

YOUR Opinion Matters

Due to the environmentally-sensitive nature of the study area and public concerns of developing a potential new roadway, the county is committed to working with agencies and the public to identify and develop the most feasible routes, while being sensitive to public concerns. All citizens are encouraged to participate in the study and provide input. You can make your voices heard in several ways, including the following:

- **Attend the public workshop** on March 26.
- **E-mail us your comments** at claudineauclair@colliergov.net
- **Review project information** on Collier County's Web site at www.colliergov.net; go to **Your Government**; go to **Department - Transportation Planning**; go to **Corridor Study**; go to **Wilson Boulevard Extension/Benfield Road Corridor Study**.
- **Request a presentation** at your neighborhood or civic association meeting, or other scheduled event.

It is the county's goal to obtain as many comments and suggestions as possible so that the final recommendations are a result of our collective input.

SCHEDULE of Events

A simple project schedule of the major milestones is provided below:

Name	Date
Project Initiation	August 2007
Public Workshop #1	March 26, 2008
Newsletter #1	March 2008
Collect Existing Data	Through February 2008
Existing Conditions	Through April 2008
Develop and Evaluate Alternatives	April 2008 – January 2009
Public Workshop #2	February 2009
Public Hearing: Present Study Findings To BCC	April 2009

CONTACT Information

Collier County

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WILSON BOULEVARD extension BENFIELD ROAD corridor Study

Issue No.1

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PROJECT Description

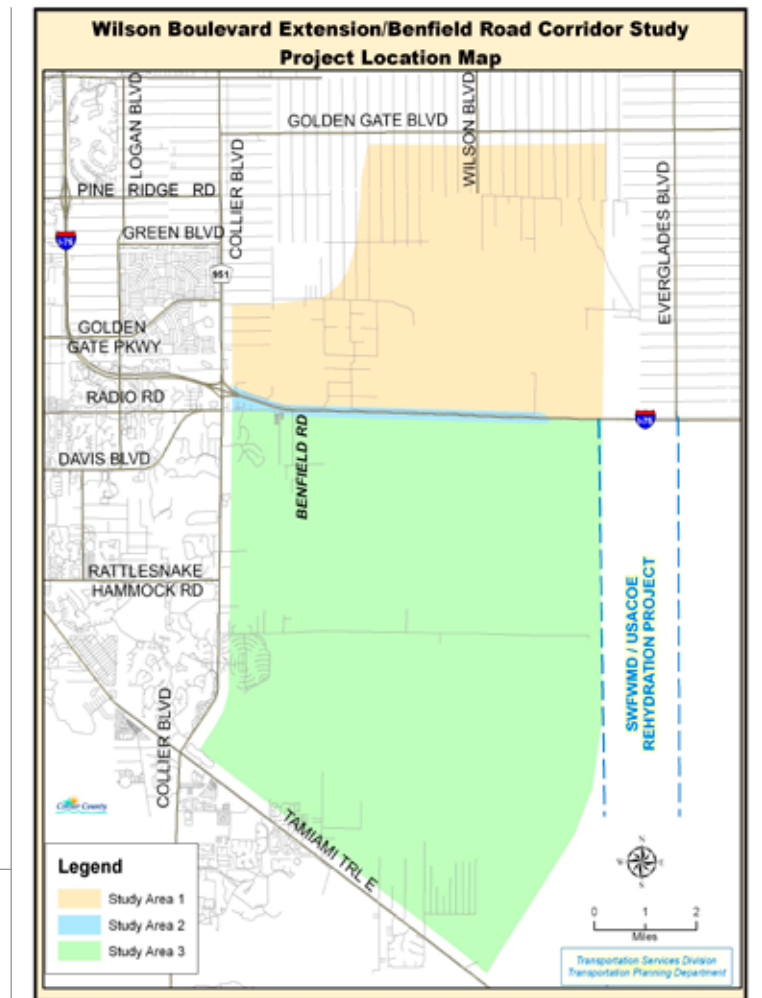
Collier County is in the process of preparing a study for a potential new north-south roadway located east of Collier Boulevard (CR 951). The area being studied is approximately 20 miles in length, bordered by US 41 to the south, CR 951 to the west, 18th Street S.E./Miller Boulevard to the east and Golden Gate Boulevard to the north, as shown on the map.

Specifically, the study will accomplish the following:

- Define the optimum location of Benfield Road (south of I-75) to connect to US 41;
- Extend Wilson Boulevard to Golden Gate Boulevard, Landfill Road and CR 951 via Utilities Drive or City Gate Boulevard North;
- Determine the most feasible crossing of I-75 that will connect the Wilson Boulevard Extension to Beck Boulevard and Benfield Road;
- Minimize any environmental, natural and social impacts during the development of conceptual roadway alignments.

PROJECT Goals and Objectives

- To maximize public outreach efforts and ensure that communication efforts will be maintained throughout the study process.
- To determine the existing and future transportation needs, concerns and how best to address these needs and concerns.
- To describe natural, physical, environmental, social, economic and other constraints within the study area that could have negative effects on any proposed roadway alignments.
- To develop and recommend alternative alignments that are consistent with the county's Growth Management and Long Range Transportation plans.
- To provide environmental, biological and historical information to serve as input for future county activities.
- To promote safe traffic and bicycle and pedestrian movements.



PUBLIC WORKSHOP MARCH 26, 2008

Collier County invites you to attend and participate in a public workshop on **Wednesday, March 26** (see location/time below). By attending the workshop, you will be provided an opportunity to learn about the project, understand the social, environmental and economic character of the area, ask questions and offer input to county staff.

St. Agnes Church
7775 Vanderbilt Beach Road (at CR 951)
Naples, Florida
5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

See **Workshop** page 2

WORKSHOP

The workshop will be in an open house format from 5:00-7:00 p.m., and citizens may attend at any time during the two hour timeframe of the workshop. There will be maps, displays and other project information on hand to provide you with a good understanding of the project. Citizens will also be provided a map of the study area and asked to “draw” a preferred alignment, given the constraints of the project area. County staff and consultant team members will be available to assist participants in identifying an alignment.

Share this news with your neighbors and friends and join us on March 26!

**St. Agnes Church
7775 Vanderbilt Beach Road
(at CR 951)
Naples, Florida
5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.**

Disclaimer:

If you are a person with a disability who needs any accommodation in order to participate in this proceeding, you are entitled, at no cost to you, to the provision of certain assistance. Please contact the Collier County Facilities Management Department located at 3301 East Tamiami Trail, Naples, Florida, 34112, 239.252.8380 at least two days prior to the meeting; assisted listening devices for the hearing impaired are available in the County Commissioners' Office.

Members of the Board of County Commissioners may be in attendance at this public workshop.



PROJECT Purpose and Need

The purpose of the study is to determine how we can improve traffic congestion in the study area by developing a series of alternative routes that will accommodate transportation needs. Over the past several years, the increase in traffic, development and population has made getting around in Collier County more challenging. This trend is expected to continue, particularly in eastern Collier County. This growth has put a strain on the overall transportation network and prompted a study of potential ways to improve north-south travel.

A new north-south roadway will also provide the following:

- Serve the evacuation needs of western Collier County residents

and significantly enhance overall safety, emergency access and traffic circulation.

- Create a better connection to CR 951 and I-75 from US 41 and the coastal areas of Collier County.
- Accommodate countywide population and employment growth, as well as play an important role in the inter-county roadway network by improving access to US 41 and I-75.
- Provide a travel option that may alleviate traffic congestion on CR 951/Collier Boulevard and Everglades Boulevard, two parallel county facilities.



INITIAL Issues and Concerns

At the beginning of the study, Collier County notified a host of environmental resource agencies about the project, its location and purpose and need, and requested their initial input, concerns and/or comments. Highlighted below is a sample of some responses:

- Approximately 40 archaeological sites within 100 feet of the project area, with three being burial sites. It is suggested that a Cultural Resources Survey be conducted to ascertain the impacts of the project to these sites (source: Miccosukee Tribe).
- The project is located within an area of Seminole historic and ancestral interest; therefore, it is important that the county coordinate with the tribal agency (source: Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Seminole Tribe of Florida).
- Preserve the integrity of North Belle Meade wetlands; incorporate Big Cypress Basin plans for diversion of a portion of Golden Gate Canada waters to North Belle Meade and



flow to Naples Bay (source: South Florida Water Management District/Big Cypress Basin).

- The study area is located within primary bear range (FWC Data 2004) of the Big Cypress Bear Population and provides habitat which is conducive for bears and bear movement within the Big Cypress bear population (source:

- Imperiled Species Management, Bear Management Program).
- Note that there are federally listed species and fish and wildlife habitat in the project study area (source: US Fish and Wildlife Service).
- Consider the following when conducting your study:
 - Panther Habitat/Red Cockaded Woodpecker (RCW) Habitat
 - Public Lands Conservation
 - Public Lands Acquisition boundaries
 - Picayune Strand Restoration
 - Wetland Impacts
 - Sending Lands(source: Florida Wildlife Federation).



Protecting Our Wildlife

As a consideration of this study, Collier County has entered into a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with the agencies listed below to recognize the value of wildlife crossings in reducing the number of roadway-related accidents to the Florida panther and other species, as well as to maintain/enable connectivity to wildlife populations.

Agencies involved in the MOA:

- Collier County
- Florida Department of Transportation
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- Big Cypress National Preserve
- US Fish and Wildlife Service, South Florida Ecological Service Office

The MOA focuses on two primary goals:

- Construct wildlife crossings within the project corridor, as needed.
- Protect lands adjacent to the crossings and install fencing to ensure its effectiveness.

The MOA is currently being reviewed by our County Attorney and will be signed by all parties.