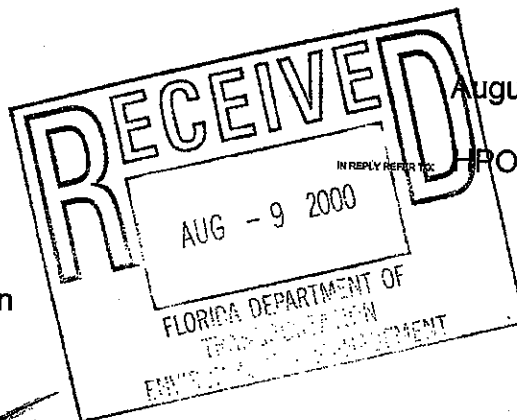




Federal Highway Administration
Florida Division
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Tallahassee, FL 32301
(850) 942-9650



August 4, 2000

PO-FL

Mr. Michael Snyder
District Secretary
Florida Department of Transportation
719 South Woodland Boulevard
DeLand, Florida 32720

Attention: Mr. Frederick R. Birnie

Dear Mr. Snyder:

Subject: Final Environmental Impact Statement Record of Decision
FHWA-FL-EIS-99-01-F
SR 423 (John Young Parkway) From SR 50 to SR 434
FAP No. XA-8785- (17)
Orange County

This is a Record of Decision (ROD) for the subject project as required by 40 CFR 1505.2. Location and design concept approval is hereby given for the Selected Alternative, New Alignment Alternative A.

Decision

The Selected Alternative, New Alignment Alternative A, consists of widening 3.5 miles of State Road 423 (John Young Parkway) from four to six lanes, from SR 50 (Colonial Drive) to SR 500 (U.S. 441/Orange Blossom Trail), and constructing an approximately 1.0 mile extension on a new alignment from SR 500 to SR 434 (Forest City Road) at SR 424 (Edgewater Drive). The New Alignment Alternative A (herein called "Alternative A") is also the Environmentally Preferred Alternative. Alternative A transitions to a short section parallel and adjacent to the Florida Central Rail Line, in the existing alignment of Carder Road, then curves east at Sidney Avenue to connect with SR 434. A detailed description of the Selected Alternative is presented in Section 3.6 of the Final Environmental Impact Statement (FEIS). The FEIS was adopted by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on May 11, 2000. The extension portion of the Selected Alternative is included in the Metroplan Orlando Transportation Improvement

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Program (TIP), for Fiscal Years 98/99 through 02/03, and the 2020 Orlando Urban Area Transportation Study (OUATS) 10C Cost Feasible Network. The widening portion of the Selected Alternative is not included in the TIP, but is proposed in the new priority list being developed for the 2001/02 through 2005/6 TIP, and is also included in the OUATS.

Background

The proposed John Young Parkway improvements and extension have been considered an integral component of the northwest Orange County transportation network for several years, as indicated in the John Young Parkway Preliminary Engineering Report and Design Traffic Report prepared for Orange County in 1994. The Metroplan Orlando TIP for FY 98/99 through 02/03 lists three transportation projects which will further enhance traffic movement within the region, without conflicting with this Decision. The TIP includes the six-laning of SR 423 from the Osceola County line to I-4, the four-laning of All American Boulevard from SR 500 to SR 434, and the four-laning of Kennedy Boulevard from SR 434 to Wymore Road. Construction for these three projects is scheduled for FY 02/03.

Alternatives Considered

Detailed alternative analyses were performed for SR 423 (John Young Parkway), from corridor selection to Build Alternative identification. The alternatives considered consist of: the No Build Alternative; the Transportation System Management (TSM) Alternative; the Improvement of Existing Facilities Alternative (herein called "Improvement Alternative"); and four New Alignment Alternatives.

The No Build Alternative is the evaluation of the existing transportation facilities in the project area, as they exist today, with no changes proposed. Although the No Build Alternative does not satisfy the purpose and need for the project, in terms of providing capacity relief to the existing local roadway network or in the completion of the final link in an otherwise continuous multilane arterial facility, it presented several advantages including no-cost expenditures or environmental impacts, and was considered a *viable* alternative through the public hearing phase.

The TSM Alternative incorporates improvements designed to maximize utilization and efficiency of the present transportation system, and includes components such as ride sharing, high-occupancy vehicle (HOV) lanes, reversible flow roadway systems, intersection improvements, turn lanes and transit. The TSM Alternative does not meet traffic demand sufficiently to satisfy the primary project purpose and need. Though

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travel demand may be reduced through a combination of certain TSM options, implementation of these measures alone is not expected to reduce peak hour travel demand sufficiently to relieve existing and projected traffic congestion through the study area. With this, and the fact that the TSM Alternative will not provide the continuous through route necessary to alleviate regional congestion, it was *eliminated* from further consideration as a stand alone alternative. Previously, TSM activities were implemented along other sections of the SR 423 corridor that included intersection improvements, separate turn lanes, traffic signal timing optimization, signing improvements, pavement marking improvements, and roadway lighting. Similar features and improvements will be considered and incorporated in the design of the selected alternative to improve traffic operations and provide continuity along the roadway corridor.

The Improvement Alternative considers the widening of SR 423 from SR 50 to SR 500 to six lanes, and the widening of Lee Road (also SR 423) to eight lanes and SR 424 to six lanes. The Improvement Alternative does not provide adequate capacity for project traffic volumes within the study area, and eight lane roadways are not consistent with FDOT policy. Because this Alternative was determined not to meet the primary project purpose and need, it was subsequently *eliminated* from further consideration.

The four New Alignment Alternatives provide a multilane (six lane) arterial on a new location from SR 500 to SR 434, in addition to the widening of SR 423 from SR 50 to SR 500 to six lanes, with grade separation at SR 500. All New Alignment Alternatives begin at the existing SR 500/Lake Breeze Drive intersection, turning to the north and bridging over SR 500 and the Florida Central Rail Line. The New Alignment Alternatives would satisfy the purpose and need for the project by improving roadway safety, enhancing local access, and providing a direct connection between SR 500 and SR 434, thus completing the final link in a continuous arterial between Longwood and Kissimmee. The New Alignment Alternatives were developed through an iterative process involving the identification, evaluation, and refinement of the roadway typical sections and alternative roadway alignments based on engineering and environmental analysis, as well as public input. The widening portion of SR 423 is proposed almost entirely within the existing road right-of-way. The improvements along the existing alignment will have minimal impacts to businesses and residences adjacent to the right-of-way. One business will be impacted on this portion of the project. The extension portion of SR 423 is on a new location, and impacts to the Trotwood Park residential area, Ben White Raceway, and commercial businesses were carefully considered.

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of splitting the neighborhood. It is the Environmentally Preferred Alternative when all pertinent social, economic, and environmental issues are considered.

Measures to Minimize Harm

Noise abatement measures -- Based upon preliminary design information, noise walls are likely to be determined reasonable and feasible along the southeast right-of-way line between Sydney and Exposition Avenues. The final decision will be made based on additional design and public involvement.

Wetland mitigation measures -- Based upon the wetland evaluation, there is no practicable alternative to avoid or minimize the 0.19 acres of wetlands. Mitigation of wetland impacts will be developed and implemented by the Water Management District.

Monitoring of Enforcement Program

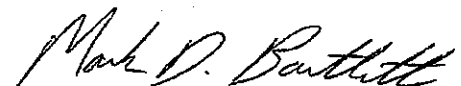
FDOT personnel have developed extensive operating procedures to ensure compliance with the various environmental commitments. The FDOT's Environmental Commitment Compliance Program is outlined in the attached January 15, 1982, memorandum from Mr. Paul N. Pappas, Secretary, FDOT.

Comments on Final EIS

As of the FEIS comment due date, FHWA received one comment from U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), dated June 23, 2000. EPA reiterated their request that the project include bicycle lane markings on the pavement. Subsequent coordination has led to the inclusion of pavement markings for this project. Therefore, the project will include bicycle lanes that shall be designated by striping, signing, and pavement markings according to American Association of State Highway Transportation Officials (AASHTO) and the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices (MUTCD) throughout the project.

A Legal Sufficiency Review has been obtained from FHWA's Legal Counsel for this ROD. Prior concurrence from the Washington Office is not required for this project.

Sincerely,



For: James E. St. John
Division Administrator