

# CR 951 PROJECT NEWS

Newsletter No. 5

November 2003

## CR 951 PROJECT DEVELOPMENT & ENVIRONMENT (PD&E) STUDY DRAFT NEEDS ASSESSMENT SUMMARY

The Lee County Department of Transportation and the Collier County Division of Transportation, in association with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) are conducting a Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study for the possible extension of CR 951 from Immokalee Road in Collier County to Alico Road in Lee County, a distance of approximately 15 miles. The CR 951 PD&E Study involves a formal process of identifying, evaluating and documenting potential social, economic and environmental impacts associated with the proposed extension. The study will document the need for the project and develop and evaluate viable transportation improvement alternatives, including the no-project alternative, for the extension of CR 951 within the limits of the project.

For over two decades, Lee and Collier counties have been working to identify and plan for new roadway corridors between the two counties. This effort has resulted in the expansion of US 41 and I-75, and the development of the Livingston Road/Three Oaks Parkway corridor west of I-75. As a result of expansion of development into the area east of I-75, it is now necessary to look for corridor opportunities in that area. However, with the rapid growth of northern Collier County and southern Lee County, the opportunities to provide additional feasible alignment alternatives in this area are diminishing. Accordingly, through the findings of recent transportation and roadway circulation studies, the extension of CR 951 from Collier County north to Lee County has been identified as a possible alternative. The purpose of and need for the extension of CR 951 from Immokalee Road in Collier County to Alico Road in Lee County is based on several contributing and defining factors.

In September 2003, the CR 951 Project Team issued a Draft Needs Assessment for the proposed CR 951 Extension. The report was prepared in response to public input regarding the documentation of the purpose of and need for the proposed improvement. Establishing the purpose of and need for major transportation projects is a standard part of the PD&E study process and is required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.

(See Draft Needs Assessment Summary  
page 3)

### PUBLIC INFORMATION WORKSHOP NO. 2

The second public information workshop is scheduled for December. The workshop will present the preliminary alternatives and initial evaluation screening matrices and give persons the opportunity to interact one-on-one with the project team. The workshop will be held on Tuesday, December 9, 2003 from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the Three Oaks University Center, 20991 Three Oaks Parkway, Estero, Florida. There will be an Open House from 5:30-6 p.m. followed by a short presentation by the project team beginning promptly at 6:00 p.m. The presentation will be followed by a question and answer period.



#### Public Information Workshop

**Date:** Tuesday, Dec. 9, 2003

**Time:** 5:30 -7:30 p.m.

**Place:** Three Oaks University  
Center  
20991 Three Oaks  
Pkwy.  
Estero, Florida

### Visit the project web site at: [www.CR951.com](http://www.CR951.com)

A project web site has been created for the PD&E study. Information about the project will be available as it is developed. Visit the web site for PD&E definitions, project map and schedule, public involvement opportunities and upcoming events. A list of project team members and their e-mail addresses is available on the "Contact Us" page of the web site. Submit your comments via e-mail or provide your mailing information to be incorporated into the project database for mailings and notifications. Watch the web site for announcements regarding workshops and consensus building meetings.

### WHAT'S NEXT?

The CR 951 project has been underway for over a year. Small group meetings will continue to be held by the project team with those persons or parties who have an interest in the decisions related to the extension of CR 951. The following activities are scheduled for the CR 951 project:

- Presentations to the Lee and Collier Boards of County Commissioners in the First Quarter 2004
- Agency Scoping Meeting First Quarter 2004
- Technical Evaluation Continues
- Small Group Meetings

The consensus building process is open to all members of the public. If you are interested in participating in the consensus building workshops, please e-mail your request and mailing information via the web site.

## DRAFT NEEDS ASSESSMENT SUMMARY (continued)

The purpose of and need for the extension of CR 951 from Immokalee Road in Collier County to Alico Road in Lee County is based on several factors including:

**Regional travel demand:** The ability of the existing and proposed roadway network to handle projected increases in traffic and how that roadway system operates will be evaluated with and without the proposed extension of CR 951.

**System linkage:** This factor addresses how the proposed improvement fits into the overall regional roadway network.

**Safety:** This factor addresses the role of CR 951 in regional emergency management or freeway incident management as well as its ability to relieve congestion on parallel facilities which in turn may contribute to reductions in vehicle crashes on the regional roadway network.

**Social Demands and Economic Development:** This factor considers the need for the improvement in response to overall regional growth (population, land use, employment, and so on).

**Consistency with Local, Regional and State Transportation Plans:** The proposed improvement must be consistent with local, regional and state goals and objectives for providing transportation service at an acceptable level of service.

Based on the projected growth of both Lee and Collier counties over the next 20 to 30 years, and the regional infrastructure deficits anticipated as a result of this growth, it is imperative that the southeast communities continue to work together in a cohesive effort to plan, fund and construct infrastructure improvements that will provide sufficient levels of service (capacity) for both existing and future growth demands. The proposed extension of CR 951 is one of the roadway infrastructure improvements that could facilitate the traffic demands of both communities and provide travel alternatives for the regions' roadway network as well as providing a reliever for I-75 and an alternative route (detour) during emergency events or closures of the interstate.



The Draft Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which is being prepared to document potential social, economic and environmental impacts resulting from the proposed CR 951 improvement will include a Purpose and Need section; however, at the request of members of the community, the CR 951 Project Team agreed to publish a separate Needs Assessment document. The Draft Needs Assessment was distributed to approximately 50 members of the community at the September 16, 2003 Small Group Meeting in Support of the Consensus Building Process (one of the many public meetings scheduled for the CR 951 PD&E Study). Copies of the Draft Needs Assessment will be available for public review at the December 9, 2003 Public Information Meeting. It is also available on the project web site, [www.CR951.com](http://www.CR951.com).

Please contact Ralph Bove at [rbove@drmp.com](mailto:rbove@drmp.com) or Don DeBerry at [ddeberry@leegov.com](mailto:ddeberry@leegov.com) for more information on the Draft Needs Assessment Summary.

## CONSENSUS BUILDING SMALL GROUP MEETINGS SUMMARY

The first public workshop was held on February 20, 2003. The workshop “exercise” included the development of alternatives and the preparation of concerns by the teams. There have been three consensus building small group meetings held since the first public workshop. A summary of the meeting topics is provided below.

### Small Group Meeting No. 1 - Purpose and Need

- Historical Trends in Southwest Florida (population, employment & development)
- Long Range Transportation Planning
- Previous Traffic Studies
- Emergency Management and Safety
- Summary of the first public workshop including review of alignment maps created at the first workshop



### Small Group Meeting No. 2 - Preliminary Traffic Forecasts, the Affected Environment and Preliminary Travel Demand Forecasting for CR 951

- I-75 Origin/Destination Study - Where does the traveling public come from - where are they going? Or who might use CR 951?
- Affected Environment including approved and existing developments, ground truthed land use information, wetlands and critical habitat
- Population trends



### Small Group Meeting No. 3 - Update on Travel Demand Forecasts and Needs Assessment, Preliminary Project Alternatives including the No-Project Alternative and Evaluation Measures

- Preliminary Travel Demand Forecasts: An update was provided including daily traffic volumes for limited access/toll road conditions.
- Needs Assessment: A draft document summarizing the purpose of and need for the proposed improvement was presented.
- Preliminary Project Alternatives: A graphical presentation and discussion of the alternatives developed by the public during the initial public information workshop held in February 2003 was provided which also included the “no-project” alternative.
- Comparative Evaluation: Evaluation measures typically used in PD&E studies to compare potential social, economic and environmental impacts were presented. Discussion of these evaluation measures included standard analysis techniques used to quantify potential impacts as well as any unique criteria that may be recommended for this study. The participants provided input regarding additional criteria that should be considered in this process.

The participants have contributed valuable input including local knowledge of Southwest Florida and experience to assist the study team in building a comprehensive knowledge base for the project.