

**RIDGE ROAD EXTENSION – PHASE I AND II
(FROM RIDGE ROAD / DECUBELLIS ROAD / MOON LAKE ROAD
INTERSECTION TO US 41)**

**ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS
PERMIT APPLICATION SAJ-2011-00551 (IP-TEH)**

PASCO COUNTY

ADDITIONAL ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

MAY 2011

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PASCO COUNTY
RIDGE ROAD EXTENSION
Permit Application SAJ-2011-00551 (IP-TEH)

May 2011

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This document has been prepared in support of the above ACOE permit application (Pasco County – Co Applicant with FDOT's Florida Turnpike Enterprise (FTE), to discharge fill in wetlands in order to construct an east-west roadway between Decubellis Road/Moon Lake Road and US 41, to be known as the Ridge Road Extension (RRE). This Alternatives Analysis includes a Project Purpose; an analysis of Need; identification of Additional Alternatives that could meet that Need; demonstration of Avoidance and Minimization for all alternatives, completion of a comparative Evaluation of the Alternatives; selection of a Preferred Alternative; and, finally, demonstration of additional Minimization for the selected alternative.

Project Need was established by utilizing the Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) - Long-Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) for Pasco County. Three tiers of LRTP analysis provided the basis for determining project need; the LRTP Demand Needs Plan, the LRTP Policy driven needs plan, and the Cost Affordable Plan, all of which focus on a 2035 forecast year. The Cost Affordable Plan was adopted by the MPO in December 2009. The LRTP Demand Needs Plan identified the need for 8 to 14 additional lanes in the planned east-west roadway network between U.S. 19 in West Pasco County and U.S. 41 in Central Pasco County. The LRTP Policy driven plan further identified specific projects that were recommended to help meet traffic demand and provide additional capacity towards the objective of meeting the adopted Level of Service (LOS) standards on the roadway network for which the LRTP is based. The Ridge Road Extension (RRE) is one of the projects identified in the LRTP and as such provides for additional roadway capacity that is needed. The LRTP Cost Affordable Plan further defines project feasibility based on projected transportation revenues. Projects like the RRE are selected as candidates in the Cost Affordable Plan on the basis of their importance and affordability in meeting the areas transportation needs.

The Project Purpose of the Ridge Road Extension is to provide additional capacity towards meeting adopted Level of Service Standards in terms of the total number of east-west travel

lanes that are needed to provide adequate traffic capacity towards meeting the adopted LOS on the roadway network within the RRE Study Area (U.S. 19 to U.S. 41). Additional lane capacity would also have the added benefit of improving evacuation times for the coastal population, who must travel east away from the coast and towards the County's established hurricane shelters and other places of safety.

In support of this Permit Application, and at the request of the ACOE, Pasco County has identified alternative improvements to the east-west network that could provide the additional travel lanes that would be needed, if the RRE project was not constructed. Four (4) additional alternatives (Alternatives 2 through 5) and a No Build Alternative, were identified to be evaluated and compared with seven (7) alternative alignments previously studied for the RRE. These build alternatives are shown on Map 1, Section 10.0. The twelve alternatives to be evaluated are as follows:

1. No Build.
2. Expansion of S.R. 52 from six lanes to ten lanes at grade.
3. Expansion of S.R. 52 from six lanes to ten lanes (six lanes at grade and four lanes elevated).
4. Expansion of S.R. 54 from six lanes to eight lanes at grade and the expansion of the proposed Tower Road from four lanes to six lanes at grade.
5. Expansion of S.R. 54 from six lanes to eight lanes at grade and the expansion of S.R. 52 from six lanes to eight lanes at grade.
6. Construction of the RRE at four lanes as proposed in the LRTP, Alignment 6A.
7. Construction of the RRE at four lanes as proposed in the LRTP, Alignment 6B.
8. Construction of the RRE at four lanes as proposed in the LRTP, Alignment 6C.
9. Construction of the RRE at four lanes as proposed in the LRTP, Alignment 6D.
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11. Construction of the RRE at four lanes as proposed in the LRTP, Alignment 6F.
12. Construction of the RRE at four lanes as proposed in the LRTP, Alignment 6G.

Before evaluating impacts associated with these alternatives, each went through a process of Avoidance and Minimization. Avoidance was accomplished by developing the alignment of the proposed improvement in order to avoid impacts to the community and the environment to the extent possible. Minimization was accomplished through the design of roadway cross-sections that minimized the impacts to the environment. Section 4.0 and Appendix E of the Alternatives Analysis provides details on this process.

The twelve alternatives were evaluated using data on Community Impacts (neighborhoods, homes, businesses, utilities, agricultural land, and archaeological/historic sites); Environmental Impacts (wetlands, wildlife, floodplains, air quality, and water quality); Travel Characteristics

(length of the alternative and network continuity); Safety (motorized vehicles/pedestrians/bicycles and hurricane evacuation); estimated costs of construction and right-of-way, and the availability of funding to construct the alternative. Table 10 of the Alternatives Analysis provides a summary of the data used to evaluate each alternative.

The data was utilized to score the alternatives for each of the above factors on a scale of 0 (most impacts) to 5 (least impacts). Scores for each alternative are presented on the Evaluation Matrix contained in Table 11. The Evaluation Matrix also indicates whether funding is available to construct each alternative.