



US 17 DESIGN CHANGE REEVALUATION

From County Road 760A to Heard Street in DeSoto County

FPID No: 193898-2-32-01

August 4, 2011

RIGHT-OF-WAY ACQUISITION & RELOCATION PROGRAM

In order to build the Preferred Build Alternative, the Florida Department of Transportation must obtain an additional 37 acres of property (right-of-way) from 71 parcels. The Department will carry out a right-of-way and relocation program in accordance with section 339.09, Florida Statute and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-646 as amended by Public Law 100-17). The four brochures which describe in detail the department's relocation assistance program and right-of-way acquisition program are Your Relocation: Residential; Your Relocation: Business, Farms and Nonprofit Organizations; Sign Relocation; and The Real Estate Acquisition Process. These brochures are available here this evening as are representatives from FDOT. Questions about right-of-way may also be addressed by contacting the District One Right-of-Way Office located at the Florida Department of Transportation, 801 N. Broadway, Bartow, Florida 33830; telephone: (863) 519-2407; business hours: 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday through Friday.

FEDERAL-STATE PARTNERSHIP IN HIGHWAYS

Through a series of congressional acts, the Federal-aid Highway Program was conceived and developed as a joint federal-state partnership. The success of this partnership is evident in the thousands of miles of excellent highways and bridges comprising the nation's transportation network. The Florida Department of Transportation, in consultation with the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and in accordance with state law, makes final decisions for the location, design, construction, and maintenance of Florida's highways. FHWA, in accordance with federal law, cooperates with the State of Florida in planning and developing federal-aid transportation improvements. FHWA reviews and approves all federal-aid actions proposed by the Florida Department of Transportation. When present at a public hearing, FHWA representatives serve as observers and technical advisors regarding federal requirements and procedures.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

This Public Hearing on the proposed design change to US 17 from CR 760A to Heard Street, in DeSoto County, Florida, is held to reevaluate the impacts from the proposed design changes. You will have the opportunity to submit your comments and exhibits concerning the proposed design change during this hearing, and until the end of the comment period, which ends August 15, 2011. FDOT will review all comments and make a final assessment to determine if the comments may be incorporated into the approved project.

Reevaluation Complete - Fall 2011

Design Complete - Spring 2012

Right-Of-Way Acquisition Begins - 2012

Construction Begins - 2015

DOCUMENTS AVAILABLE FOR REVIEW

Draft documents, and other pertinent information developed by the FDOT will be available for public review weekdays from 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, at the DeSoto County Courthouse, 115 E. Oak Street, Room 101, Arcadia, Florida 34266; 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Tuesday through Friday, and from 9 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Saturday at the DeSoto County Library, 125 N. Hillsborough Avenue, Arcadia, Florida 34266. These materials will also be available at the hearing site beginning at 6:00 p.m. until the end of the public hearing that evening.

PROJECT CONTACTS

We encourage you to continue to stay involved in the process to improve US 17 in DeSoto County. If you have any questions regarding this project, please contact FDOT's Project Manager, Ms. Nicole Harris, at (863) 519-2373, or by email at nicole.harris@dot.state.fl.us. Written questions can be faxed to (863) 519-1922 or mailed to:

US 17 PD&E Study
ATTN: Nicole Harris
Florida Department of Transportation
P.O. Box 1249
Bartow, FL 33831

CIVIL RIGHTS STATEMENT

This public hearing, held in accordance with 23 CFR 771 and Section 339.155, Florida 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 may have been discriminated against because of race, color, religion, sex, age, national origin, handicap, or familial status may file a complaint with the FDOT District One Title VI Coordinator, Robin Parish, at (863) 519-2675, or by writing to Ms. Parish at P.O. Box 1249, Bartow, Florida 33831. Anyone needing special assistance under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact Ms. Nicole Harris (see "Project Contacts" section on this page for contact information).

WELCOME

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District One, is conducting a public hearing to present proposed design changes to US 17 from CR 760A in Nocatee to Heard Street in Arcadia, DeSoto County. The proposed design changes affect the roadway typical section and right-of-way width, along with affecting two historic resources, the Nocatee Historic District and First Baptist Church of Nocatee. This hearing is being conducted to allow you an opportunity to express your reviews concerning the social, economic and environmental effects of the proposed design change. The department welcomes your comments concerning the design changes being presented this evening. You may complete the comment sheet included in the handout and leave it with us tonight, or you may take it home to complete and mail it back to the department, postmarked by August 15, 2011.

Department representatives are available to answer your questions and discuss the project. Aerial photographs showing the proposed design changes are on display. In addition, project related materials and right-of-way acquisition and relocation information is available.

The informal open house begins at 6 p.m., with the formal hearing presentation beginning at 7 p.m. During the hearing, there will be a video presentation on the proposed improvements. Following the presentation, an opportunity will be given for public comment. In addition, written statements or exhibits submitted at the hearing or postmarked by August 15, 2011, will become part of the official public hearing transcript.

WHY THE DESIGN CHANGE?

The original Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study recommended the widening of US 17 from two to four lanes from CR 760A to Heard Street, a distance of 4.4 miles. The original PD&E Study was approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) in June 1990. The original approved typical section required 113-feet of right-of-way. The existing right-of-way throughout the corridor varies from 60 to 100 feet. After the study was completed, the Florida Intrastate Highway System (FIHS) was formally created, which incorporated this segment of US 17. FIHS criteria requires that the roadway be designed for a minimum design speed of 50 mph. The 1990 PD&E preferred typical section was designed for 45 mph and does not meet FIHS design standards, therefore, a design change reevaluation is required. As part of this reevaluation process, an updated Cultural Resource Assessment Survey was performed. The survey identified four resources that are eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. Two of these



resources, the Nocatee Historic District and First Baptist Church of Nocatee, are affected by the roadway improvements. To minimize impacts, a design variation was approved that reduced the design speed to 45 mph within the Nocatee Historic District, minimizing the right-of-way width required to 106 feet. While less than the right-of-way width required in the original study, both the church and historic district are affected. For the rest of the corridor, the 50 mph design speed will require a right-of-way width of 136 feet. There is no change in the proposed alignment from the original study.

The department held a public information meeting on March 22, 2011 in Nocatee to address the Nocatee Historic District and First Baptist Church of Nocatee impacts. Several alignment alternatives were presented, public input gathered and a questionnaire concerning the historic district and church impacts was distributed. Comments were received and have been considered in the reevaluation study.

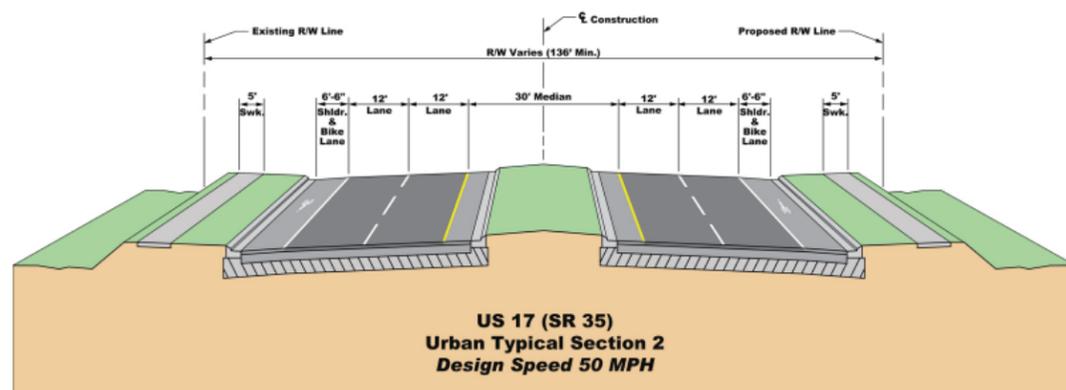
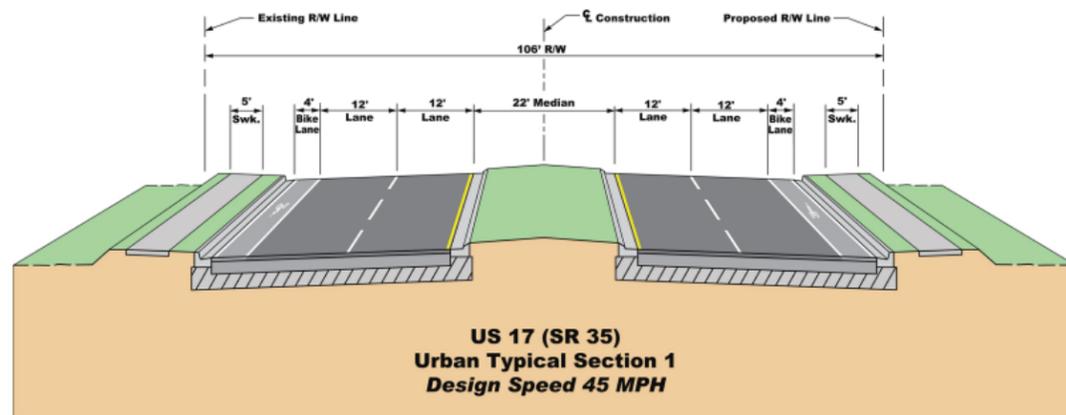
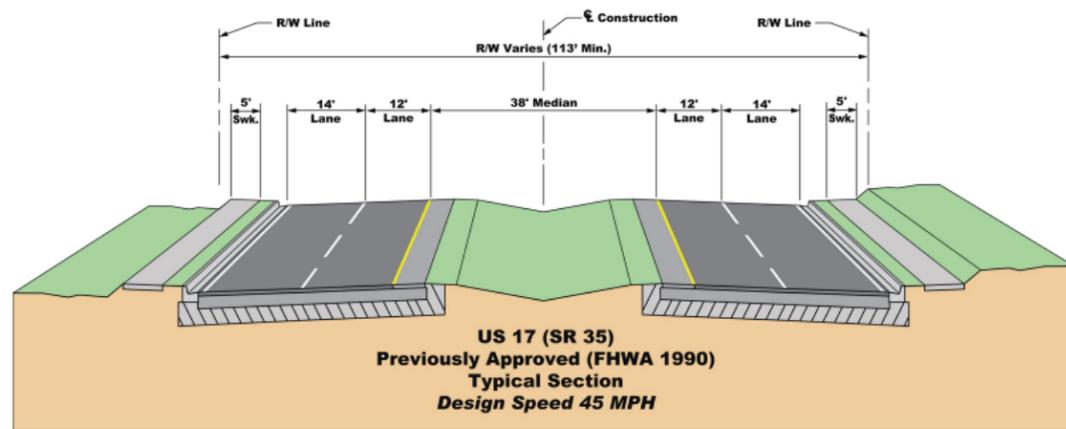
TYPICAL SECTION

In the original PD&E Study, the recommended typical section for this segment was a four-lane divided urban roadway with 12-foot inside and 14-foot outside travel lanes, separated by a 38-foot wide depressed median. Five-foot sidewalks were located along both sides. This typical section included a 45 mph design speed and required 113 feet of right-of-way. The additional right-of-way was proposed to be acquired from the east side of the roadway.

The proposed design change creates two recommended typical sections. From CR 760A to just north of the Joshua Creek bridge, the proposed typical section is a four-lane divided urban roadway with two 12-foot travel lanes and a four-foot outside shoulder in each direction separated by a 22-foot wide raised grassed median. Sidewalks are provided along both sides.

This typical section has a 45 mph design speed and can be accommodated within 106 feet of right-of-way, seven feet less than the original typical section. The additional right-of-way will be acquired predominately from the east side.

The second typical section extends from north of the Joshua Creek bridge to the end of the project. This typical section requires 136 feet of right-of-way and has a 50 mph design speed. The typical section includes two 12-foot lanes, 4-foot inside and 6.5-foot outside shoulders in each direction, separated by a 30-foot raised grassed median. Sidewalks are provided along both sides of the roadway. The additional right-of-way will be acquired predominately from the east side of the roadway.



ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS

Social and environmental impacts were evaluated based on the recommended alternative, including:

- Land Use
- Threatened and Endangered Species
- Wetlands
- Floodplains
- Water Quality
- Noise
- Air Quality
- Right-of-Way Requirements
- Residential and Business Relocations
- Contamination
- Cultural and Historic Resources
- Section 4(f) Resources

The following impacts are anticipated as a result of the recommended alternative:

The reevaluation determined that the project may affect the Audubon's crested caracara and wood stork. FDOT has committed to re-initiate formal consultation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service during the final design phase of the project.

The study identified four historic resources within the project area of potential effect that may be eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. These include the Nocatee Historic District, the First Baptist Church of Nocatee, and two residences. The church is located within the proposed boundaries of the historic district and is considered a contributing resource. The recommended improvements will not affect either of the single family residences, but the improvements will impact the church and historic district. The typical section within the historic district was minimized to reduce impacts. FDOT is consulting with FHWA and the State Historic Preservation Office to provide appropriate mitigation for the impacts.

A noise study was performed as part of the project reevaluation. Noise abatement measures were evaluated for noise sensitive sites along the corridor, including the Arcadia Mobile Home Park. FDOT has committed to conduct further noise analysis during final design to determine if noise abatement measures at the Arcadia Mobile Home Park are reasonable and feasible.

EVALUATION MATRIX

Discuss results of evaluation matrix.

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Preferred Alternative Evaluation Matrix

EVALUATION FACTORS	PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE
Segment Length (miles)	4.4
Social Impacts	
Number of Residences Impacted	11
Number of Businesses Impacted	20
Number of Churches Impacted	2
Number of Civic Organizations Impacted	1
Impacts on Cultural / Historical Resources	
Number of Impacts to Historic Sites/Districts*	2
Number of Impacts to Archaeological Sites	0
Right-of-Way Impacts	
Number of Parcels Impacted	71
Required Right-of-Way Area for Roadway (acres)	25.60
Required Right-of-Way Area for Stormwater Ponds (acres)	11.51
Total Required Right-of-Way Area (acres)	37.11
Drainage Impacts	
Treatment Volume Requirements (acre-ft)	4.16
Natural Environmental Impacts	
Wetland Impacts (acres)	3.16
Floodplain Impacts (acre-feet)	0.00
Physical Environmental Impacts	
Number of Potential Contamination Sites	45
Estimated Project Costs	
Engineering Design Cost	\$3,700,000
Right-of-Way Acquisition Costs	\$19,100,000
Construction Costs	\$23,300,000
Construction Engineering Inspection (CEI) Costs	\$3,500,000
Total Estimated Project Cost (In 2011 \$)	\$49,600,000

* NRHP-eligible Nocatee Historic District and First Baptist Church of Nocatee