

**Summary of Comments and Questions Received from Alternatives Public
Workshop- In-Person and Virtual**

Burnt Store Road PD&E Study from Van Buren Parkway to Charlotte County Line

FPID 436928-1-22-01

General Project Questions and Comments

Question: Is there a way to replay the webinar?

Response: Yes, the webinar link was added to the project website.
<https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/recording/4099655973489766408>

Question: This project is needed and should be expedited. When will it be done?

Response: This PD&E Study is anticipated to be completed in Fall 2023, pending programming of funds for a future project phase(s). Once funding is programmed, Lee County will be able to develop a schedule for final design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction. Currently, Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) documents depict the project as cost-feasible in 2031-2035, but these schedules are subject to change.

Comment: I would prefer improvements to the existing roadway such as turn lanes and paved shoulders, instead of widening.

Response: While this improvement does address safety, it does not fully meet the purpose and need of this PD&E Study. This includes enhanced capacity for hurricane evacuation and accommodating future traffic volumes along the corridor and addressing associated delay related to the existing 2-lane typical section. Currently, the 18-mile length of Burnt Store Road either has 4-lanes or is under construction to provide 4 lanes. Most of the corridor also has accommodation to widen to 6 lanes, meaning that 2 additional travel lanes can be added within the median without significant construction effort or right-of-way impacts. Therefore, leaving this middle segment of Burnt Store Road a 2-lane typical section creates constrained conditions and a traffic “bottleneck”.

Comment: Please include acceleration lanes in the design.

Response: This comment will be discussed with Lee County. Various engineering factors need to be considered including additional right-of-way requirements.

Comment: The area needs more east-west roadway access - Caloosa Parkway and Sands Road are suggested as best options.

Response: Most of the project is within the limits of the City of Cape Coral. The City of Cape Coral Public Works Department, Transportation Division, oversees transportation planning and may be considering future projects for these city facilities. City

representatives are aware of this PD&E study. The project team will relay this comment to the appropriate city representatives.

Comment: Would like parking areas to be added for people to access the trail along Burnt Store Road.

Response: The project team will discuss this topic with Lee County.

Comment: Would like to see bold landscaping (and coordinate with Cape Coral zoning and landscape design plan) and/or a gateway feature like artwork.

Response: Landscaping and other aesthetic treatments will be addressed in later project phases by Lee County.

Comment: I am not in favor of bike lanes or walking paths along the road, they seem dangerous.

Response: The concept plans propose a shared-use path separated from the roadway by a paved roadway shoulder (approximately 7 feet), curb (approximately 2 feet) and a grassy strip (approximately 4 feet) on each side of the road. The offset from the outside travel lane will therefore be approximately 13 feet. Placement of the pathways at the right-of-way line was considered, but this location would block offsite water flows into the ditch or swale. Bicyclists may choose to ride within the paved roadway shoulder or on the path.

Comment: Proposed ponds are located within property and would prevent future development.

Response: Since the original roadway construction did not consider water treatment or storage, new stormwater pond sites are required for this project. The concept plans presented at the workshop showed pond alternatives. Within each basin, typically only 1 pond site is ultimately needed. The project team considered pond site alternatives within Lee County and City of Cape Coral properties, where feasible. However, even with the potential use of county or city properties for pond sites, right-of-way acquisition from private landowners may be required for stormwater management. When the project proceeds toward the design phase, a Pond Siting Analysis will be conducted in greater detail evaluating additional factors including the economic impacts of each pond.

Comment: There is no sidewalk shown in current plans. If sidewalks are proposed they should align with the Charlotte County sidewalks just north of the project.

Response: Lee County is not proposing sidewalks within their portion of the Burnt Store Road corridor, instead shared-use paths are depicted in the concept plans. These are 10-foot wide, as compared to a sidewalk which is typically 5-feet wide. Lee County prefers the wider paths since they accommodate more users, and a path is in alignment with the overall vision of Burnt Store Road and other area roads providing a trail network for bicyclist and pedestrian use. The Florida Shared Use Network (SUN) Trail system has also identified Burnt Store Road as a SUN Trail corridor. The portion of Burnt Store Road in Charlotte County is similarly part of the SUN Trail network.

Question: Are there any plans to make any changes to the bridge over Gator Slough? If so, will there be an additional lane? Will the bike lane and walking path remain?

Response: Since, the northbound bridge was recently constructed, no changes are anticipated. The southbound bridge is in need of replacement as part of this project. The new southbound bridge will be of a higher elevation, like the northbound bridge. Also, it will be wide enough to ultimately carry 6 lanes. A shared-use path will also be constructed on the outside travel lane (furthest from the median).

Question: Has high speed been monitored along Burnt Store Road?

Response: Lee County does not monitor vehicle speeds. We have received a few comments regarding high speeds and suggest citizens contact law enforcement to report and request patrol of the area. The proposed design, with raised curb and median and 11-foot travel lanes, as well as posted speeds of 50 mph, is anticipated to reduce speeding.

Comment: The project should be coordinated with Charlotte County and their residents because half of Vincent Avenue and all of Cape Horn Boulevard is maintained by Charlotte County.

Response: Charlotte County, the Charlotte County-Punta Gorda MPO, and the City of Cape Coral are aware of this PD&E study. The project team will continue to coordinate with them.

Question: Does the project enter Charlotte County?

Response: Yes. While the name of the project is “to the Charlotte County Line”, the limits do extend approximately 0.25-miles into Charlotte County to tie into the existing 4-lane typical section.

Comment: I would like to receive a full set of all associated documents and plans.

Response: All project materials available to date have been provided on the project website. As the study progresses toward a public hearing, additional project documents will be added to this website: <https://www.swflroads.com/project/436928-1>

Question: Is there general information on those that are anticipating a possible eminent domain petition and the timeline for the process?

Response: Lee County will be responsible for the right-of-way acquisition process. The schedule for subsequent project phases, including final design, right-of-way acquisition, and construction, are unknown at this time. However, in general, the process is as follows: You will get a notice explaining your rights and describing the property needed for the project; you will get an offer of not less than the estimate of your property's value; there is a negotiation phase (typically at least 30 days); if a price cannot be agreed upon, an eminent domain action would be filed and negotiation would then occur through litigation.

Question: What can I initiate for assessments on this project?

Response: Your name will be added to the project mailing list. Additional information on the project is also available at the project website:
<https://www.swflroads.com/project/436928-1>

General Access Management Questions and Comments

Comment: I am not in favor of the proposed widening of Burnt Store Road unless design changes are made related to access management, specifically, open medians to make north bound left turns from side streets.

Response: We understand from the comments received that many residents have questions and concerns about being able to make northbound left turn lanes. Please see the following comments and responses that address this more specifically. This topic will also be considered in discussions with Lee County.

Comment: Why are there so few locations along the project with opportunities to turn north bound from side roads?

Response: Lee County developed an access management plan for the entirety of Burnt Store Road within Lee County. It was approved and signed by the Lee County Board of County Commissioners (Board), becoming the Access Management Resolution, on September 15, 2020. The resolution identifies Burnt Store Road as a controlled access facility to which permanent access points are restricted to locations established and set by design guidelines and plans adopted by resolution of the Board. The purpose of this restriction is to improve the safety of the traveling public by controlling roadway median openings and access points.

Within the project limits, the access management resolution does not currently call for any full median openings. The project team proposed one full median opening which was warranted at NW 40th Lane, at the Cape Coral Fire Department #7 Station. The reason for this is to provide full access for emergency response to access Burnt Store Road. It is expected that as emergency vehicles, they would be using lights/sound when making a northbound left turn. However, given the high number of public comments received from the alternatives workshop, the team is currently working with Lee County DOT to determine if additional access management changes are warranted.

Lastly, several comments were received about the possibility of adding traffic signals at some intersections. This topic will also be considered in discussions with Lee County.

Question: Will FDOT implement a dedicated area that motorist can utilize to perform the U-turn safely regardless of driver skill level?

Response: If this question is asking about wider pavement areas at the U-turns, called bulb-outs, the project team is evaluating the need and placement.

Access Management Questions and Comments Related to Burnt Store Marina Area

Comment: I would like to see a left turn option from Burnt Store Marina.

Response: We received many comments from citizens requesting an opportunity to turn northbound from Burnt Store Marina. Some comments specifically identified either the Vincent Avenue or Islamorada Boulevard intersection or wanting this opportunity at both locations. The above response explains the background of why northbound left turn opportunities were not shown in the concept plans presented at the public workshop. However, this topic is under consideration with Lee County at this time.

Comment: Could an underpass or overpass be constructed at Burnt Store Marina, to allow for U-turns, like what was recently constructed south of Embers Parkway?

Response: An underpass for a side street would require a significant elevation change, which would not be feasible in this location due to the high water table that is present along the corridor. The difference with the new underpass at SW 1st Terrace is that it is located just south of an excavated canal and Burnt Store Road was previously elevated to span over that canal at the existing bridge location. An overpass for a side street would require significant right-of-way acquisition for a bridge footprint. Construction costs would also be significantly higher to account for a new bridge.

Comment: Can the project team use the Tropicana Parkway intersection at Burnt Store Road as an example for designing the Burnt Store Marina main entrance (Islamorada Boulevard)?

Response: At Tropicana Parkway, south of this project, the roadway right-of-way is very wide, consisting of approximately 350 feet. As a result, this intersection design was an option in that location.

At Islamorada Boulevard, Burnt Store Marina is located on the west side, and state-owned conservation lands are on the east side. The existing right-of-way within this project segment is 200 feet, and this full width is needed for the typical section design (i.e., travel lanes, wide median for an ultimate 6-lane section, multi-use paths, drainage swales, and side slopes and tie downs from raising the road). Therefore, a similar intersection design for Islamorada Boulevard to mirror the intersection design at Tropicana Parkway would require significant right-of-way acquisition. Our project team is striving to minimize right-

of-way acquisition needs when possible, particularly in the case of impacts to private residences and state-owned conservation lands.

Question: Is the right turn only at Burnt Store Marina permanent or just during construction?

Response: It is designed to be permanent. Please see earlier responses regarding why a northbound left turn lane was not depicted in the concept plans.

Comment: We would like right turn lanes into Vincent Avenue and Islamorada Boulevard from Burnt Store Road.

Response: Southbound right turn lanes into these side streets will be discussed further with Lee County and additional right-of-way needs will be evaluated.

Question: Why is Burnt Store Marina the only development that has to make a U-turn to head north on Burnt Store Road?

Response: Please refer to the earlier responses about the U-turn lanes and the approved Lee County Access Management Resolution. Note that the access management plan Charlotte County implemented along Burnt Store Road within Charlotte County limits is different from what Lee County has implemented.

Question: How will drivers, contractors, boats on trailers, large commercial trucks be able to drive north when leaving Burnt Store Marina?

Response: Passenger vehicles, smaller trucks, and vehicles towing boat trailers would be able to make the U-turns at any of the directional median openings. Large commercial trucks would need to use an alternate route.

Question: How will residents of Burnt Store Marina evacuate during an emergency if the proposed roadway prohibits a left turn to head straight north? Are residents supposed to head south then make a u-turn?

Response: This topic will also be considered in discussions with Lee County for potential access modifications.

Question: Would not constructing a left turn option at Burnt Store Marina defeat the purpose of safety onto Burnt Store Road from Burnt Store Marina?

Response: This topic will also be considered in discussions with Lee County for potential access modifications.

Question: How far south will residents leaving Burnt Store Marina have travel before making a U-turn to head north?

Response: In the current concept plans, drivers would have to travel approximately 720 feet south before making a U-turn per the Lee County Access Management Resolution.

Question: Has there been a study to determine how many people go north and south out of Vincent Avenue and Islamorada Boulevard?

Response: Yes, turning movement counts were collected at intersections along the project limits. At Vincent Avenue, AM peak hours recorded 66 vehicles per hour (vph) turning north and 23 vph turning south. These numbers for the PM peak hours are 53 vph turning north and 29 vph turning south.

At Islamorada Boulevard, peak AM hours showed 51 vph turning north and 45 vph turning south. These numbers for the PM peak hours are 41 vph turning north and 71 vph turning south.

Question: Would it be possible to cross Vincent Avenue from Burnt Store Marina into Burnt Store Lakes to head north?

Response: Given current road configurations and conditions, yes.

Question: Is there precedent for restricting traffic for such a large community as Burnt Store Marina?

Response: The Lee County access management resolution approved by the Lee County Board of County Commissioners dictates the access and the intersection configurations for this study. This topic will also be considered in discussions with Lee County.

Question: Why not incorporate a design similar to the exit from Heritage Landing or Peppercorn Road in Charlotte County for Burnt Store Marina?

Response: The intersection at Heritage Landing is a full median opening. Please refer to earlier responses with more details. The Lee County access management resolution approved by the Lee County Board of County Commissioners dictates the access and the intersection configurations for this study.

Question: Why not have simple entry and exit at Islamorada Boulevard, Vincent Avenue, and Charlie Road, similar to the Peppercorn Road and Burnt Store Road intersection?

Response: This question appears to be asking why there cannot be full median openings at these 3 intersections. Please see earlier responses about the approved Lee County Access Management Resolution.

Question: Will the proposed design hinder traffic to Burnt Store Marina?

Response: Traffic will continue to be able to access both Vincent Avenue and Islamorada Boulevard from both the north and south. Left hand turn lanes will be provided in the median to allow for northbound travel to these streets. The design depicted in the concept plans is as per the approved Lee County Access Management Resolution and is intended to allow for functional and safe turning movements in and out of all side streets including Burnt Store Marina. As per the current concept plans, traffic leaving these side streets

would be required to turn south. Northbound drivers would then need to access a U-turn lane option to then proceed north.

Question: Have the safety issues caused by the right turn from Burnt Store Marina then U-turn to head north on Burnt Store Road been considered? Are there any potential solutions?

Answer: Please refer to earlier responses. This design is safer than an open median since it reduces conflict points. However, the project team will further discuss access management with Lee County.

Question: Why is a traffic light, roundabout, or open median to include left turns not considered at Burnt Store Marina exit/entrance, at Islamorada Boulevard and/or Vincent Ave?

Response: Please refer to earlier responses. Regarding a roundabout, these were not considered because roundabouts are not acceptable for 6-lane roads. Since the road is anticipated to ultimately be widened to 6 lanes in the future, a roundabout construction would be “throw-away” in the ultimate condition.

Question: In the proposed design, is a right turn the only option for persons leaving Burnt Store Marina at Vincent Avenue and Islamorada Boulevard?

Response: Yes, as depicted in the concept plans. However, given the volume of public comments requesting an opportunity to make a northbound left turn from the marina, this topic will be discussed further with Lee County.

Question: Burnt Store Marina and Country Club would like to ask for a meeting with Lee County and FDOT staff to continue the discussion of the issues involved in the project that will affect the community.

Response: The design team will be happy to meet with your group after we apprise Lee County and the Lee MPO of the public workshop comments and next steps for the project.

Access Management Questions and Comments Related to Other Locations

Comment: I would like to see a full median opening at Durden Parkway. There is a motorcoach resort on the south side and pending development on the north side.

Response: The approved Access Management Resolution does not depict a full median opening at this location. The project team will discuss this comment with Lee County. There is a full median opening depicted in the concept plans at NW 40th Lane which appears can be accessed by motorcoaches from the Myriad development.

Comment: We need a right in at some point north of Durden Parkway off of Burnt Store Road.

Response: A southbound right turn lane into this side street will be discussed further with Lee County and additional right-of-way needs will be evaluated.

Comment: We will need access for the Hudson Creek development which is located to the east of Burnt Store Road.

Response: The project team is coordinating with Lee County to identify any access points that were approved. Approved access points will be included in the revised concept plans.

Comment: We need access into both parcels on the north and south side of Gator Slough Canal, where a development is pending.

Response: The concept plans depict an access to the north parcel across from the directional median opening at Kismet Parkway. Access to the south parcel from Burnt Store Road was not shown, but an access point is listed in the adopted Access Management Resolution for the corridor just north of NW 21st Street on the east side. This access will be added to the concept plans.

Comment: We need a median opening and access into the south and north portions of the parcel (minimally 1,200 linear feet in separation) located east of Charlee Road, where a development is pending.

Response: The concept plans depict an access to the north parcel across from the directional median opening at Charlee Road. Access to the south parcel from Burnt Store Road was not shown, but a driveway connection will be added to the concept plans since this connection was included in the Access Management Resolution.

Comment: Driveway/property access to Burnt Store Road is needed for properties including 4650 Burnt Store Road and 4970 Burnt Store Road that was not shown in the concept plans.

Response: These driveway connections will be shown in the revised concept plans.

Question: Will there be any turn lanes for left hand turns and will there be intersections at various streets, such as Delilah Drive?

Response: At this time the concept plans depict only one full median opening, which would allow for a north bound left turn lane, at NW 40th Lane. However, based on public feedback, the project team will further discuss access management concepts with Lee County.

Question: How will the southbound traffic gain entry to the parcel north of Gator Slough canal and east of Burnt Store Road?

Response: In the current concept plan, traffic would need to continue south past Gator Slough Canal, then use the existing U-turn lane to turn north.

Drainage and Environmental Comments and Questions

Comment: The proposed improvement should eliminate flooding and also runoff should be routed around Burnt Store Marina and not through it.

Response: The project team is aware of the existing roadway flooding issue. To address this issue, the elevation of the new road (vertical profile) will be raised approximately 3 feet from what it is today. The bridge culvert over Yucca Pen Creek and the multiple cross drains will be sized to ensure that the roadway design does not impede hydrological flows. Project documents will also reference the area-wide hydrological restoration goals of restoring more historic water flow patterns moving to the west, under Burnt Store Road. The proposed curb and gutter typical section will ensure water from the road will not travel through Burnt Store Marina but to the proper stormwater management pond.

Comment: Suggest increasing cross drain capacity, especially for Yucca Pen Creek, which has flashy hydrology.

Response: The design team is aware of the concern for cross drain capacity and the concern for roadway flooding. The cross drains will be sized to ensure the roadway will not impede hydraulic flows and to prevent future roadway overtopping. Increasing cross drain size typically is not accepted/permittable by the local governing agencies including the South Florida Water Management District due to the risk of creating a downstream flooding issue. Enlarging cross drains can only be proposed if it shown that no adverse effects occur downstream of the crossing. This topic will be described in the project documentation for more detailed review, analysis and consideration during subsequent project phases.

Comment: How will this project not impact wetlands and wildlife?

Response: As part of this study, an environmental document is being prepared that will address wetlands, species, and potential impacts. The document will be sent to various agencies such as the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, South Florida Water Management District, and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission for comment. While impacts to wetlands are anticipated, wetland mitigation will be determined and provided during final design and permitting. Potential impacts to protected wildlife and plants will be quantified and addressed with either species mitigation, construction commitments or implementation measures. The environmental document will be made available to the public after review by the agencies noted above and prior to the public hearing.

Comment: There is evidence of a bear within the state preserve and it would be beneficial to include a wildlife underpass.

Response: A true wildlife crossing, which is a structure purposely designed to provide a way for wildlife (typically large species) to cross under a road, is not warranted in this location. This is for several reasons including: no documented federal or state listed species (note that the Florida black bear, while a protected species, is not a listed species) that would benefit from the crossing; conservation lands are not present on both sides (they are skewed); and no agency request has been received based on their project review to consider a crossing. However, this does not preclude the consideration of a wildlife feature, which could be constructed at the Yucca Pen Creek bridge culvert. Currently that bridge culvert consists of 2 concrete boxes that are flooded during short periods of the year and contain moderate to low standing water during most of the year. They are 10 feet wide by 8 feet high. Since the bridge culvert will be replaced, it could be designed to provide passage opportunity for wildlife, specifically by providing a dry shelf. The height of the culvert may likely be sufficient for providing passage to not only small animals but also to larger species such as bears. This will be evaluated more fully during the final design phase of the project.

Comment: For the purposes of protecting wildlife, it would be preferred that no roadway lighting be added.

Response: Lee County is not planning on including roadway lighting for this project, and it is not depicted in the roadway concepts.

Question: Is there a plan for Lee County to build a higher wall barrier to help keep the traffic noise at bay, specifically at Burnt Store Marina?

Response: A noise study evaluation is being conducted for this project. If it is determined that noise abatement is determined to be feasible and reasonable, options will be considered to reduce noise levels. Modification to the wall could be an option considered.

Multi-part and Miscellaneous Questions and Comments

Comment: Lee DOT and FDOT should reconsider the intersection design at Burnt Store Road and Tropicana Parkway.

Response: Tropicana Parkway is outside of the project limits, but we will relay this comment to Lee County DOT. Citizens also may visit <https://burntstorewidening.com> for the Lee County website for the Burnt Store Road widening to the south. There is a "contact us" option for public questions and comments on that website.

Comment: Suggested to shift the alignment to the east and utilize the preserve opposite Burnt Store Marina for the widening of the roadway so that when it eventually goes to 6 lanes the proposed roadway would not abut the marina.

Response: Alternative 1 shows a right-of-way take on the east side, within the state conservation lands. Alternative 2 shows no right-of-way take to either side of Burnt Store Road. The comment seems to be asking if the roadway alignment can be shifted to the east such that more right-of-way would be taken from the eastern property, and the edge of the southbound travel lane would not be closer to the Burnt Store Marina development than current conditions. Creating a shift in the alignment anywhere along the project requires approximately 1,500 feet before and after the location of the shift to transition with reverse curves to meet roadway design criteria. Creating shifts is therefore a complex geometric change that affects other properties along the corridor. The alignments shown in the concept plans have been optimized through several iterations in an effort to avoid impacts to Burnt Store Marina as well as other properties in the area.

Note that when the 4-lane condition is built to a 6-lane condition, the 2 additional travel lanes would be constructed in the median. New travel lanes would not be constructed closer to the marina.

Comment: Expansion considerations – Charlotte County North Development: 10,000 homes under development north of Burnt Store marina; Lee County South Development: Cape Coral is one of the fastest growing cities in SW Florida, 4,000+ residential and commercial properties under development in NW Cape Coral, Burnt Store Road is primary evacuation rout for Cape Coral and pine Island; traffic loads have increase significantly in the last few years; speeding is a chronic problem; limited law enforcement; no stop light at dangerous entrances to Burnt Store Marina; one traffic fatality at entrance; road structure is inadequate for current traffic loads/ heavy trucks; intersection of Vincent Avenue and Burnt Store Road is extremely dangerous; rainwater runoff is through Burnt Store Marina.

Response: The project team is aware of the pending development. Traffic growth rates are factored into the traffic analysis completed for the project. A 4-lane roadway will sufficiently address traffic volumes at design year 2045 based on traffic data and at a future date, Lee County can determine when widening to 6-lanes is appropriate. We have relayed comments about speeding to Lee County DOT but as this is an enforcement issue, citizens are encouraged to contact law enforcement. With the proposed design, consisting of raised curbs and posted speeds of 50 mph, speeding is expected to decrease. Please refer to earlier responses regarding stop lights. The roadway will be completely reconstructed, meaning that the existing pavement will not be salvaged, the footprint of the travel lanes will be shifted from where they are today, and the roadway will be reconstructed to raise the elevation of the road by approximately 3 feet to address flooding concerns. The proposed curb and gutter typical section will ensure water from the road will not travel through Burnt Store Marina but to the proper stormwater management pond.

Comment: I hope that this last segment of Burnt Store Road will be designed more like the segments in Charlotte County and not elsewhere in Lee County. The Lee County segments to the south did not account for high traffic volumes; deceleration lanes are too short; U-turn placement is ineffective; line of sight is limited at the bridges; stop signs at entry merge lanes should be yield signs; parking lot lighting was used instead of highway lighting; and no sound barriers or landscaping was included.

Response: The project team for the PD&E study of Van Buren Parkway to Charlotte County Line will relay these comments to Lee County DOT. Citizens may visit <https://burntstorewidening.com> for the Lee County website for the Burnt Store Road widening to the south. There is a “contact us” option for public questions and comments on that website.