emergency Management Agency	Szczech, Gracia
14.	Federal Rail Administration	Partriarca, Carmen
15.	Federal Transit Administration	Hibbert, Jennifer
16.	Federal Transit Administration	Mitchell, Stan
17.	Federal Transit Administration	Taylor, Yvette G.
18.	FIHS Central Office	Hatim, Khaleda
19.	FL Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services	Bohl, Steve
20.	FL Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services	Rackley, Anderson
21.	FL Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services	Weston, Michael
22.	FL Department of Economic Opportunity	Biblo, Adam
23.	FL Department of Economic Opportunity	Preston, Matt
24.	FL Department of Environmental Protection	Blair, Lucianne
25.	FL Department of Environmental Protection	Cerullo, Terry
26.	FL Department of Environmental Protection	Craig, Kae
27.	FL Department of Environmental Protection	Iglehart, Jon
28.	FL Department of Environmental Protection	Ray, Suzanne E.
29.	FL Department of Environmental Protection	Stahl, Chris
30.	FL Department of Environmental Protection	Yeagan, Mary
31.	FL Department of State	Aldridge, Jason
32.	FL Department of State	Jones, Ginny L.
33.	FL Department of State	McClarnon, Daniel
34.	FL Department of State	McManus, Alyssa
35.	FL Department of State	Parsons, Timothy
36.	FL Department of Transportation	Brickner, Eric
37.	FL Department of Transportation	Jackson, Roy
38.	FL Department of Transportation	McGilvray, Peter
39.	FL Department of Transportation	Morefield, Ken
40.	FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	Anderson, Michael
41.	FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	Gilbert, Terry
42.	FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	Goff, Jennifer
43.	FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	Poole, MaryAnn
44.	FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	Reinert, Thomas
45.	FL Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission	Sanders, Scott

46.	FL House	Hudson, Matt
47.	FL Senate	Bullard, Dwight
48.	FL Senate	Galvano, Bill
49.	Florida Inland Navigation District	Crosley, Mark
50.	Florida Inland Navigation District	* Mr. David Roach
51.	Florida's Turnpike Enterprise	Horwitz, Martin
52.	Glades County	Ahern, John
53.	Glades County	Bass, Scott
54.	Glades County	Beck, Paul
55.	Glades County	Brown, Avant
56.	Glades County	Brown, Sandra
57.	Glades County	Carlisle, Paul
58.	Glades County	Colegrove , Angela
59.	Glades County	* Glades County Board of County Commissioners, Commissioner District 5
60.	Glades County	Jones, CFC, Gail A.
61.	Glades County	Pryor, Weston
62.	Glades County	Storter-Long, Donna
63.	Glades County	Ward, Lorie
64.	Glades County	Whiddon, Holly
65.	Glades County	Whiddon, Stuart
66.	Glades County	Williams, Inga
67.	Hendry County	Butler, Barbara S.
68.	Hendry County	Chapman, Charles
69.	Hendry County	Davis, Don
70.	Hendry County	Harris, Darrell R.
71.	Hendry County	Hoots, Brenda
72.	Hendry County	Johnson, Myra
73.	Hendry County	Langford, Pat
74.	Hendry County	Newhouse, Brian
75.	Hendry County	Parker, P.E., R. S.
76.	Hendry County	Pelletier, Phillip
77.	Hendry County	Puletti, Paul K.
78.	Hendry County	Swindle, Michael
79.	Hendry County	Taylor, Janet B.
80.	Hendry County	Turner, Karson
81.	Hendry County	Vaughan, Jr., Tommy
82.	Hendry County	Whidden, Steve
83.	Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida	* Dayhoff, Fred
84.	Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida	* The Honorable Mr. Billy Cypress, Chairman
85.	Muscogee (Creek) Nation	* Historic & Cultural Preservation Department
86.	Muscogee (Creek) Nation	* The Honorable Mr. James Floyd, Principal Chief
87.	National Marine Fisheries Service	Crabtree, Roy
88.	National Marine Fisheries Service	Rydene, David A.
89.	National Marine Fisheries Service	Sramek, Mark
90.	National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration	Fay, Virginia
91.	National Park Service	Austin, Stan
92.	National Park Service	Barnett, Anita
93.	Natural Resources Conservation Service	Beck, Bob
94.	Natural Resources Conservation Service	Robbins, Rick A.
95.	Poarch Band of Creek Indians	* The Honorable Ms. Stephanie A. Bryan, Tribal Chair

96.	Poarch Band of Creek Indians	* Thrower, Robert
97.	Seminole Nation of Oklahoma	* Harjo, Natalie
98.	Seminole Nation of Oklahoma	* The Honorable Mr. Leonard M. Harjo, Principal Chief
99.	Seminole Tribe of Florida	Backhouse, Paul N.
100.	Seminole Tribe of Florida	Swing, Alison
101.	Seminole Tribe of Florida	* The Honorable Mr. James E. Billie, Chairman
102.	South Florida Water Management District	Beltran, Robert
103.	South Florida Water Management District	Carter, Hugo
104.	South Florida Water Management District	Layman, Laura
105.	South Florida Water Management District	Parrott, Mindy
106.	Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council	Gwinnett, Nichole L.
107.	Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council	Hutchinson, David L.
108.	Southwest Florida Regional Planning Council	Wuerstle, Margaret
109.	US Army Corps of Engineers	Barron, Robert B.
110.	US Army Corps of Engineers	Kinard, Donnie
111.	US Army Corps of Engineers	Kizlauskas, Andrew A.
112.	US Army Corps of Engineers	Ornella, Michael
113.	US Army Corps of Engineers	Ostrofsky, Tarrie L.
114.	US Army Corps of Engineers	Turner, Randy
115.	US Army Corps of Engineers	Wegmann, Deborah L.
116.	US Coast Guard	Barry Dragon, Chief Bridge Branch
117.	US Coast Guard	Overton, Randall D.
118.	US Department of Health and Human Services	* National Center for Environmental Health Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
119.	US Department of Housing and Urban Development	Jennings, Jr., Edward
120.	US Department of Housing and Urban Development	* Regional Environmental Officer
121.	US Department of Interior	* Bureau of Land Management, Southeastern States Field Office
122.	US Department of Interior	Dawson, Bruce, SE States District Manager
123.	US Department of Interior	Director, USGS-FISC
124.	US Department of Interior	Maytubby, Bruce, Eastern Regional Office Director
125.	US Environmental Protection Agency	Gates, Kim
126.	US Environmental Protection Agency	McTeer Toney, Heather
127.	US Environmental Protection Agency	Somerville, Amanetta
128.	US Environmental Protection Agency	Walls, Beth
129.	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Dohner, Cindy
130.	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Hinzman, Roxanna
131.	US Fish and Wildlife Service	Wrublik, John
132.	US Forest Service	Blake, Susan
133.	US Geological Survey	Gould, Jacklynn
134.	US House	Diaz-Balart, Mario
135.	US House	Rooney, Thomas
136.	US Senate	Nelson, Bill
137.	US Senate	Rubio, Marco

* Hardcopy recipient