



# State Road (S.R.) 70 Project Development & Environment (PD&E) Study

From Lonesome Island Road to the southern leg of County Road (C.R.) 721

Highlands County | Financial Project ID No. 449851-1

January 2026

**Project Information:** The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is conducting a Project Development & Environment (PD&E) study on State Road (S.R.) 70 from Lonesome Island Road to the southern leg of County Road (C.R.) 721 in Highlands County. The intent of the project is to improve traffic safety conditions on S.R. 70, maintain important east-west connectivity within the regional transportation network, and accommodate freight activity in the area. The study will evaluate the effects of widening of S.R. 70 from a 2-lane undivided roadway to a 4-lane divided roadway.

**About the Project:** The proposed improvements include widening S.R. 70 from a two-lane, undivided roadway with 10-foot travel lanes and 4-foot paved outside shoulders to a four-lane, divided facility with 12-foot travel lanes and 5-foot paved outside shoulders separated by a 40-foot grass median. The improvements also include constructing a 12-foot shared use path along the south side of the roadway and replacing the bridges over the Harney Pond Canal and the Indian Prairie Canal.

The project will also realign a portion of S.R. 70. Beginning just west of the S.R. 70/C.R. 721 intersection, the corridor will be shifted to the south and a new intersection will be constructed.

**Project Documents:** Project documents will be available for public viewing from January 27, 2026, through March 2, 2026, online [www.swflroads.com/project/449851-1](http://www.swflroads.com/project/449851-1) and in-person at the following locations:



**Lake Placid Memorial Library**  
205 W. Interlake Blvd.  
Lake Placid, FL 33852  
(863) 669-3705  
Tues: 10:30 a.m.-6:30 p.m.  
Wed-Sat: 9:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.  
Sun-Mon: Closed



**FDOT Heartland Operations Center**  
4722 Kenilworth Blvd.  
Sebring, FL 33870  
(863) 471-4848  
Mon-Fri: 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

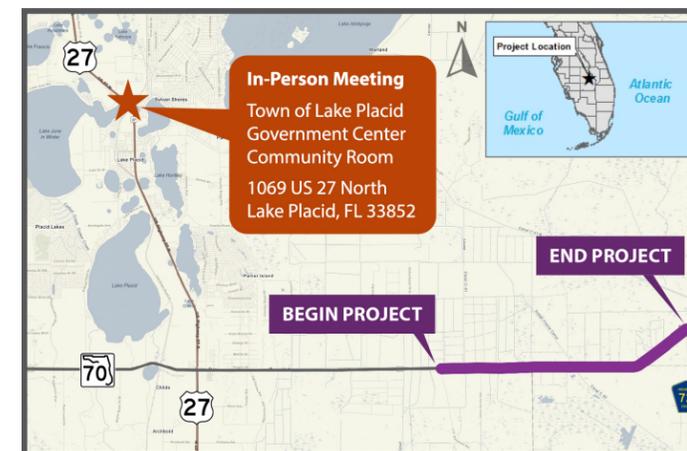
**Upcoming Public Hearing:** FDOT, District One, invites you to attend the public hearing for the S.R. 70 PD&E Study from Lonesome Island Road to the southern leg of C.R. 721. The hearing is being conducted to present the preferred alternative and the engineering and environmental analysis completed to date and to provide an opportunity for the public to offer feedback for the official hearing record.

You can participate in-person or live online. The information presented during either format will be the same and all attendees will have an opportunity of comment.

**In-Person Option: Tuesday, February 17, 2026**

Town of Lake Placid Government Center  
Community Room  
1069 US 27 North | Lake Placid, FL 33852  
5:30 –6:00 p.m. Open House  
6:00 p.m. Formal presentation and comment period

The project team will be available for discussion and displays will be available to review beginning at 5:30 p.m. and the formal presentation will begin at 6:00 p.m.



**Virtual Option: Thursday, February 19, 2026**

Register in advance:  
[attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2829603521931654495](https://attendee.gotowebinar.com/register/2829603521931654495)  
6:00 p.m. Formal presentation and comment period  
Please review the materials on the project webpage before attending the virtual event:  
[www.swflroads.com/project/449851-1](http://www.swflroads.com/project/449851-1)

Materials will be posted by February 10, 2026.

**S.R. 70 PD&E Study**  
From Lonesome Island Road to the southern leg of C.R. 721  
Kathern Cothern  
Florida Department of Transportation  
801 N. Broadway Avenue, MS 1-41  
Bartow, FL 33830



**WAYS TO COMMENT**  
FDOT encourages the public to provide comments on the SR 70 PD&E Study. Comments may be submitted verbally during the formal portion of each hearing event, or in writing in the following ways:

-  [www.swflroads.com/project/449851-1](http://www.swflroads.com/project/449851-1)
- ONLINE:** [Kathern Cothern, FDOT Project Manager](mailto:kathern.cothern@dot.state.fl.us)
-  **MAIL:** Florida Department of Transportation  
District One  
801 N. Broadway Avenue, MS 1-41  
Bartow, FL 33830
-  **EMAIL:** [kathern.cothern@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:kathern.cothern@dot.state.fl.us)

**SCAN HERE**



- Quick access to the Project Website
- View Project Documents, Maps, and Graphics
- Submit Comments

While comments will be accepted throughout the duration of the study, comments must be emailed or postmarked by March 2, 2026, to be included in the formal hearing record.

**CONTACT INFORMATION**

For additional information, visit the project website:  
[www.swflroads.com/project/449851-1](http://www.swflroads.com/project/449851-1)  
or contact:

**Kathern Cothern**  
FDOT Project Manager  
(863) 519-2331  
[kathern.cothern@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:kathern.cothern@dot.state.fl.us)

**PARA MATERIALES DEL PROYECTO EN ESPAÑOL**

Para ver este boletín y otros materiales del proyecto en español, visite el sitio web en <https://www.swflroads.com/project/449851-1> o contacte Sra. Karina Della Sera de la Oficina del Departamento de Transporte de Florida por teléfono al (863) 519-2750. También puede usar el correo electrónico: [karina.dellasera@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:karina.dellasera@dot.state.fl.us).

**PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE  
TYPICAL SECTIONS**

**Proposed Roadway Typical Sections:** Four typical sections are proposed within the project area. Each typical section includes four 12-foot travel lanes (two lanes in each direction) separated by a 40-foot grass median, 12-foot outside shoulders (5 feet paved), and a 12-foot shared-use path on the south side of the roadway. While the typical sections share common design elements, variations occur throughout the corridor to accommodate site-specific conditions, including roadway location within the proposed right-of-way, drainage features, border widths, and widening adjacent to existing canals.

The widening will occur on both sides of the existing roadway. From Lonesome Island Road to the Harney Pond Canal (C-41), the widening will occur to the south of the existing roadway.

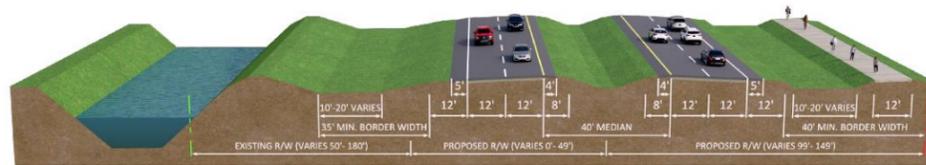
Moving east along the corridor, construction transitions to the north side of the existing roadway. The alignment remains on the north side until it crosses the Indian Prairie Canal (C-40).

East of the Indian Prairie Canal, the alignment shifts back to the south side of the roadway to avoid impacts to existing utilities, including a gas pipeline and an overhead electric transmission line.

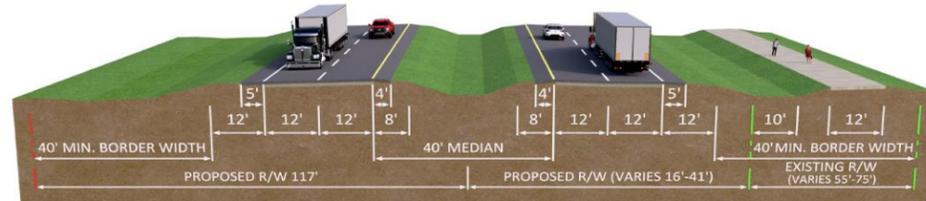
Starting approximately 1,000 feet west of C.R. 721, the S.R. 70 alignment will be shifted to the south, and a new S.R. 70/C.R. 721 intersection will be constructed. The bypassed portion of S.R. 70 will be closed to through traffic; however, access to the existing businesses will be maintained through access from C.R. 721.

**Harney Pond Canal Bridge Typical Section:** The new bridge over the Harney Pond Canal will include four 12-foot travel lanes (2 lanes in each direction), 10-foot outside shoulders, a 12-foot left turn lane on the south side, and a 12-foot shared use path on the south side.

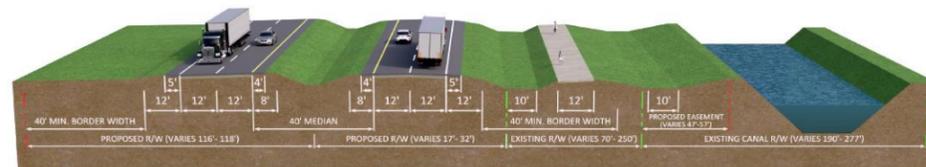
**Indian Prairie Canal Bridge Typical Section:** The new bridge over the Indian Prairie Canal will include four 12-foot travel lanes (2 lanes in each direction), 10-foot outside shoulders, and a 12-foot shared use path on the south side.



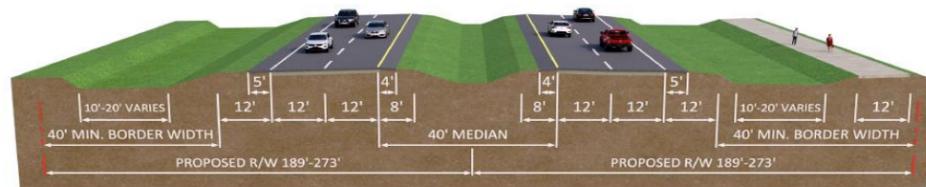
**S.R. 70 from Lonesome Island Road to Dosia Smith Road  
and from Indian Prairie Canal C-40 to West of C.R. 721  
(Facing East)**



**S.R. 70 from Dosia Smith Road to Harney Pond Canal C-41  
(Facing East)**



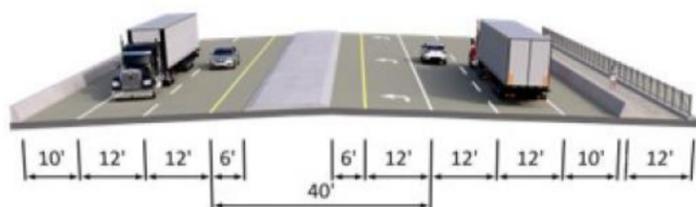
**S.R. 70 from Harney Pond Canal C-41 to Indian Prairie Canal C-40  
(Facing East)**



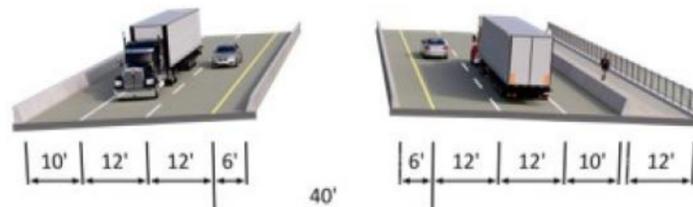
**S.R. 70 from West of C.R. 721 to Southern leg of C.R. 721  
(Facing East)**



**S.R. 70 Realignment and New C.R. 721 Intersection**



**S.R. 70 over Harney Pond Canal (C-41) Bridge Typical Section  
(Facing East)**



**S.R. 70 over Indian Prairie Canal (C-40) Bridge Typical Section  
(Facing East)**

**NO-BUILD ALTERNATIVE**

Under the No-Build Alternative, no improvements would be made, leaving the existing roadway in its current configuration. The No-Build Alternative will not incur additional costs or environmental impacts; however, it fails to fulfill the project's purpose and need or to meet the goals of the MPO's LRTP. The No-Build Alternative remained a viable alternative throughout the study process. The evaluation matrix below compares the predicted impacts of the Preferred Alternative to the No-Build Alternative.

S.R. 70 Study Evaluation Criteria	Preferred Alternative	No-Build Alternative
<b>Benefits</b>		
Improves Traffic Safety Conditions	✓	X
Improves Emergency Evacuation and Incident Response Times	✓	X
Maintains Important East-West Connection	✓	X
Accommodates Increasing Freight Activity	✓	X
<b>Potential Right of Way (ROW) Impacts</b>		
ROW to be Acquired for Roadway Improvements (Acres)	183.2	0
ROW to be Acquired for Off-Site Stormwater/Floodplain Compensation Sites (Acres)	148.5	0
Number of Parcels Impacted	7	0
Number of Utilities Impacted	6	0
Number of Potential Business Relocations	0	0
Number of Potential Residential Relocations	0	0
<b>Potential Environmental Effects</b>		
Potential Impacts to Threatened and Endangered Species	Medium	No Change
Direct Impacts to Wetlands and Other Surface Waters (acres)	85.7	No Change
Section 4(f)/Public Recreation and Conservation Lands Potentially Impacted	0	No Change
Number of Historic Sites Impacted	0	No Change
Number of Archaeological Sites Impacted	0	No Change
Number of Noise-sensitive Sites Impacted	0	No Change
Potential Contamination Sites (high/medium risk)	0 High/32 Med	No Change
Impacts to Farmland (acres)	225.7	No Change
Impacts to Floodplain (acres)	164.0	No Change
<b>Estimated Costs</b>		
Design	\$10,300,000	\$0
Right of Way Acquisition	\$6,000,000	\$0
Roadway Construction	\$102,500,000	\$0
Construction Engineering and Inspection (CEI)	\$10,300,000	\$0
Utility Relocation	\$11,926,000	\$0
Wetland Mitigation	\$1,000,000	\$0
Species Mitigation	\$168,000	\$0
<b>Preliminary Estimate of Total Costs</b>	<b>\$142,194,000</b>	<b>\$0</b>

**FDOT ADOPTED FIVE-YEAR WORK PROGRAM  
Fiscal Years (FY) 2025/26 to 2029/30**

WPI Seg.	Project Segment	Design	ROW	CST
449851-1	S.R. 70 from Lonesome Island Rd. to the southern leg of C.R. 721	Not Currently Funded	Not Currently Funded	Not Currently Funded

**RIGHT OF WAY (ROW) ACQUISITION**

The Preferred Alternative includes the construction of 6 new off-site stormwater management facilities (SMF), 6 new off-site floodplain compensation (FPC) sites, and 2 linear sites within the existing right of way. It is anticipated that approximately 331.7 acres of additional right of way (ROW) involving 7 parcels, will be required for the roadway widening and off-site SMF and FPC site construction.

**REAL ESTATE ACQUISITION PROCESS**

When a transportation project proposes the acquisition of private property, questions or concerns may arise. The FDOT has developed informational brochures to provide a better understanding of the ROW acquisition and relocation process. These brochures, along with other educational materials, are available online: [www.fdot.gov/rightofway/documents.shtm](http://www.fdot.gov/rightofway/documents.shtm).



For additional information, call the District ROW office: (863) 519-2406 or (800) 292-3368.