

PKA Members,

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) is conducting a Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) Study “to evaluate proposed transportation solutions” for Perdido Key Drive (SR 292). A public hearing on its “Draft Preliminary Engineering Report” and “Environmental Impact Report” will be held at the Perdido Bay United Methodist Church Activity Center, 13660 Innerarity Point Road, on Tuesday, June 7, 2016, from 5:30 to 6:30 PM, with the first half hour an open house and the remainder a formal presentation. Written notification of the study and meeting was given to residents who resided within 300 feet of Perdido Key Drive.

Copies of the two study documents (labeled ETDM #9207) are available for public review at the Perdido Key Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Center at 15500 Perdido Key Drive during the Center’s normal operating hours from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM, Monday through Friday, and 10 AM to 4:30 PM, Saturday and Sunday.

Highlights from a review of the study include:

1. To meet expectations of increased traffic flow by 2045, the study proposes that Perdido Key Drive be made a four lane road; because funding has not been allocated to do so, the proposal for four lanes is not being advanced.
2. The study acknowledges the Perdido Key Master Plan (which favors two lanes), but argues that the Master Plan considers only traffic counts from 2009 through 2014 and not the TPO “Travel Demand Model” used by FDOT. The FDOT model indicates that traffic capacity on Perdido Key Drive will be deficient by 2025 except between River Road and Johnson Beach Road and deficient for the entire corridor by 2045. The FDOT proposal, therefore, is not compatible with the Perdido Key Master Plan.
3. Between 2010 and 2045, the study states that Perdido Key’s population (interpreted here as full-time residents) is expected to grow from 1123 to 1428 (27.18%), employment to grow from 879 to 8891 (911.49%) – primarily service jobs, and dwelling units to increase from 3461 to 6868 (98.44%) – but still under the current dwelling cap of 7,150 residences.
4. The study includes discussion of the Theo Baars Bridge where, among several alternatives, it recommends construction of a new two lane bridge west of the current structure (which would stay in place) to meet increased traffic demands.
5. To accommodate restrictions imposed by the Perdido Key beach mouse, two portions of the four lane road through Perdido Key State Park would be on bridges 200 feet long and 6 feet high.
6. The study recommends construction of buffered bicycle lanes and curbed pedestrian sidewalks at varying locations and of varying widths along Perdido Key Drive. The paths from Gongora Drive to the Perdido Key State Park entrance have been funded and are being advanced – with design work to begin in early-2017. The portion of the bicycle and pedestrian paths from the Perdido Key State Park entrance to the Alabama state line has not been funded and is not being advanced.
7. The environmental impact of construction considered by the study covers several categories, such as water quality and fish habitat, and is either “None” or “Minimal;” the controversy expected from the study, however, is expected to be “Significant.”

8. There will likely be traffic signals on Perdido Key Drive at River Road, Johnson Beach Road, Gongora Drive, and CR 292A (Innerarity Pt. Road/Gulf Beach Highway intersection).
9. The preliminary estimated cost of the project, including the new bridge but not any Right-of-Way costs, is \$80,283,233; the cost of the bridge alone is \$29,096,033.

The intention of this brief summary of FDOT's current Perdido Key Drive study is to provide relevant information to our PKA members. We believe it is accurate, but apologize for any errors.

The study is a work in progress, so your inputs are important. Your views can be submitted to FDOT by June 17, 2016 by the means listed below. Note that submitted statements become a part of the public record:

By mail:

Peggy Kelley, FDOT Project Manager
1074 Highway 90
Chipley, FL 32428

By e-mail:

peggy.kelley@dot.state.fl.us

By phone:

Peggy Kelley at 888 638-0250

We hope to see you at the June 7, 2016 meeting.

Best wishes,

Perdido Key Board of Directors