

SUMMARY
Alternative Concepts Public Meeting
June 8, 2023



North Lake Trail Phase 3 Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study
Financial Project Identification (FPID) Number: 441626-2

LOCATION First Baptist Church of Umatilla
550 Hatfield Drive
Umatilla, Florida 32784

TIME 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 pm.

IN-PERSON ATTENDEES 30 signed in participants
Fred Schneider, Lake County
George Gadiel, Lake County
Jeff Earhart, Lake County
Gallus Quigley, Lake County
Luis Diaz, Stantec
John Moore, Stantec
Beth Beam, Stantec
Matt Leonard, Stantec
Alexandra Holtkamp, Stantec
Jordan Metellus, Stantec
Laura Turner, Laura Turner Planning Services

VIRTUAL ATTENDEES 11 signed in participants
Veronica Paredes, Stantec (Host)

PREPARED BY Laura Turner **Date:** July 3, 2023

In August 2022, Lake County began the North Lake Trail Phase 3 Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study. The study limits extend from E. Altoona Road to State Road (SR) 40. This corridor is located in unincorporated Lake County, the Ocala National Forest, Altoona, and Astor Park. The project is approximately 16 miles in length.

The purpose of the PD&E Study is to evaluate potential impacts of the proposed trail alignments,, resulting in a preferred trail alignment. The study will consider engineering analysis, environmental review, and public input as these alternatives are evaluated. It is anticipated that this study will be completed by Spring 2024.

The Alternative Concepts Public Workshop was held on June 8, 2023 to share the trail concept segments with the public and receive feedback. This summary provides highlights of the notification process, information shared at the public workshop, comments received, and the next steps.

WORKSHOP NOTIFICATION

Several notification techniques were used to publicize the public meeting, which are summarized here.

<i>Sent Out or Posted</i>	<i>Notification Activity</i>
May 8, 2023	Newsletter Issue 2 posted to project website; other website sections updated (www.NorthLakeTrail.com)
May 10, 2023	Letter and Newsletter Issue 2 emailed to 5 Lake County BCC members
May 11, 2023	Letter and Newsletter Issue 2 emailed to 28 elected officials
May 12, 2023	Letter and Newsletter Issue 2 emailed to 88 agencies
May 12, 2023	Letter and Newsletter Issue 2 emailed to 50 stakeholders – 1 st class mail via USPS
May 15, 2023	Letter and Newsletter Issue 2 mailed to 473 property owners and 25 stakeholders – 1 st class mail for domestic and international addresses via USPS
May 23, 2023	Hand delivered 260 copies of Newsletter Issue 2 to gathering places within project corridor
May 26, 2023	Ad published in <i>Florida Administrative Register</i>
May 28, 2023	Newspaper display ad published in <i>Orlando Sentinel – Lake Extra</i>
May 31, 2023	Lake County PIO emailed news release to local media outlets
June 2, 2023	Alternative Concepts Public Workshop materials posted to project website (www.NorthLakeTrail.com)

AT THE WORKSHOP

In-Person Format

As individuals signed in, copies of the comment form and Newsletter Issue 2 were available. Individuals could share input by submitting a completed comment form at the meeting or by sending it to the study team afterwards through June 19, 2023. Throughout the evening, the following display boards were available for review.

- Welcome
- Title VI
- Lake County Trails Master Plan
- Purpose and Need

- Design Segment
- Project Development Process
- Project Alternative Segments Map
- Segment Evaluation Matrix
- Individuals Segment Boards (typical sections and trail location)
 - A: SR 19 – East Altoona Road to CR 445
 - B: SR 19 – CR 445 to CR 445A
 - C: SR 19 – CR 445A to SR 40
 - D: CR 445 – SR 19 to Spring Creek Bridge
 - E: CR 445 – Spring Creek Bridge to CR 445A to SR 40
 - F: CR 445A – SR 19 to SR 40
- Ways to Share Comments

Meeting information was posted to the project website (www.NorthLakeTrail.com) on June 2, 2023. In addition, Lake County provided the Lake County Priority Trails Master Plan (June 2022) display board.

Virtual Format

Veronica Paredes hosted the virtual format which began at 5:30 p.m. Individuals were required to register prior to joining the virtual workshop. Once signed in, the project presentation (same video shown at the in-person meeting) was shown and attendees had the opportunity to review project documents (via links to the project website) and to submit written comments (via Questions box in the control panel). The presentation was shown twice at 5:30 p.m. and at 6:15 p.m.

COMMENTS RECEIVED

This summary of comments includes those received from May 8, 2023 (beginning of the workshop notification process) through June 19, 2023 (end of the workshop comment period). During this time, 26 individuals submitted written comments. A few individuals submitted multiple written comments through separate submittals so there are more written comment submittals than the total of individuals. At the in-person workshop, 12 completed comment forms were submitted with no comments submitted during the virtual workshop. Before the workshop, four emails were submitted with 16 submitted after the workshop.

Following is a summary of the comments that were shared. The comments relate to the PD&E Study (from East Altoona Road to SR 40). Any comments about the design project (East Collins Street to East Altoona Road) are noted separately. Several individuals who submitted comments identified with the following advocacy groups: Friends of Lake County Trails, Friends of Lake Apopka, and the Lake-Eustis Chamber of Commerce.

The number in parenthesis indicates the number of times a comment was made. The number in parenthesis does not match the number of submitted comments as several different topics could be covered in one submittal.

General

- Supports the trail (1)
- If horses are using the trail, need a small parking lot north of Pittman for trailers (1)
- Don't forget the equestrian community when designing trails (1)

- Need to know who will be maintaining the trail (1)
- Need to know if existing utilities will be affected (1)
- Make trails a priority (1)

Add to Contact List

- Both segments (11)
- PD&E Study only (1)
- Design only (2)

Segments

- Prefers Segments A, D, and E due to connectivity (6)
- Use Segments A and E; building any of the other options is a waste of money (1)
- Prefers trail to go along CR 445A to Astor (2)
- Prefers the CR 445 route that goes by Alexander Springs (6)
 - More scenic than CR 445A and SR 19 (3)
 - Impacts less houses (1)
 - Has more shade (1)
 - Will not add to traffic at Alexander Springs (1)
 - Has room to separate the trail from the roadway (1)
- Segments B, C, and F
 - No connection to lower income census tract and local neighborhoods along CR 445, which impacts trail access and usage (6)
 - No direct connection to Astor and Astor Park, which affects trail access and usage (6)
 - No connections to: Alexander Springs, Spring Creek, Paisley Woods Bicycle Trail, Florida Trail & Trail Spur at Alexander Springs, and Wandering Wiregrass Trailhead (9)
 - Forces riders to be perilously close to SR 19, a high speed arterial corridor (6)
 - Don't use taxpayer funds for a trail that doesn't offer full access, expected trail experience, and projected use and economic impact to affected neighborhoods, communities, and local municipalities (1)
 - Need to add these factors to the evaluation matrix (1)
- SR 19 route is less desirable due to lots of semi-truck traffic (1)
- Don't go along CR 445 since it will add to traffic at Alexander Springs and impact wetlands (1)

Trail Elements

- Have as much sight and sound separation from roadway as possible (1)
- Need separation from roadway (2)
- Make sure that the pedestrian crossing at Dorrwood Lane is brief and doesn't slow down traffic; otherwise this could become a dangerous area (1)

Design Project

- Need to verify the ownership (City of Umatilla or other) of the railroad property (1)
- Concerns about right of way impacts to 2 structures on property (1)
- Concerns about sight lines (from property driveway) once guard rails are added (1)
- Utilize the old railroad bed and place the trail through the tree tunnel – located south of Keene Road and Lakeview Terrace (1)

Verbal Comments Shared During Hand Delivery of Newsletters (May 23, 2023)

- Need to consider accessibility to the trail (via ATV) for emergencies so EMTs can reach those on the trail who are in distress (1)
- Consider including location markers along the trail (similar to mile post numbers on interstates) to help identify trail location in case of emergencies (1)
- Great idea (1)
- Workshop information to be sent in eblasts (2)
 - Umatilla Chamber of Commerce (1)
 - Astor Chamber of Commerce (1)

NEXT STEPS

This public input has been shared with the project team for consideration as the trail alternatives are further studied and evaluated. The results of this work will be presented at the next public meeting to be held in Fall 2023.