

Blueprint 2000 & Beyond
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This newsletter is the third in a series prepared by the staff at Blueprint 2000 to help keep the citizens of Tallahassee and Leon County informed about the Capital Circle NW/SW Expanded Project Development and Environment Study.

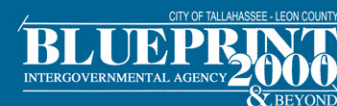
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Alternative Design Concepts to be Presented at Public Information Meeting

A public information meeting has been scheduled for the Capital Circle NW/SW Expanded Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study. The meeting will be held on June 30, 2005, at Tallahassee Community College (see back page). It will begin at 6:00 p.m. with an informal open house period in which members of the Blueprint 2000 & Beyond Project Team will be available to discuss the project informally, and to answer questions. At 6:30, a presentation will be made describing the proposed project and the alternative design concepts that have been developed for it. A public comment session will follow the presentation, with the meeting ending at 8:00 p.m. All who are interested in the proposed project are encouraged to attend this meeting.

We encourage individuals to discuss their suggestions and concerns with Blueprint 2000 Project Team members during the open house. Comments or suggestions can be communicated to Project Team members at that time, or in writing by completing a comment form.

This meeting is the second of three public meetings being held as part of the Expanded PD&E Study. The first was a "kickoff" meeting to announce the beginning of the study. That meeting was held in July, 2004. The third public

meeting will be the study's formal public hearing, which is scheduled to be held this fall. In addition, a project advisory group has been formed for the study. This group, which is comprised of area stakeholder representatives, has been meeting on a regular basis and will continue to meet until the study is concluded.

Please be aware that this project is separate from the Capital Circle SW project, which is investigating alternatives between Springhill Road and SR 20. We request that comments made at the June 30 meeting be limited to the Capital Circle NW/SW study limits, which extend from Orange Avenue to Tennessee Street.

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Expanded PD&E Study. That work has included developing project design alternatives and assessing the effects those alternatives would have on the environment and the community. This information will be available in much greater detail at the study's public information meeting, described on the front page of this newsletter. We encourage all who are interested to attend this meeting, to learn about the project, to ask questions of our Blueprint 2000 & Beyond Project Team, and to share your comments with us.

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

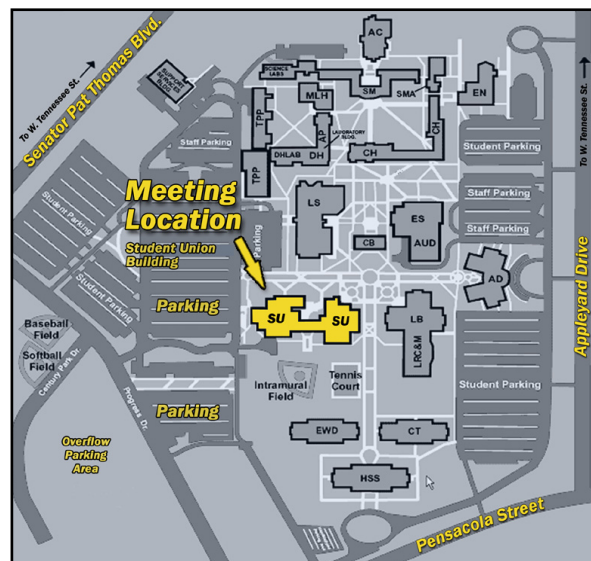
Capital Circle NW/SW Expanded Project Development and Environment Study

Date:
Thursday, June 30, 2005

Time:
Open House – 6:00 to 6:30 p.m.
Presentation – 6:30 p.m.
Public Comment – 7:00 to 7:30 p.m.
Open House – 7:30 to 8:00 p.m.

Location:
Tallahassee Community College,
Student Union Building (SU)

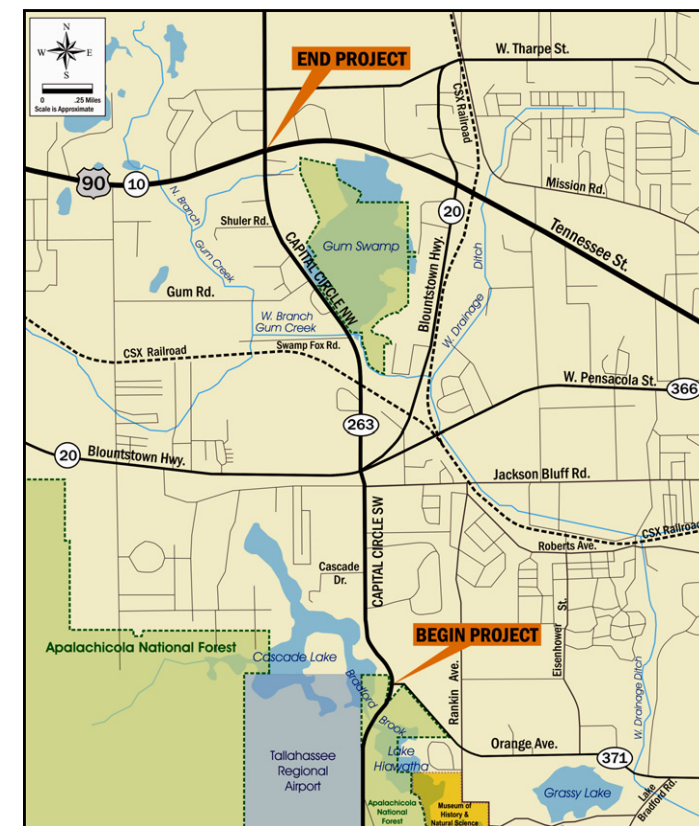
Parking:
Parking is available in any lot marked "Student Parking." A parking permit is not required.



Meeting Accessibility:
In keeping with the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities (ADA) Act of 1990, the meeting site is fully accessible. Any person requiring special assistance under the ADA Act is requested to contact Ms. Bonnie Pfuntner at (850) 891-1880, no later than June 27.

Remaining Study Milestones

Public Hearing..... Fall 2005
Federal Highway Administration Acceptance..... Winter 2006



Project Location Map

A Summary of Study Results, To Date

Development of Alternative Design Concepts

For projects such as the Capital Circle NW/SW Expanded PD&E Study, early activities include a traffic study to estimate future traffic demands, and an analysis to determine the type of facility needed to accommodate these traffic demands. Then, typical roadway cross sections are developed based on this analysis. The general concept for the proposed Capital Circle NW/SW typical roadway cross section is a 6-lane divided urban roadway, with three lanes northbound and three lanes southbound, a 36-ft. median, 4-ft. bike lanes, curb and gutter, a 10-ft. sidewalk on one side, and a 5-ft. sidewalk on the other side. The proposed right-of-way width is 230 feet. Special typical cross sections are also proposed for the CSX Railroad and Gum Creek bridges, for the roadway segment through Gum Swamp, and in the areas where frontage roads may be utilized. Graphics depicting these typical cross section concepts will be presented at the Public Information Meeting.

Once a proposed cross section and right-of-way width is established, alternative alignment design concepts are developed. "Left," "right," and "center" alternative alignments are normally prepared. These terms refer to the location of additional right-of-way needed for the improvements, relative to the existing roadway. The "Left" design concept is drawn so that required additional right-of-way is needed from the left-hand side of the facility. In the case of Capital Circle NW/SW, the left side of the project is the west side. The "Right" design concept would acquire all of the right-of-way on the right-hand or east side of the existing roadway. The "Center" design is drawn such that the improvements are centered on the existing roadway, with the widening taking place on both sides.

Once the Left, Right, and Center alignments are drawn, it is possible to create other alignments. These are usually known as "combination" alignments and are drawn such that the improvements transition between left, right, and center in an attempt to avoid or minimize negative impacts to the environment and residences, businesses, etc.

Another design feature that is being evaluated is the use of frontage roads to collect and distribute traffic to and from properties adjacent to Capital Circle NW/SW. The purpose of these frontage roads is to provide better control of access, safety, and mobility along the Capital Circle main line. These frontage road concepts are being evaluated in a few locations, but primarily in the southern end of the project from south of Cascade Drive to south of Jackson Bluff Road.

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The public information meeting for the Capital Circle NW/SW Expanded PD&E Study will include displays that illustrate the Left, Right, Center, and Combination design concepts. While we seek comments on each of these alternatives, our goal is to refine the Combination alternatives such that they reflect the

concerns and desires of the community to the greatest extent possible, recognizing that often compromise is necessary.

In addition to alignment variations, the study's design concepts also consider various widening layouts, median openings, sidewalk treatments, and other elements.

At the upcoming public information meeting, we would like to receive comments on all aspects of the alternative design concepts. Once public comments are received and analyzed, we will assess their merits with respect to their impacts and benefit, then incorporate them into the design if appropriate to do so.

Understanding of Project Effects

On studies such as the Capital Circle NW/SW Expanded PD&E Study, a critically important part of the process is the determination of the effect the project would have on the natural environment and surrounding communities. This work begins with an extensive data collection effort. Once all the necessary information is collected, an assessment of the effect the left, right, and center alternatives would have is conducted, based on the data collected. Once the impacts of these alternatives are known, alternatives can be developed to avoid impacts to the greatest extent possible. These become the combination alternatives, as previously discussed. In cases when even a combination alternative cannot avoid negative impacts, it is required that those impacts be kept to a minimum and that a plan be developed and carried out to mitigate those effects. The impact categories that are being examined as a part of this study are briefly described below. Greater detail on each will be available at the study's upcoming public information meeting.

Threatened and Endangered Species — Biologists have reviewed the entire project area for the presence of protected species or suitable habitat that could support those species. The result of this review is that no federally endangered or threatened species are known to occur within the project limits. There are, however, certain federally listed species that could possibly occur in the project vicinity. These include the American alligator, eastern indigo snake, bald eagle, and wood stork, as well as two plant species: Chapman's rhododendron and chaffseed. No critical habitat for any of these species was found within the project's study area.

There are species that are not federally listed as protected but that are protected by the State of Florida. While some of these species have known or possible occurrences in the project vicinity, none of these species were observed, nor was evidence of their presence observed, by biologists in their field investigations.

Wetlands — Biologists have identified the location of each distinct wetland area that could be affected by the proposed roadway. These wetlands have been analyzed to determine their level



Gum Swamp is an important wetland in the study area. Pictured is a view from the footpath over the north-south drainage canal across Gum Swamp, east of Capital Circle, facing north.

important wetlands in the study area is Gum Swamp, which is located at the northern end of the project. Another significant wetland area is Cascade Lake.

Water Quality — A Water Quality Impact Evaluation has been performed to identify the extent of the project drainage area, the amount of paved or otherwise impervious surfaces in this area, all locations where surface water empties into larger water bodies, and potential large sources of water pollution. As a result of



Pictured is a ditch and drainage structure near Cascade Drive and Capital Circle Southwest. The view is facing north.

this investigation, it was found that the drainage area surrounding the project is 85 acres in size and that 30 percent of this area is impervious to water. Currently, large potential sources of pollution in the project vicinity include stormwater runoff from the roadway and adjacent commercial properties. Surface water receptors are Gum Swamp and the Cascade Chain of Lakes, both of which ultimately drain into Lake Munson. Design of the ultimate project alignment will incorporate improvements to enhance water quality.

Cultural Resources — Archaeologists and architectural historians have conducted field work and other research to locate and identify any prehistoric sites or historic buildings (50 years of age or older) in or near the project limits. It has been determined that there are no significant prehistoric or historic sites along the length of the project.

Noise Impacts — In developing roadway projects, analysis is conducted to determine if the proposed project would cause sig-

nificant increases in noise levels at sites where frequent human use occurs and where a lowered noise level would be of benefit. Examples include residences, churches, schools, parks, libraries, hospitals, etc.

As a result of the analysis conducted, it has been determined that for each of the project's alternative design concepts there are four sites that could be affected by increased noise levels. Once a preferred alternative is selected (later in the study), a detailed analysis will be performed for each potential noise impacted site. A Noise Barrier Analysis will be performed, if necessary, to determine the feasibility of constructing noise walls to abate the noise impact.

Air Quality Impacts — Like noise impacts, an analysis is conducted to determine the effect the project might have on air quality. The initial analysis is an Air Quality Carbon Monoxide Screening Test. Florida Department of Transportation criteria state that if the worst-case intersection passes this screening test, then no further analysis is necessary and it is concluded that the project would have no negative effect on air quality. If the screening test fails, further analysis is necessary to determine if there is any impact on air quality.

For the Capital Circle NW/SW Expanded PD&E Study, the intersection at Blountstown Highway (SR 20) was chosen for air quality analysis. Four locations at this intersection were analyzed: Texaco, Circle K, Inland Sun Stop, and Burger King. As a result of the analysis, it was determined that none of the locations would experience carbon monoxide concentrations that would equal or exceed the National Ambient Air Quality Standards and, therefore, that the project would not have a significant impact on air quality.



An analysis of how the Capital Circle improvements would affect air quality has been conducted. As a result, it was determined the the project would not have a significant affect on air quality.

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The findings summarized in the preceding paragraphs are documented in the study's various technical reports. The conclusions contained in these reports will be updated as necessary, once all comments made at the upcoming public information meeting have been reviewed.

For More Information...

The above descriptions are brief summaries of the detailed work that has been conducted to date for the Capital Circle

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