

Coastal *Trail* PD&E Study

CAPITAL CITY TO THE SEA TRAILS



Capital City to the Sea Trails

U.S. 98 Corridor (Coastal Trail) Project Development and Environment Segments 1 – 3 Public Involvement Plan

- **Segment 1:** Boykin Road to Woodville Highway
- **Segment 2:** Ochlockonee Bay Trail (Surf Road) to Boykin Road
- **Segment 3:** Woodville Highway to C.R. 59

Prepared by: Kimley-Horn and Associates

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Tallahassee, Florida 32308

Prepared for: Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency

408 N. Adams Street, 4th Floor

Tallahassee, Florida 32301

The purpose of this Public Involvement Plan (PIP) is to assist in providing information to and obtaining input from concerned citizens, agencies, private groups (residential/business), and governmental entities. The overall goal of this plan is to help ensure that the study reflects the values and needs of the communities it is designed to benefit. A schedule of events and list of documentation exhibiting compliance with these procedures are included.

This program is in compliance with the Florida Department of Transportation's Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) Manual, Part 1, Chapter 11; Section 339.155, Florida Statutes; Executive Orders 11990 and 11988; Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act; and 23 Code of Federal Regulations 771.

Description of Project

Financial Project Number:

Federal Project Number:

Project Limits: C.R. 59 (Eastern Terminus) to Ochlockonee Bay Trail (Surf Road) (Western Terminus)

- Segment 1: Boykin Road to Woodville Highway
- Segment 2: Ochlockonee Bay Trail (Surf Road) to Boykin Road
- Segment 3: Woodville Highway to C.R. 59

Proposed Activity: PD&E Study

Class of Action: Type II/Categorical Exclusion

Project Contact Information

For additional information regarding this project contact:

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Tallahassee, FL 32301

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Email: jack.kostrzewa@talgov.com

Project Background

The Capital City to the Sea Trails (CC2ST) is envisioned to be a series of shared-use paths (paved multi-use trails) used to connect various areas from Capital Cascades Park in the City of Tallahassee and extend all the way to the Gulf Coast. The shared-use paths are intended to provide better mobility and connectivity for residents and visitors traveling throughout Leon and Wakulla counties. CC2ST is envisioned to include the existing Tallahassee-St. Marks Historic Railroad State Trail; the abandoned Georgia, Florida, & Alabama (GF&A) Railroad corridor; U.S. 98; and Ochlockonee Bay Trail, which is a funded project that is currently under construction.

The CC2ST Master Plan process began in March of 2013 and was adopted by the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA) in April 2014. The Master Plan will be implemented over multiple years based on project rankings and available funding.

The public, local agencies, and stakeholders were involved with the master planning process from the start of the project in March of 2014. Three public workshops in both Leon County and Wakulla County were held during the master plan process to gain valuable input on a range of topics. A Technical Advisory Committee was created and consisted of federal, state, and local agency representatives. A Trail Advocacy Group was also created and consisted of local stakeholders such as civic groups and local businesses. Informational kiosks, presentations at local events and organizations, a project survey, and outreach through social media were just a few other ways the public was notified and engaged throughout the project. A summary of the efforts is included in the final CC2ST Master Plan and the Public Involvement Supplementary document.

The guiding principles and evaluation criteria were developed through significant public involvement during the master planning process. The different segments of the CC2ST network were prioritized by the public and later applied to the evaluation criteria to determine the final rankings of the segments. The Coastal Trail was the highest ranked project. The corridor extends from C.R. 59 (eastern terminus) to Ochlockonee Bay Trail (Surf Road) (western terminus). Many attractions and important destinations are found along this corridor. These include but are not limited to:

- The existing Tallahassee-St. Marks Historic Railroad State Trail
- The City of St. Marks
- Panacea
- Connection to Tallahassee Community College Wakulla Environmental Institute
- The St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge
- Ochlockonee Bay Trail – once completed, the City of Sopchoppy will also be accessible
- Medart Recreation Park
- Medart Elementary School
- Wakulla Middle School
- Wakulla High School
- Tallahassee Community College Wakulla Environmental Institute

- Woolley Park in Panacea
- Newport Park
- Wildwood Golf Country Club
- Florida National Scenic Trail
- Wakulla River State Paddling Trail

The Project Development and Environment Study for the Coastal Trail began in May of 2014. This project is to develop a paved, shared-use path along the U.S. 98 (S.R. 30) corridor in Wakulla County. The overall U.S. 98 corridor has three distinct segments that each has independent utility and each will be reviewed and developed as coordinated, but independent segments. These three segments may have separate, standalone PD&E documentation completed for them.

Based upon feedback received through the master planning process, limited opposition and public concern is anticipated. There may be isolated incidents of opposition from property owners along the corridor. Additionally, there may be concern over right-of-way required in some areas.



Project Goals

The goals of the Coastal Trail PD&E Study are:

- To evaluate design alternatives for the shared-use path along U.S. 98 (S.R. 30). The consultant shall consider build and no build alternatives and alignments north and south of the existing U.S. 98 (S.R. 30) corridor.
- To assess and address potential effects on the natural, cultural, physical, historical, and sociocultural environments resulting from the development of the paved shared-use path.

Affected Communities

The communities that will be affected by the project include Panacea, Ochlockonee Bay, Medart, and Newport. Overall, Wakulla County will also be impacted, as Wakulla High School and Wakulla Middle School are located along this corridor along with Medart Elementary School.

These communities were involved with the development of the CC2ST Master Plan through workshops, stakeholder interviews, and presentations held and made throughout the County and will remain engaged throughout the PD&E process.

The following list is comprised of local, regional, state, and federal agencies that have a vested interest in this project due to the jurisdictional review or have previously expressed interest. These stakeholders will be contacted directly through the Advance Notification (AN) process at the outset of the project in accordance with the PD&E Manual, Part 1, Chapter 3, Advance Notification. Other stakeholders may be identified throughout the study; they will be added to the list and contacted.

STATE

- ❖ Florida Department of Agriculture – Division of Forestry
- ❖ Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) – Northwest District
- ❖ Florida Department of State, State Historic Preservation Division of Historical Resources
- ❖ Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FFWCC) – Office of Environmental Services
- ❖ Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FFWCC) – Office of Marine Fisheries
- ❖ Florida Department of Transportation – Central Environmental Management Office
- ❖ Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services – Division of Administration
- ❖ Florida Transportation Commission
- ❖ Northwest Florida Water Management District

FEDERAL

- ❖ Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), Division Administrator
- ❖ Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) – Regional Director
- ❖ Federal Aviation Administration – Airports District Office
- ❖ Federal Railroad Administration – Office of Railroad Development, Environment and Systems Planning
- ❖ National Center for Environmental Health
- ❖ National Center for Injury Prevention and Control
- ❖ National Center for Disease Control and Prevention
- ❖ National Register of Historic Places
- ❖ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) – Regulatory Branch, District Engineer
- ❖ U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACOE) – Field Office
- ❖ U.S. Coast Guard – 8th District
- ❖ U.S. Department of Agriculture – Marianna Area Office
- ❖ U.S. Department of Commerce – National Marine Fisheries Service, Habitat Conservation Division
- ❖ U.S. Department of Commerce – National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
- ❖ U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) – Regional Administrator, Region 4
- ❖ U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development – Regional Environmental Officer
- ❖ U.S. Department of the Interior – Bureau of Indian Affairs
- ❖ U.S. Department of the Interior – Bureau of Land Management Regional Office
- ❖ U.S. Department of the Interior – National Park Service, Southeast Region
- ❖ U.S. Department of the Interior – U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
- ❖ U.S. Department of the Interior – U.S. Geological Survey
- ❖ U.S. Forestry Service
- ❖ U.S. Department of Transportation – Federal Railroad Administration
- ❖ U.S. Department of Transportation – Federal Transit Administration
- ❖ U.S. Department of Health & Human Services – Center for Environmental Health and Injury Control

REGIONAL

- ❖ Chamber of Commerce, Regional Planning Council, Transportation Planning Organization, Water Management District, Big Bend Scenic Byway Corridor Management Entity, or others that may pertain to the project

NATIVE AMERICAN TRIBES:

- ❖ Miccosukee Tribe of Indians
- ❖ Muscogee (Creek) Nation
- ❖ Poarch Band of Creek Indians of Alabama
- ❖ Seminole Nation of Oklahoma
- ❖ Seminole Tribe of Florida
- ❖ Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians

LOCAL ELECTED AND APPOINTED OFFICIALS

Florida State Senators for Local Districts:

- ❖ Bill Montford, Senator District 3

Florida State Representatives for Local Districts:

- ❖ Alan B. Williams, Representative District 8

Federal Delegation:

- ❖ Rick Scott, State of Florida Governor
- ❖ Bill Nelson, U.S. Senator
- ❖ Marco Rubio, U.S. Senator
- ❖ Steve Southerland, U.S. Representative, District 2

Wakulla County

- ❖ Luis Serna, Wakulla County Planning Department
- ❖ David Edwards, Wakulla County Administrator
- ❖ Ralph Thomas, Commissioner, District 1
- ❖ Randy Merritt, Commissioner, District 2
- ❖ Howard Kessler, Commissioner, District 3

- ❖ Jerry Moore, Commissioner, District 4
- ❖ Richard Harden, Commissioner, District 5
- ❖ Michael Morgan, Wakulla County Fire Chief
- ❖ Cleve Fleming, Wakulla County Public Works
- ❖ Brent Pell, Wakulla County Public Works
- ❖ Charles W. Creel, Wakulla County Sheriff's Office
- ❖ Robert Pearce, Superintendent of Schools
- ❖ Brent X. Thurmond, Wakulla County Clerk of the Circuit Court
- ❖ Brent Pell – Wakulla County Public Works
- ❖ Bryan Roddenberry – Wakulla County Recreation Director

OTHER STAKEHOLDERS

- ❖ Allen Hobbs, City of St. Marks Mayor and Commissioner, District 3
- ❖ Zoe Mansfield, City Manager, City of St. Marks
- ❖ Bob Ballard, Tallahassee Community College Wakulla Environmental Institute
- ❖ James Burnette, St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge
- ❖ David Moody, St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge
- ❖ Jackie Lawhon – City of Sopchoppy
- ❖ Marcus Beard – Apalachicola National Forest
- ❖ Harold Shenk – Apalachicola National Forest
- ❖ Marti Miller – State Forest Service
- ❖ Paul Schraime – Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Outreach Activities

Newspapers:

- ❖ The Wakulla News, P.O. Box 307, Crawfordville, FL 32326

Television:

- ❖ WFSU – TV, 1600 Red Barbed Plaza, Tallahassee, FL 32310
- ❖ WCTV – TV, 1801 Halstead Boulevard, Tallahassee, Florida 32309

- ❖ WTXL – TV 1620 Commerce Boulevard, Midway, Florida 32343
- ❖ WTWC – TV, 8440 Deerlake South, Tallahassee, Florida 32312
- ❖ WTLH – TV, 950 Commerce Boulevard, Midway, Florida 32343

Radio:

- ❖ WFSU 88.9 FM, 1600 Red Barber Plaza, Tallahassee, Florida 32310
- ❖ WFLA 100.7 FM, 325-G John Knox Road, Tallahassee, Florida 32303

Letters/Newsletters — Invitational and informational letters and newsletters will be distributed to elected and appointed officials, property owners/tenants, business owners/operators, and interested parties as feasible. It is anticipated that newsletters will be distributed for this study prior to formal public outreach events, including the Public Hearing. Notices will be mailed via USPS to residences and businesses located directly along the project corridor. These newsletters will also be emailed to a master email list compiled of previous CC2ST public workshop attendees, and the CRTPA master email list. Wakulla County and the City of St. Marks will also be sent the electronic newsletters to email out to their master email lists. Letters and newsletters will also be posted to the CC2ST website.

News/Press Releases — News/press releases will be released for each public meeting and the public hearing.

Public Notices/Legal Display Ads — Public advertisement will consist of a legal display advertisement published in the Local Section of the Wakulla News twice prior to the public meeting/hearing, and may be placed once to announce Federal Location and Design Concept Acceptance (LDCA) at the end of the study.

Public Announcements — In order to distribute PD&E Study information, fliers will be made available to organizations such as neighborhood/civic groups, the FDOT, Wakulla County, and CRTPA to publish in existing newsletters and websites. The Wakulla County website, the City of St. Marks website, and the CC2ST project website will post announcements regarding the PD&E Study. Social media will also be utilized to advertise information about the PD&E Study. A Facebook page and a Twitter account were created for the CC2ST Master Planning process and will continue to promote the project and inform the public through the PD&E Study.

DIRECT MAIL LIST FOR PUBLIC HEARING — The following will be contacted by direct mail in order to obtain input throughout the project development process and/or in order to provide project information.

- ❖ Those whose property lies, in whole or part, within at least 300 feet on either side of the centerline of each project alternative (Section 339.155 FS), as well as other local citizens who may be impacted by the time the study begins for this project. This portion of the mailing list will be based on the County Property Appraiser’s tax rolls.

- ❖ Local elected and appointed public officials or individuals who request to be placed on the mailing list for this project.
- ❖ Public and private groups, organizations, agencies, or businesses that request to be placed on the mailing list for this project.

Presentations to Local Officials: Presentations will be given to local officials and agencies such as the CRTPA and Wakulla County Board of County Commissioners as needed during the course of the study and prior to the Public Hearing to apprise local officials of the project status, specific location and design concepts, and receive their comments.

Public Hearing: A formal Public Hearing, as required by Federal Regulations and State Law, will be held. The information for this hearing this will be advertised through the website, social media, emails, and County and City websites well in advance of the hearing. Wakulla County does not have public transportation but with enough notice, transportation services can be provided to those in need of a ride.

- ❖ Public Hearing Site
 - The Public Hearing will be held within Wakulla County at an appropriate facility.
- ❖ Public Hearing Advertisement:
 - The Public Hearing will be advertised on the project website, social media pages, CRTPA website, and the Wakulla County website
 - All advertisements to local newspapers will be sent via e-mail or by registered mail, return receipt requested.
 - In addition, an announcement of the Public Hearing will be published in the Florida Administrative Register at least 7 days prior to the public hearing. See Section 11-2.9.3.1 for instructions regarding FAR Ad submittal.
- ❖ Letters Of Invitation
 - Letters will be mailed to all property owners as required by Section 339.155, FS and to local elected and appointed government officials notifying them of the upcoming public hearing.
- ❖ Hearing Preparation
 - Tape recordings, slide presentations and/or video presentations, project corridor aerial maps, graphics, and handouts will be prepared to supplement the oral public hearing presentation.
- ❖ Transcript
 - A verbatim transcript of the Public Hearing will be compiled, to include written comments received at the hearing and written comments received within the established comment period after the hearing. All public hearing documentation (handouts, presentation, graphics, etc.) will be included with the transcript.
- ❖ Documents For Public Review
 - Environmental and engineering reports to support PD&E studies evaluation will be available for public review at least 21 calendar days prior to the public hearing date.
- ❖ Locations Of Documents For Public Review

- Public notice will be provided in the public hearing advertisement and by mailed invitational letters as to where the study documents are located for public review. Documents to be provided include the Type II and Preliminary Engineering Report and any documents that provide documentation for the alternatives analysis.
- Suggested public review sites are:
 - County Libraries
 - District Offices
 - County Offices/Facilities
 - City Offices/Facilities
 - Churches
- ❖ Title VI And Related Statutes
 - Notification for the public hearing will be provided in the presentation, by handout, signage, and through availability of personnel on the Title VI Program and the Relocation Assistance Program which complies with Title VIII.
- ❖ Americans With Disabilities Act Compliance
 - Notification of the CRTPA's intent to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act will be provided in the public advertisements for the public hearing, in invitational letters to property owners/tenants and local officials, in handout, and by selection of a public hearing site that meets all ADA requirements.
- ❖ Section 508 Compliance
 - Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act eliminates barriers in information technology and requires information on electronic devices to be accessible to persons with disabilities. The project website will be in compliance with Section 508.

All materials available online will be in compliance with Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act.

The following procedures will occur after the public hearing.

Responses — Responses to all formal written comments received as a result of the hearing and responses to questions and comments not answered at the public hearing will be made in writing.

Recommendation Notice — A legal notice announcing the Federal Highway Administration's (FHWA's) approval of the final document and recommendations will be published in the Wakulla News and on CRTPA's website. In addition, news items detailing the CRTPA's recommendations to FHWA will be provided to local media.

Public Hearing Transcript Package — A transcript package will be produced and submitted following the public hearing. The transcript package will include a verbatim hearing transcript prepared by an approved court reporter, an errata sheet detailing any transcript discrepancies, a copy of all correspondence received by the CRTPA as part of the public hearing record, and affidavits of publication for newspaper ads advertising the hearing.

EVALUATION OF THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM

A public involvement evaluation process will be developed to assess the effectiveness of the public involvement efforts utilized throughout the PD&E Study. This process will include identification of the public involvement tools, establishment of performance measures, performance evaluations, and identification of improvement strategies.

PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT DURING DESIGN

It is anticipated that the Design Project Manager will maintain the appropriate level of public involvement activities throughout the final design process. These public involvement activities may include additional coordination meetings with local government and environmental permitting agencies, work sessions, and small group meetings, as directed by FDOT.

Public Involvement Documentation

The public involvement efforts will be summarized in the Type II CE and the Preliminary Engineering Report.

Wakulla County Commissioners

Commissioner District 1

The Honorable Ralph Thomas, Vice-Chairman
3093 Crawfordville Highway
P.O. Box 1263
Crawfordville, FL 32327

Commissioner District 2

The Honorable Randy Merritt
3093 Crawfordville Highway
P.O. Box 1263
Crawfordville, FL 32327

Commissioner District 3

The Honorable Howard Kessler
3093 Crawfordville Highway
P.O. Box 1263
Crawfordville, FL 32327

Commissioner District 4

The Honorable Jerry Moore
3093 Crawfordville Highway
P.O. Box 1263
Crawfordville, FL 32327

Commissioner District 5

The Honorable Richard Harden, Chairman
3093 Crawfordville Highway
P.O. Box 1263
Crawfordville, FL 32327

City of St. Marks

Mayor and Commissioner District 3

The Honorable Allen Hobbs
788 Port Leon Drive
P.O. Box 296
St. Marks, FL 32355

Commissioner District 2

The Honorable Don Grimes
788 Port Leon Drive
P.O. Box 296
St. Marks, FL 32355

Commissioner District 2

The Honorable Don Grimes
788 Port Leon Drive
P.O. Box 296
St. Marks, FL 32355

Commissioner District 1 and Treasurer

The Honorable Charles Shields
788 Port Leon Drive
P.O. Box 296
St. Marks, FL 32355

Commissioner District 4

The Honorable Ray Stokes
788 Port Leon Drive
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St. Marks, FL 32355

Commissioner District 5

The Honorable Gail Gilman
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P.O. Box 296
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Local Agencies and Appointed Officials

Wakulla County

Wakulla County Administrator
Mr. David Edwards
3093 Crawfordville Highway
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Wakulla County Planning Department

Mr. Luis Serna
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Crawfordville, FL 32327

Wakulla County Fire Department

Mr. Michael Morgan
338 Trice Lane
Crawfordville, FL 32326

Wakulla County Sheriff's Office
Mr. Charles W. Creel
15 Oak Street
Crawfordville, FL 32327

Wakulla County Public Works
Mr. Cleve Fleming, Project Manager
340 Trice Lane
Crawfordville, FL 32327

Wakulla County Public Works
Mr. Brent Pell, Project Engineer
340 Trice Lane
Crawfordville, FL 32327

Wakulla County School District
Mr. Robert Pearce, Superintendent of Schools
69 Arran Road
Crawfordville, FL 32327

Wakulla County Clerk of Courts
Mr. Brent X. Thurmond
3056 Crawfordville Highway
Crawfordville, FL 32327

TCC Wakulla Environmental Institute
Mr. Bob Ballard
2932 Crawfordville Highway
Crawfordville, FL 32327

St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge
Mr. James Burnette, Refuge Manager
1255 Lighthouse Road
St. Marks, FL 32355

City of St. Marks

City Manager
Mrs. Zoe Mansfield
788 Port Leon Drive
P.O. Box 296
St. Marks, FL 32355