

I-75 / Everglades Boulevard Interchange Justification Report

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

November 4, 2010

NOTES

PROJECT CONTACTS

Thank you for attending this public information meeting. Please let us know what you think by completing a comment form and submitting it in the tray provided at the comments table tonight, mailing it, or faxing it to the number on the form. We encourage you to stay involved. If you would like to share your comments at any time during this project, please contact either Debbie Armstrong, Project Manager or Michael Greene, Transportation Planning Manager at the following address:

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INTRODUCTION

The Collier County Transportation Planning Department of the Growth Management Division welcomes you to this public information meeting for the *I-75/Everglades Boulevard Interchange Justification Report (IJR)*. The purpose of this public meeting is to provide you with an update on the status of the IJR and give you the opportunity to submit comments on this important project. Collier County staff and members of the project team are available this evening to answer your questions.

The County is developing the IJR to evaluate the need for a new interchange on I-75/Alligator Alley between Collier Boulevard (CR 951) and SR 29. The project area is shown below. A new interchange along this 21-mile section of I-75 would improve mobility and interstate access for people living and working in eastern Collier County. Improved access to I-75 is especially critical during evacuation events such as hurricanes and brush fires. A new interchange in eastern Collier County would also help to alleviate some of the future traffic congestion projected to occur at the Collier Boulevard (CR 951) and Golden Gate Parkway interchanges.



IJR PROCESS

An IJR is a formal proposal that documents the need for and the operational impacts of a proposed new interchange on a limited access facility, such as I-75. The IJR for this project will address the following:

- ✓ The existing conditions of the study area roadway network (including traffic operations);
- ✓ Reasonable alternatives to a new interchange;
- ✓ Future year traffic operations on I-75 (both with and without a new interchange);
- ✓ Environmental fatal flaws;
- ✓ Level of public support; and
- ✓ Consistency with local, regional and state transportation plans.

Since I-75 is under the jurisdiction of the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), the IJR must be submitted to FHWA for its review and approval. It is FHWA's policy to maintain the safety and integrity of the Interstate Highway System to provide motorists with the highest level of service possible. Limiting access to only justified interchanges is critical to achieving this goal. The IJR for this project is being prepared in consultation with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District One.



Potential Interchange Locations (circled)

IJR PROCESS

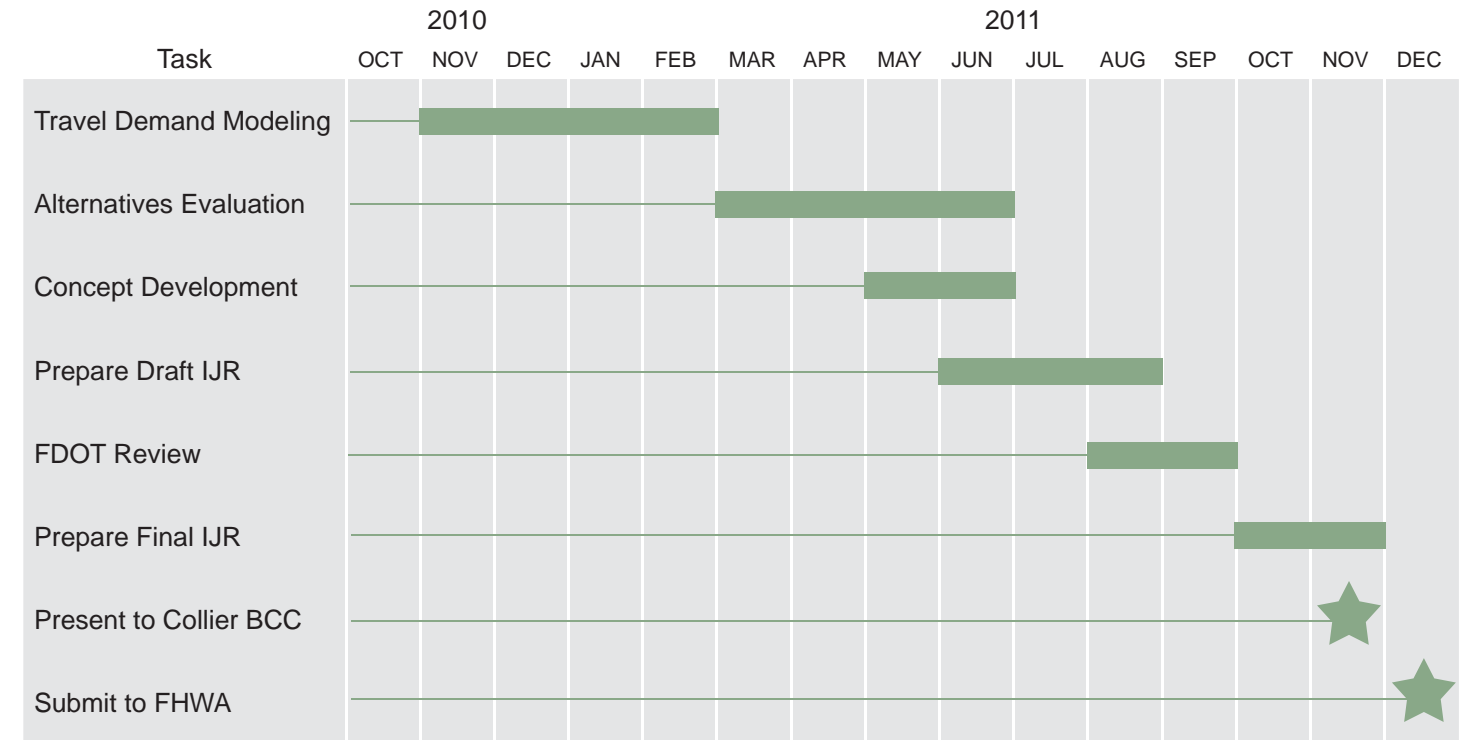
Preliminary concepts for a new interchange at either Everglades Boulevard or Desoto Boulevard were developed and these concepts are on display this evening for you to review and comment. Each concept was developed to provide safe access to and from I-75, while minimizing impacts to property owners and the area's sensitive natural resources. The County will continue to evaluate each concept based on engineering and environmental factors, similar to a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study, to determine the preferred interchange location and configuration. The interchange locations being evaluated are constrained to only those existing roads that are currently adjacent to I-75.



CUMULATIVE EFFECTS EVALUATION STUDY

At the County's request, FDOT began an Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) study for the proposed interchange. This process brings the regulatory agencies into the process early in order to allow them the opportunity to make comments or address any concerns before a future PD&E study would be conducted. During the ETDM process the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and the Florida Department of Environmental Protection raised significant environmental concerns regarding the potential environmental effects of the proposed interchange. A Cumulative Effects Evaluation (CEE) study was determined to be necessary to address these concerns and FDOT is currently conducting the CEE study. This study will identify and evaluate the potential environmental effects of the new interchange as it relates to past, present and future land use actions. This study must be successfully completed before a PD&E study can begin.

IJR SCHEDULE



PROJECT SCHEDULE FROM IJR TO CONSTRUCTION

The matrix below provides the estimated time frames by which each phase of the project will be completed. The time frames are dependent on funding for each phase. Currently, the design, right-of-way acquisition and construction phases are not funded.

PROJECT PHASE	ESTIMATED COMPLETION DATE
Interchange Justification Report	Winter 2011/2012
Cumulative Effects Evaluation	Winter 2011/2012
Project Development and Environment Study	Winter 2013/2014
Design	Summer 2016
Right-of-Way Acquisition	Summer 2017
Construction	Summer 2019

LIST OF ACRONYMS

BCC – Board of County Commissioners
 CEE – Cumulative Effects Evaluation
 ETDM – Efficient Transportation Decision Making
 FDOT – Florida Department of Transportation

FHWA – Federal Highway Administration
 IJR – Interchange Justification Report
 PD&E – Project Development and Environment