


NORTH LAKE TRAIL PHASE 3 - CORRIDOR PLANNING STUDY

FPID # 436360-1

PROJECT VISIONING TEAM MEETING

 Tuesday, May 22, 2018
12:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.

 Astor Community Center
24148 Ann Street, Astor, FL 32102

I. Introduction

- Judy Pizzo welcomed attendees to the first Project Visioning Team (PVT) meeting for the North Lake Trail Phase 3 Corridor Planning Study.
- Attendees introduced themselves and their organizations to the PVT members.
- The PVT is a working meeting for stakeholders with public observation. Public comments were accepted solely through comment cards.
- The responsibilities and roles of the PVT were described for the members, including:
 - Attending three PVT meetings (including this meeting) which will be hosted as part of this study, and identify additional stakeholders that may need to be engaged in the study;
 - Provide input on the trail concepts and development;
 - Recommend alternatives to be advanced for further study; and
 - Share local knowledge and history.
- FDOT defines trails as “shared use paths [which] are paved facilities physically separated from motorized vehicular traffic by an open space or barrier, and are either within the highway right of way or an independent right of way. Shared use paths are used by bicyclists, pedestrians, skaters, runners and others” (FDOT Design Manual 2018 – Section 224).
 - Trails are typically 12 feet wide and are usually paved using asphalt.

II. Background/Project Goals

- The Lake County Trail Master Plan identifies an opportunity for a trail from Umatilla to Astor, which would increase connectivity for pedestrians throughout the County.
 - This trail opportunity was originally identified in 2002, and it has been included in subsequent updates to the Trail Master Plan (including the 2018 update in progress).
 - Lake County’s alignment for the trail is included in the 2008 and 2018 Trail Master Plans follows along the railroad right of way and CR 445A.
- The North Lake Trail is planned to span 19 miles from CR 450 (Bulldog Lane) to SR 40.

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- The goals of the project are to:
 - Determine the best method to meet current and future needs of users;
 - Establish a long-term plan to guide corridor evolution; and
 - Balance land use and transportation planning effectively.

III. Project Approach/Schedule

- The study team began collecting data and evaluating existing conditions in January 2018, and has developed an Existing Conditions Technical Memorandum.
- The next steps include:
 - Defining the purpose and need;
 - Alternatives development and preliminary engineering analysis
 - Alternatives analysis and evaluation; and
 - Development of corridor concept plans.
- Two additional PVT meetings and one public workshop will be held as the study progresses.


IV. Existing Conditions

- The PVT reviewed the existing conditions of the corridor, noting that right of way varies along SR 19, Railroad Grade Road, CR 445, and CR 445 A.
- An existing concrete path is located on the east side of SR 19 from CR 450 (Bulldog Lane) to E Collins Street.
- An abandoned rail corridor, currently owned by Lake County, is located along the east side of SR 19 from E Collins Street to Baker Road. At Baker Road, the rail corridor transitions to the west side of the road to East Altoona Road.
- One potential trail alignment, other than following SR 19 from Umatilla to SR 40, is to follow CR 445.
- The North Lake Trail Phase 3 would tie together with the existing trail network, including the Florida National Scenic Trail. Cyclists currently use the roadways to travel between destinations.

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- There are concerns that paving the existing dirt road may increase vehicle speeds.
- The PVT discussed the construction and maintenance of the future trail. Judy reiterated that part of the study process is to develop maintenance agreements for the trail.
- The National Forest indicated their preference for pervious surface roads, not pavement.
 - Lake~Sumter MPO clarified that the National Forest would not be approached as a potential agency to maintain the trail. The purpose of these discussions are to determine a preferred alignment that meets the needs of stakeholders, including the National Forest.
- Lake County is open to discussions to maintain the trail where it is located within unincorporated Lake County. Sections of the trail within City boundaries would be left to the City to maintain.
- The City of Umatilla is fully supportive of the trail, and is willing to maintain the trail within the City's limits.
- Existing conditions for the study area, existing trail network, traffic, crash density, future land use, social resources, wildlife and critical habitats, historic & archaeological sites, drainage basins, wetlands, and floodplains were reviewed by the PVT.
- PVT members were asked to send the Study Team information about any current or future sites of interest.
- The PVT discussed the potential of a pervious surface trail.
 - Historically FDOT utilizes impervious surfaces (asphalt) for paved trails, though other FDOT studies are exploring pervious surfaces.
 - Pervious surface trails have higher maintenance costs.
 - Trails must be ADA compliant.
- Trails are exempt from most permitting (if wetlands and surface waters are not impacted), though best practices are applied to the project. The North Lake Trail Study Team will work closely with the water management district to mitigate impacts.
- There will be two additional PVT meetings and a public workshop throughout the study process. Judy requested that PVT members share events dates/details that the Study Team should attend to discuss the project.
 - Astor - December Boat Parade

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- Astor – Harvest Festival
- Umatilla Chamber of Commerce Community Breakfast
- The PVT recommended expanding the demographics review to include Lakeview Terrace and the RV Park. The data currently represents households within 500 feet from the centerline of SR 19.
- Ocala National Forest is open to discussing a permit for a trail within their jurisdiction, and indicated that the trail design would need to be designed with several items in mind, including:
 - The need to maintain access and management between existing stands for timber trucks, with trucks crossing the trail.
 - Controlled burns within the forest
 - Safety for trail users and the surrounding environment, and the potential increase in dispersed camping
 - Wildlife
 - Historic & archaeological sites are located throughout the area.
 - Wetlands/floodplains/swales/drainage
 - Access points for the trail
- The North Lake Trail Phase 3 Corridor Planning Study will not propose trailhead or trail access locations. These locations would be left to the discretion of the maintaining agencies. The PVT discussed potential access points for the North Lake Trail.
 - The 2018 Lake County Trails Master Plan will include potential trailhead locations.
 - The City of Umatilla is building a trailhead within the city limits
 - Other locations suggested included: Wildcat Lake (existing parking facilities), joint use of the National Forest Ranger Station on SR 19, and the Butler Street Boat Ramp.
- This study will identify preliminary cultural resources, archaeological, and environmental concerns for the next phase, which will include an even more thorough environmental survey.
- The PVT discussed that the purpose and need should include discussions regarding ecotourism, connecting destinations within the area, and the many users and stakeholders that will ultimately incorporate the trail into their community.

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V. Project Branding

- Judy debuted several potential logos for North Lake Trail Phase 3 Trail Corridor Planning Study. The purpose of selecting a study logo is to begin to develop an identity for the project, but the preferred logo at this stage is not permanent and may be changed in the future.
 - Lake County is currently developing trail logo standards which will be included within the 2018 Trails Master Plan. Lake County is currently focusing on developing the South Lake Trail.
- PVT members voted on the logos and provided their comments for the selection of a final study logo.

VI. Attachments

- Agenda
- Project Visioning Team Presentation
- Study Logo Concept Sheet
- Sign-In Sheet