



US 301 (SR 35) PD&E Study

CR 470 E to State Road 44 in Sumter County, FL

Public Involvement Plan

FDOT Office

District Five

Authors

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The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) pursuant to 23 U.S.C. §327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 14, 2016 and executed by the Federal Highway Administration and FDOT.

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PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PLAN

Project Name: State Road (SR) 35 (US 301)
Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study

Project Limits: From south of County Road (C) 470 West to SR 44

County/State: Sumter County, Florida

Financial Management Number: 430132-1-22-01

Federal Aid Project Number: 3113-117-P

In accordance with Part 1, Chapter 11 of the *Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Manual*, this Public Involvement Plan is submitted to the District Environmental Management Office (DEMO) for review and approval.

Submitted by: Jeffrey Arms
Project Manager

HDR
Name of Consulting Firm

Date: December 20, 2016

Approved by: _____
District Project Development Engineer

Date: _____

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Public involvement includes communicating to and receiving information from all interested persons, groups, agencies and government organizations regarding the development of transportation project. This Public Involvement Plan (PIP) documents the appropriate level of public involvement for this project, in compliance with the Florida Department of Transportation's (FDOT) *Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Manual, Part 1, Chapter 11, and Part 2, Chapter 9*; the FDOT *Public Involvement Handbook; Section 339.155, Florida Statutes; Executive Orders 11990 and 11988; Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA)*; and *23 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 771*.

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) pursuant to 23 U.S.C. §327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 14, 2016 and executed by the Federal Highway Administration and FDOT.

The results of the PIP will be supportive of the NEPA process and local needs.

Successful public involvement is based on building trust and understanding, as well as working to achieve public consensus on infrastructure investments. This requires a process that is characterized by technical competence, honesty and integrity, and good listening skills. These principles will create the framework for the public involvement that will occur for the SR 35 (US 301) PD&E Study.

1.0 Purpose of the Public Involvement Plan

Activities implemented as part of this PIP will allow people living and working within the project study area, and other interested parties, to contribute to the decision-making process and to influence the choices that are made regarding proposed transportation improvements for SR 35 (US 301). The goal of the PIP is to outline the project scope and schedule and the public involvement activities that will occur over this phase of the project. This will ensure that the general public, local communities, agencies and officials, and other interested parties understand the nature of the project and its benefits by providing an open, two-way line of communication, presenting project information in an easy-to-understand format, and by making project information easily accessible.

Gaining community consensus among the varied stakeholders in the study area is essential to achieve a successful project outcome. The keys to gaining community consensus are:

- Include project stakeholders early in the study process and include their input to define the initial alternatives;
- Develop a transparent process to screen the initial alternatives and determine which viable alternative(s) to further evaluate through the public involvement process and environmental analysis; and,
- Maintain regular communication with project stakeholders and provide multiple opportunities and methods for participating in the process and providing comments, in order to shape the selected alternative.

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Public involvement efforts will seek to actively involve key stakeholders; to listen to ideas and concerns; and to document and incorporate input received during the study process. The PIP will ensure that the study reflects the diverse values and needs of the communities this project is designed to benefit.

The fundamental objectives of the PIP are to ensure that the concerns and issues of those living and working within the study area, and those in close proximity who may be affected by the project, are identified; that stakeholders are given opportunities to assist in developing the alternatives, to review and comment on the findings of the alternatives analysis; and that stakeholder concerns are addressed in the analysis process. The PIP provides an outline for:

- Early and continuous involvement of stakeholders;
- Reasonable availability of technical and other project information;
- Collaborative input on alternative transportation improvements for the study area; and,
- Open access to the decision-making process.

2.0 Description of Proposed Improvement

Financial Project Number:	430132-1-22-01
Federal Aid Project Number:	3113-117-P
Project Limits:	From C-470 West to SR 44
Proposed Activity:	To study the widening of State Road (SR) 35 (US 301) from County Road (C) 470 West to SR 44, a distance of approximately 8 miles. This includes a possible truck route parallel to the east-west portion of SR 35 (US 301) that travels through the City of Coleman and evaluation of new interchange concepts at Florida’s Turnpike. All viable alternatives and alignments will be considered.
Class of Action:	The Class of Action is undetermined at this time. It is anticipated that an Environmental Assessment (EA) will be the level of environmental documentation required by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) for this project.

3.0 Project Location Map

The Project Location Map is shown on the following page.

Figure 3-1 | Project Location Map



4.0 Project Contact Information

For additional information regarding this project contact:

Jazlyn Heywood, P.E.
FDOT Project Manager
Florida Department of Transportation
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DeLand, Florida 32720-6834
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HDR
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Orlando, FL 32801
Phone: 407.420.4227
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Consultant Public Involvement Coordinator
Wade Trim
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Tampa, FL 33614
Phone: 813.882.4373
E-mail: bcornelius@wadetrim.com

5.0 Project Background

US 301 was established in 1932 as a replacement of a piece of US 17-1 and the whole of US 217 in South Carolina running north to Petersburg, Virginia. In the late 1940s, US 301 was extended all the way to Tampa, Florida. The final extension to the south was made in 1960. US 301 is a spur of US Route 1 running through the South Atlantic States. It currently runs 1,099 miles from Glasgow, Delaware to Sarasota, Florida. US 301 is the main local road through Sumter County, running southwest to northeast and merges with SR 35 in Belleview, Florida. It has become a popular route between Northeastern Florida and the Gulf Coast region. Sixty-two miles of SR 35 (US 301) has been designated by the State of Florida as a Florida Scenic Byway. A portion of the Florida Scenic Byway touches Sumterville at SR 35 (US 301) and C-470 West.

SR 35 (US 301) varies from a two-lane to a four-lane roadway through the state of Florida. Within the project limits SR 35 (US 301) begins as a two-lane undivided roadway at C-470 West with turn lanes at some intersections; makes a sharp 90° turn through the City of Coleman (Warm Springs Avenue) and then curves to the north at CR 468. It then continues north as an undivided roadway until it reaches the Florida's Turnpike interchange with a median. North of the interchange the roadway is a four-lane divided, rural typical section facility. It has a short urban curb and gutter section approaching SR 44.

The roadway is considered rural from C-470 West to just south of the City of Coleman with a short urban section and then a rural section begins and continues to north of Florida's Turnpike Interchange. North of the interchange it becomes a suburban to urban section to the end of the study limits, the roadway is a four-lane,

divided facility without curb and gutter and sidewalk. With the exception of an isolated section within Coleman, there are no sidewalks.

Existing right-of-way for the two-lane sections averages about 96 feet wide. The right-of-way narrows considerably where SR 35 (US 301) runs through the residential area of Coleman. Acceptable typical sections for a four-lane facility will be evaluated during the study to minimize the need to acquire additional right-of-way. Additional right-of-way will be required for off-site stormwater facilities throughout the project limits.

6.0 Project Need

The need for this project is based on capacity/travel demand from existing and planned development, and consistency with local long-range planning efforts. The need for increased capacity is based on projected growth in traffic volumes resulting primarily from approved or pending Developments of Regional Impact (DRIs) within one mile of the project corridor. The planned new developments include:

- Landstone LLC, located two miles east of Sumterville. This development is approved for 3,475 dwelling units and 175,000 square feet of retail. The main entrance to this development will be off of CR 470.
- Wildwood Springs development near Colman is approved for 3,000 dwelling units and 215,000 square feet of retail. The main entrance will be to the east of Coleman on CR 468.
- Southern Oaks development; Phase I is very small, with just enough activity necessary to establish and vest the project. The project is located near the City of Wildwood. The developer is requesting 2,685,000 square feet of office and 470,000 square feet of retail space as a part of the overall development. This project is being planned in conjunction with a proposed interchange on Florida's Turnpike.
- Florida Crossroads Industrial Activity Center (FCIAC), which is the area bounded by US 301, SR 44, Florida's Turnpike, and I-75, is a designated strategic economic area with the Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) for the Withlacoochee Region and identified by the Sumter County Comprehensive Plan. The FCIAC is primarily comprised of three significant properties; Monarch Ranch (2,800 acres), Lee Capital, LP (240 acres), and Sumter, LLC (180 acres). Within the FCIAC, over 20 million square feet of entitlements are established with the potential to generate over 20,000 jobs in the next 20 years. In addition, Monarch Ranch is identified as a potential future Intermodal Logistics Center (ILC).

The existing Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes range from 6,000 vehicles per day (vpd) north of CR 470 to 14,000 vpd north of Florida's Turnpike Interchange with SR 35 (US 301). The existing AADT provides an acceptable Level of Service (LOS) of C and B. Projected traffic volumes under build-out conditions of these DRIs will result in LOS from D to B. Projected volumes will range from 9,200 vpd north of CR 476 to 27,800 vpd north of Florida's Turnpike Interchange. The portion of US 301 that the preliminary traffic study projects to still have an acceptable LOS in future years is the portion between Florida's Turnpike and SR 44. This section of SR 35 (US 301) is already a four-lane divided facility but is a rural typical section. It is likely that no improvements other than the addition of pedestrian and bicycle facilities will be required within this segment of the project.

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Safety issues within the project limits include numerous crash incidents at the Florida’s Turnpike Interchange at SR 35 (US 301), including three fatalities in 2011/2012. The entrance to the Trinity Baptist Church at SR 35 (US 301)/CR 468 includes a driveway which crosses a thru-gore area. The T-intersection at C-470 West is very confusing to motorists. There is a lack of pedestrian and bicycle facilities throughout the project limits. There are segmented sidewalks through the City of Coleman; however, there are no designated bicycle facilities and bicyclists have been observed riding in the middle of the roadway. SR 35 (US 301) is also designated as a Sumter County evacuation route.

7.0 Project Goals

The purpose of this project is to increase the capacity of SR 35 (US 301), to respond to future travel demand, from the intersection of C-470 West in the unincorporated community of Sumterville to SR 44 in the City of Wildwood. The project will also improve safety and provide multi-modal facilities for pedestrian and bicyclists.

This study will evaluate the existing project corridor as well as a potential truck route for SR 35 (US 301) from CR 470 East to CR 468. The study will:

- Screen the study area using weighted Geographic Information System (GIS) layers;
- Identify the corridor width and design criteria;
- Identify and evaluate a potential new truck route near Coleman (up to three alternative corridors will be evaluated and developed);
- Eliminate the most sensitive areas from further consideration;
- Obtain local government, stakeholder and public input;
- Develop and evaluate alignments within the approved corridor(s);
- Evaluate the environmental socio-cultural effects, cultural resources, natural resources and wildlife and habitat impacts of the alignments;
- Develop strategies to mitigate for the environmental impacts; and,
- Prepare and submit an environmental document to FHWA for review and approval.

8.0 Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM)

The Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) programming screen for this project began on May 1, 2013. The Environmental Technical Advisory Team (ETAT) review was completed on June 15, 2013. The *Programming Screen Summary Report* was published on August 14, 2013 and the *Programming Screen Eliminated Alternatives Report* was published on May 2, 2014. The ETDM number for the project is 13955.

The formal Advance Notification (AN) for this project was submitted during the ETDM screening on April 13, 2014. The Summary Degree of Effect assigned by the FDOT on August 14, 2013, is moderate. The proposed project traverses Shady Brook and Jumper Creek, which are part of the Withlacoochee River System and designated Outstanding Florida Waters (OFW). These water bodies are afforded a high level of protection under Sections 62-4.242(2) and 62-302.700, F.A.C. It was recommended that the PD&E Study include an evaluation of existing stormwater treatment adequacy and details on the future stormwater treatment facilities. Under

Section 373.414(1), F.S., direct impacts to these water bodies and associated wetlands must be demonstrated to be “clearly in the public interest” as part of the Environmental Resource Permit (ERP) Program process.

9.0 Identification of Agencies and Affected Public

The PIP includes conducting a formal, comprehensive community inventory to develop a stakeholder database. A variety of resources will be used to compile the database to include key community members and leaders who can provide information about the community, local elected and appointed officials, local agencies, adjacent property owners, business owners and operators, chamber of commerce leaders, religious leaders and neighborhood associations. A detailed list of the elected and appointed officials is provided in Appendix A. This list will be updated to reflect changes in inter-agency collaboration or as additional public and agency stakeholders are identified throughout the project.

The following local, regional, state, or federal agencies having a concern in this project, due to jurisdictional review or expressed interest, have been identified and will be contacted directly by the FDOT through the AN process at the outset of the project in accordance with the PD&E Manual, Part 1, Chapter 3, Advance Notification. As other concerned public agencies are identified throughout the study, they will also be listed and contacted.

9.1 State

Florida Audubon Society

Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

Florida Department of Economic Opportunity

Florida Department of Environmental Protection – Branch Office

Florida Department of Environmental Protection – Central District Office

Florida Department of Environmental Protection – Division of Environmental Assessment
And Restoration, Bureau of Watershed Restoration

Florida Department of State, State Historic Preservation - Division of Historical Resources
Transportation Compliance and Review

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission – Northeast Regional Office

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission – Watershed Restoration Program

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission – Wildlife Biologist

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission – Conservation Planning Services

Florida Highway Patrol

Florida Inland Navigation District

Florida’s Turnpike Enterprise

Florida Department of Transportation – District Five

Florida Department of Transportation – Central Office

Florida Department of Health – Sumter County

9.2 Federal

Federal Highway Administration, Division Administrator
Federal Emergency Management Agency, Regional Director
Federal Aviation Administration, Airports District Office
Federal Railroad Administration, Office of Economic Analysis, Director
Federal Transit Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
National Park Service
National Register of Historic Places
National Resources Conservation Service
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Regulatory Branch, District Engineer
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Field Office
U.S. Coast Guard, Seventh District
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Regional Forester, Southern Region
U.S. Department of Agriculture, Transportation and Marketing Programs
U.S. Department of Commerce - National Marine Fisheries - Habitat Conservation Division
U.S. Department of Commerce - National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
 National Center for Environmental Health Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development - Regional Environmental Officer
U.S. Department of Interior - Bureau of Indian Affairs
U.S. Department of Interior - Bureau of Land Management, Eastern States Office
U.S. Department of Interior - National Park Service, Southeast Regional Office
U.S. Department of Interior - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Field Supervisor
U.S. Department of Interior - U.S. Geological Survey, Chief
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Regional IV Administrator
U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Ground Water Protection Branch, Region IV
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
U.S. Forestry Service

9.3 Regional

Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Committee (MPOAC)
Lake~Sumter Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)
 Board of Directors
 Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)
 Citizens Advisory Committee (CAC)
 Bicycle & Pedestrian Advisory Committee (BPAC)
 Transportation Disadvantaged Coordinating Board
East Central Florida Regional Planning Council
East Central Florida Economic Development Council
Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD)

9.4 Native American Tribes

Miccosukee Tribe of Indians
Muscogee (Creek) Nation
Poarch Band of Creek Indians of Alabama
Seminole Nation of Oklahoma
Seminole Tribe of Florida

9.5 Local Elected and Appointed Officials

9.5.1 Florida State Senators for Local Districts

Wilton Simpson District 18

9.5.2 Florida State Representatives for Local Districts

Marlene O'Toole District 33

9.5.3 Federal Delegation

Bill Nelson U.S. Senator
Marco Rubio U.S. Senator
Richard B. "Rich" Nugent U.S. House of Representatives, District 11

9.5.4 Sumter County

Al Butler	Commissioner, District 1
Doug Gilpin	Commissioner, District 2
Don Burgess	Commissioner, District 3
Gary Breeden	Commissioner, District 4
Don V. Hahnfeldt	Commissioner, District 5
William O. "Bill" Farmer, Jr.	County Sheriff
Leland Greek	Fire Chief
Bradley Arnold	County Administrator
Richard Baier	Director of Public Works
Angela Newland	Assistant Director of Engineering
Karl Holley	Development Services Director
Aimee Webb	Development Coordinator
Karen S. Krauss	Supervisor of Elections
Randy Mask	Tax Collector
Joey Hooten	Property Appraiser
Gloria R. Hayward	Clerk of Circuit Court and Comptroller
Richard A. "Rick" Shirley	Superintendent of Schools
Haydn L. Evans	School Board Chairman, District 1
Christine Norris	School Board Member, District 2
David A Williams	School Board Member, District 3
Kenneth P. Jones	School Board Vice Chairman, District 4
Kathie L. Joiner	School Board Member, District 5

9.5.5 Community of Sumterville

Sumterville is an unincorporated community in the jurisdiction of Sumter County.

9.5.6 City of Coleman

Richard Huff	Commissioner, District 1
Mary Bigham	Commissioner, District 2
Richard K. Lima	Commissioner, District 3
Charles Felton	Commissioner, District 4
Leland Clay Godwin	Commissioner, District 5
Milton Hill	Mayor
Ruth Busby	Public Service Director
Robert A. Bernhard	Chief of Police

9.5.7 City of Wildwood

Ed Wolf	Mayor, Group 1
Pamala Harrison-Bivins	Mayor Pro-Tem, Commissioner, Group 2
Robby Strickland	Commissioner, Group 3
Don C. Clark	Commissioner, Group 4
Julian Green	Commissioner, Group 5
Bill Ed Cannon	City Manager
Melanie Peavy	Development Services Director
E. W. Reeser	Chief of Police
Gene Kornegay	Public Works Director
Jason Wheeler	Parks & Recreation Coordinator

The following public interest groups, organizations or businesses having a direct or expressed interest in the project study have been identified and will be contacted by the Florida Department of Transportation.

American Cement Company	Outdoors Without Limits, Sumter County Chapter
Bedrock Resources Sumter Mine	Patrick's Equipment Leasing, LLC
Blue Ways Boat Landing	Phoenix House
Central Florida Transport, LLC	Sabal Trail Gas Transmission
Coleman City Hall	Shady Brook Baptist Church
Coleman First Assembly of God Church	Shady Brook Golf and RV Resort
Coleman United Methodist Church	Shell Oil Station
Community Auto Exchange	Solid Waste Management Facility
Cook Portable Warehouses	Sport Fishing Restoration Boat Ramp
CSX Railroad	Sumter County Chamber of Commerce
D&C Mart & BBQ	Sumter County Historical Society
Dixie Lime and Stone Company	Sumter County Preserve Our Environment Organization
Duke Energy	Sumter Electric Cooperative, Inc. (SECO)
Eagle Roofing Products FL, LLC	Sumterville Community Building
Eagles Lodge 4515, Sumterville	Sunoco Gas Station
Elks Lodge, Sumterville	Pat Treasures Thrift Shop
Federal Correctional Complex Coleman	Time Definitive Services Transp.
First Baptist Church of Sumterville	Trinity Baptist Church
Junction City Mining Company, Inc.	

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Lake Sumter State College
Lane Purcell Hospice House
Langley Health Services Complex
Masonic Lodge, Wildwood
Muddy Hammock Mud Park
O’Shuks! Oyster Bar and Grill

U.S. Post Office Sumterville
Uptown Family Child Care Center
Wildwood Auto Wrecker Service
Wildwood Market Place

10.0 Outreach Activities

The following techniques will be employed to notify the public of the proposed transportation improvements and to solicit public input into the project development process. The following media services encompass the SR 35 (US 301) study area and will be informed of public notices, news releases, public service announcements, and interviews associated with the study. Additional media contacts will be coordinated through the FDOT’s Public Information Office (PIO).

10.1 Newspapers

Florida Administrative Register
R.A. Gray Building
500 South Bronough Street
Tallahassee, Florida 32399-0250
850-245-6270

Sumter County Times / Sumter News Times
204 E. McCollum Avenue
Bushnell, Florida 33513
352-793-2161

10.2 Press Releases

Press Releases will be prepared in advance of the public meetings/hearing. Identification of contacts for press releases will be obtained from the FDOT media contacts list. Press releases will be coordinated with the FDOT District Five Public Information Officer and will be provided for release to FDOT at least 7 days prior to the public meeting or hearing.

In addition to working with the media, a number of different notification techniques will be used throughout the study. A brief description of these techniques is listed below.

10.3 Environmental Justice

Environmental Justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair treatment means that no group of people should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, governmental and commercial operations or policies

The purpose of Environmental Justice is to allow everyone the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards and equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work. Environmental Justice ensures that:

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1. All people have an opportunity to participate in decisions about activities that may affect their environment and/or health;
2. The public's contribution can influence the regulatory agency's decision;
3. Concerns of the local stakeholders will be considered in the decision making process; and
4. The decision makers seek out and facilitate the involvement of those who are potentially affected.

The City of Coleman has a predominantly African American population percentage above the state average with a median household income significantly below the state average. Public outreach will be conducted to ensure that all community residents have an opportunity to participate in the study process. Prior to public meetings, in addition to mailing notices to the property owner mailing list provided by the Sumter County Property Appraiser's Office, notices will be hand delivered to homes, apartments, and business along Warm Springs Avenue in Coleman. Notices will also be placed on bulletin boards at the Coleman City Hall, Coleman and Sumterville Public Libraries, and distributed to religious organizations, schools and local businesses.

There is a relatively low percentage of Spanish speaking residents in the project area. It is not anticipated that bilingual newsletters and meeting materials will need to be prepared. However, a Spanish translator will be available, if deemed necessary at public meetings, to listen to comments and concerns, answer questions, and provide project information.

10.4 Project Advisory Group

The Project Advisory Group (PAG) is for area residents and businesses to express their ideas and concerns related to the study and to provide the project team feedback and guidance on the development of the preferred alternative. The PAG is focused on the community of Coleman and the potential truck route. It is anticipated that the PAG will meet a total of two times throughout the process. Currently, the PAG meetings are planned for July 2015 and April 2016. These PAG meetings are scheduled prior to the Alternatives Public Meetings, scheduled for September 2016 and May 2017, and public hearing to obtain feedback from the PAG in preparation for the required public meetings and public hearings.

10.5 Newsletters

Informational and easy-to-understand newsletters will be distributed either by email, mail or hand delivered to elected and appointed officials, agencies, business owners/tenants, property owners/tenants and other interested persons or groups. Newsletters will also be posted on the project website. The newsletters will give a detailed overview of the project, project team contact information, notice of public meetings, updates on study activities, a summary of the findings, and the next steps of the project development.

It is anticipated that five (5) newsletters (1 for the PAG and 4 for the general public) will be distributed during the study process:

1. Project kickoff notification
2. Project Advisory Group meeting notification (PAG members only)
3. Alternatives public meeting notification
4. Intermediate project status

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5. Public hearing notification
6. At the end of the project with the results of the study

10.6 News Releases

News releases notifying the public of meetings and other study activities will be submitted to the FDOT Public Information Office no less than seven (7) days in advance. News releases will be sent to diverse media outlets to encourage broad participation in the study including:

- TV Stations
- Media Websites as Appropriate
- Existing Communication Networks
 - Local Business & Community Groups
 - Coleman Public Library
 - Coleman City Hall
 - Sumter County Community Voice Website
<http://www.sumtercountyfl.gov/communityvoice>
- Special Community Events as Appropriate
- Central Florida Roads Website - www.CFLroads.com

10.7 Public Notices/Display Ads

Public notices will consist of display advertisements published in the area newspaper with the largest circulation prior to each public meeting. Public notice will be placed in the *Florida Administrative Register*, published on the FDOT's public meeting notices website, and distributed to business owners along the corridor at least seven (7) days prior to each public meeting and the public hearing. Public notices will also be posted on the project website as well as in post offices along the corridors.

10.8 Public Announcements

In order to distribute study information to a broader segment of the community, fliers will be made available to local communities, cultural and civic groups, business organizations, religious groups, schools and others to publish in existing newsletters and on websites. Any such correspondence will first be reviewed and approved by the District's Public Information Office. A list of these groups and organizations is included in the mailing list in Appendix A at the end of this document. The mailing list will be updated throughout the study.

10.9 Direct Mail/Email List

Persons on the mailing lists will be contacted by either direct mail or email in order to obtain input throughout the project development process and/or to provide project information. The mailing list will be updated at regular intervals throughout the PD&E Study.

- Letters and/or newsletters will be mailed to those whose property lies, in whole or part, within 300 feet on either side of the centerline of each project alternative (Section 339.155 F.S.). This portion of the mailing list will be based on the County Property Appraiser's records.

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- Email notices will be sent to local elected and appointed public officials and agencies. For those who do not have an available email address, notices will be sent by U.S. Mail.
- Notices will be sent by mail and/or email to public and private groups, organizations, businesses and/or individuals who request to be placed on the mailing list for this project.

10.10 Project Website

A project website will be created using the FDOT templates and will be maintained throughout the PD&E Study. The site name will be simple and refer to the project name such as www.us301sumter.com. Information will include:

- Project information including the project schedule, project location map, meeting announcements.
- Following each public meeting, materials such as the presentation, display boards, handouts, etc., will be posted on the website.
- Will include contact information for the public involvement coordinator and the FDOT and consultant project managers for the study.
- Links will be provided to allow the public to submit comments and sign up to be added to the mailing list.
- Project documents and Reports (when finalized).

All materials to be uploaded on the website will first be provided to the FDOT for review and approval.

11.0 Public Involvement Strategies

11.1 Meeting Facilities Evaluation

Public meeting facilities will be convenient to the study area where people normally congregate and are easily accessible. Potential meeting sites will be visited and evaluated for suitability, including whether they are appropriate to the meeting purpose and format, and whether they comply with the requirements of the *Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)*.

Special considerations will also be given to ensure the facilities comply with the 2005 *Jessica Lunsford Act*. Public school facilities, grades K-12, will not be used for public meetings while students are present. School facilities may be used, however, with authorization from an appropriate school principal when no students are present. Alternate facilities to be considered include community centers, churches, colleges, universities, and private schools.

A summary of potential meeting sites will be prepared and presented to the FDOT for review and approval. A copy of the meeting facilities evaluation will be included in Appendix A at the end of this document. The following sites have been and utilized during the course for this study. This list will continue to be updated as the study progresses.

Trinity Baptist Church Fellowship Hall
3305 E C-468
Wildwood, Florida 34785

Coleman Community Hall
1204 North Church Street
Coleman, Florida 33521

11.2 Scheduled Public Meetings

Public information meetings or workshops will be conducted to present the project and the conceptual project alternatives being considered and to obtain comments from the general public.

11.2.1 Public Kick-off Meeting (12/9/2014)

A public kick-off meeting was conducted early in the project process at the Coleman Community Hall to make the local community aware of the study and to give the general public an opportunity to express their views concerning the proposed improvements. Notification to officials, agencies, property owners and interested persons, display advertisements and media releases were distributed as described above. A meeting summary was compiled following the meeting to include a copy of all meeting materials, presentation, public comments and responses.

11.2.2 Project Advisory Group Meetings

Project advisory group meetings meeting will be held to present the initial corridor alignments under consideration. These meetings will be promoted in the same manner as the public kick-off meeting, with the objective of obtaining stakeholder input on local issues and concerns regarding the proposed improvements.

11.2.3 Alternatives Public Meetings

Two alternatives public meetings will be held to present the alternatives which will be carried forward for further study and review. These meetings will be promoted in the same manner as the corridor public meeting, with the objective of obtaining public input on local issues and concerns regarding the proposed improvements. The first alternatives public meeting will highlight the truck route/US 301 realignment alternatives while also presenting a comparison of potential impacts for left or right side widening along the existing US 301. The second alternatives public meeting will focus on the selected truck route/US 301 realignment alternative, a best fit widening alignment along the existing US 301, and several interchange configurations to reconstruct the Florida's Turnpike and US 301 interchange.

11.2.4 Formal Public Hearing (see Section XII)

A formal public hearing will be held toward the end of the project, in accordance with Federal Regulations and State Law, to allow persons an opportunity to express their views concerning the location, conceptual design, and social, economic and environmental effects of the proposed improvements.

11.2.5 Unscheduled Public and Agency Meetings

In addition to the scheduled public meetings, meetings will be held with elected and appointed officials, agency representatives, special interest groups, and individuals, as needed and upon request and approval from the Department. Presentations will be given to the Lake~Sumter MPO and its committees as well as the Sumter County Commission, the City of Wildwood and the City of Coleman. It is anticipated that there will be up to 46 unscheduled meetings during the study.

- City of Wildwood (2)
- City of Coleman (4)

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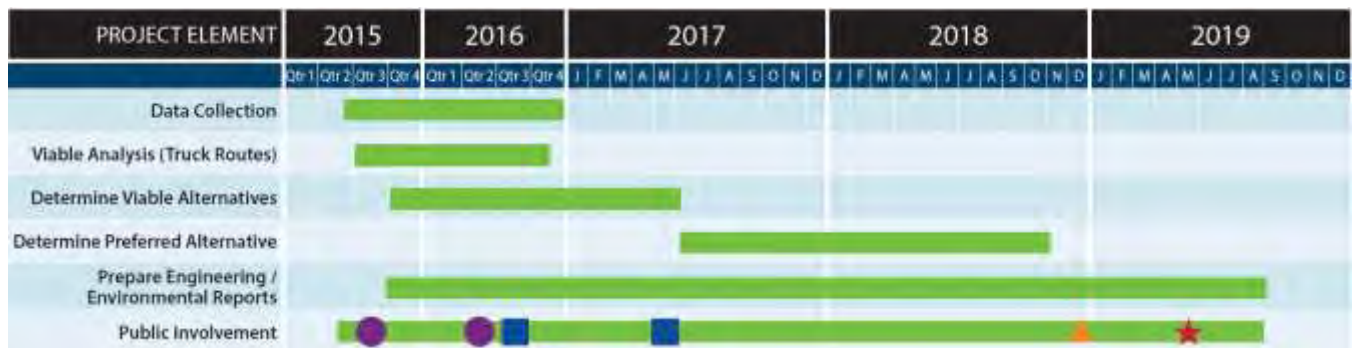
- Sumter County (4)
- Lake~Sumter MPO
 - Staff (1)
 - Board (3)
 - Transportation Technical Committee (3)
 - Citizens Advisory Committee (3)
 - Bicycle/Pedestrian Advisory Committee (3)
- Small Group Meetings/Local Events (9)
- C-470 Public Meeting (3)
- CR 514 Public Meeting (3)
- US 301 Scenic Byway (1)
- US 301 Transportation Alternatives Study (3)

11.2.6 Tracking Public Comments and Responses Tracking

A Public Comments and Responses log form will be used internally by the project team to document all questions, requests and concerns received from project stakeholders, including the general public outside the forum of public meetings. The log will also include comments received from the website link. The Comments and Responses log will list the name of the person making the comment, their name and organization, the date the comment was received, a summary of the comment, the date a response was given, and who provided the response. This log will be included in Appendix H at the end of this document.

12.0 Public Outreach Activity Schedule

The Project Schedule for this project is illustrated below, along with the key milestones for the PD&E Study efforts.



13.0 Public Hearing

A public hearing will be held in compliance with the FDOT's PD&E Manual, 23 CFR 771 and Section 339.155, FS and advertised in the newspaper listed under Public Advertisement.

13.1 Public Hearing Site

The public hearing will be held at an appropriate facility convenient to the study area and meeting all of the other aforementioned requirements. It is anticipated that the same sites used for the public meetings will be adequate for the public hearing.

13.2 Public Advertisement

A display advertisement will appear in the following newspapers twice. The first notice will be published 15 to 30 days prior to the hearing and the second ad will be published seven to 12 days prior to the public hearing. Advertisements will be sent to the local newspaper with a request for tear sheets and an affidavit of publication for each ad.

Sumter County Times / Sumter News Times
204 E. McCollum Avenue
Bushnell, Florida 33513
352-726-0902
Maryanne Naczi – Legal Department
mnaczi@chronicleonline.com

In addition, an announcement of all public meetings and the public hearing will be published in the *Florida Administrative Register* (FAR) at least seven (7) days prior to the public meeting/hearing. The announcement will be sent to the Florida Department of State online at: <https://www.flrules.org/agency/login.asp>.

13.3 Letters of Invitation

Letters will be mailed to all property owners as required by Section 339.155, F.S., and emailed or mailed to local elected and appointed officials, agencies, community groups and other interested parties notifying them of the public meeting. Notices also will be hand-delivered to targeted stakeholders as deemed necessary by the FDOT.

13.4 Hearing Preparation

Voice-over recordings, slide presentations and/or video presentations, project corridor aerial maps, graphics and handouts, as requested by the FDOT, will be prepared to supplement the oral public hearing presentation.

13.5 Documents for Public Review

Environmental and engineering reports to support the PD&E Study evaluation will be available for public review at least 21 calendar days prior to the public hearing and for 10 days following the hearing. The documents will be available for review on the project website and at the following locations:

Clark Maxwell, Jr. Library - Lake-Sumter State College
Dr. Richard Morrill, Reference Librarian
1405 CR 526-A
Sumterville, Florida 33585
(352) 568-3074

Villages Public Library at Pinellas Plaza
7375 Powell Road, Suite 100
Wildwood, Florida 34785
(352) 689-4580

Villages Public Library at Pinellas Plaza
7375 Powell Road, Suite 100
Wildwood, Florida 34785
(352) 689-4580

Coleman City Hall
3502 E. Warm Springs Avenue
Coleman, Florida 33521

Wildwood City Hall
100 N. Main Street
Wildwood, Florida 34785

13.6 Title VI and Related Statutes

Notification of the Title VI Program and Related Statutes, and the Relocation Assistance Program which complies with Title VIII, will be provided in the invitational letters (mailed and/or emailed), newsletters and/or handouts, and the presentation for the public hearing.

13.7 Americans with Disabilities Act Compliance

Notification of the FDOT's intent to comply with the *Americans with Disabilities Act* (ADA) will be provided in the public advertisements for the public hearing, in the invitational letters emailed and/or mailed, in newsletters and/or handouts, in the presentation, and by selection of a public meeting site that meets all ADA requirements.

13.8 Transcript

A verbatim transcript of the public hearing will be compiled to include written comments received at the hearing and written comments received within the established comment period following the hearing. All public hearing documentation (handouts, presentation, graphics, etc.), will be included with the transcript.

14.0 Public Hearing Follow-up

The following procedures will occur after the public hearing:

14.1 Responses

Responses to all written comments received as a result of the public hearing, and questions and comments not answered during the public hearing, will be made in writing.

14.2 Recommendation Notice

A legal notice announcing the FHWA's approval of the final document and recommendations will be published in the *Sumter County Times/Sumter News Times*. In addition, news items detailing the FDOT's recommendations to the FHWA will be provided to local media.

14.2.1 Location and Design Concept Acceptance

A legal notice announcing the FHWA's approval of the Location and Design Concept Acceptance will be published in the *Sumter County Times/Sumter News Times*.

14.3 Public Hearing Transcript Package

A Transcript Package will be produced and submitted following the public hearing. The Transcript Package will include a verbatim hearing transcript prepared by an approved court reporter, an errata sheet detailing any transcript discrepancies, a copy of all correspondence received by the FDOT within the established comment period as part of the public hearing Record (received up to 10 days after the hearing), responses to written comments, and affidavits of publication for newspaper ads advertising the hearing.

14.4 Public Involvement Plan Final Report

A *Public Involvement Plan Final Report* will be produced and submitted at the conclusion of the study, in a bound booklet with a cover, containing, at a minimum, all documentation regarding public participation performed throughout the study period. This report shall include all comments and responses received from the public, as well as records of coordination with local officials and agencies, and public meetings; the verbatim transcript from the public hearing; proof of publication of legal ads; public hearing certification; newsletters; sign-in sheets; comment forms; public meeting materials; presentations and displays; and all public correspondence. The *Public Involvement Plan Final Report* will be submitted with the final engineering documents.

15.0 Evaluation of the Public Involvement Plan

A public involvement evaluation process will be developed to assess the effectiveness of the public involvement efforts utilized throughout the PD&E Study. This process will include identification of the public involvement tools, establishment of performance measures, performance evaluations, and identification of improvement strategies.

16.0 Public Involvement During the Next Phases of the Project

It is anticipated that the Design Phase Project Manager will maintain the appropriate level of public involvement activities throughout the design process. These public involvement activities may include additional coordination meetings with local government and environmental permitting agencies, work sessions, small group meetings, and public meetings, as directed by the FDOT.