

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Northeast Gateway: Welaunee Boulevard PD&E Study

What is Phase 1 of the Northeast Gateway?

Phase 1 is to develop a four-lane Welaunee Boulevard from Fleischmann Road over I-10 and north to an intersection with a two-lane extension of Shamrock Street, east of Centerville Road.

What is Phase 2 of the Northeast Gateway?

Phase 2, which is not a part of this PD&E study and is unfunded at this time, is the continuation of a four-lane Welaunee Boulevard from the extension of Shamrock Street north to connect to Roberts Road, as well as a continuation of the Shamrock Street extension across Miccosukee Road to connect to Mahan Drive.

What is the Shamrock Street extension?

The Shamrock Street extension will be a two-lane roadway with one travel lane in each direction and will include bike lanes, a sidewalk, and a shared-use path. This typical section is intended to accommodate all corridor users.

What will the proposed Welaunee Greenway look like?

The proposed greenway will include a natural trail surface similar to what exists along the Miccosukee Canopy Road Greenway, which will allow the greenway to accommodate a wide variety of non-motorized user groups.

What will be the traffic impacts from the new facility?

A component of this PD&E study is a comprehensive future traffic analysis, which evaluates future traffic volumes out to the year 2045. Upon completion of the traffic analyses in Fall 2019, the results will be reviewed by the project team and made available to the public.

How will this project impact safety in the community?

The traffic analyses that will be conducted as part of this PD&E study will include safety and operational assessments of the study area roadways and intersections. Within these assessments, crash analyses will be conducted by utilizing data from the most recent 5-year period to identify existing and potential safety concerns.

What will be the environmental impacts from the new facility?

A major component of this PD&E study is to analyze the impacts of the new facility to both the natural and built environment. Should the analyses reveal any potential adverse impacts to the environment, additional coordination and evaluation will take place to avoid and/or mitigate any potential adverse effects.

Is this project “set in stone”?

Phase 1 of the Northeast Gateway project was approved by County and City Commissioners at the April 22, 2014 Blueprint Intergovernmental Agency Board meeting. Our elected officials have directed Blueprint staff to move forward with development and delivery of Phase 1 of the Northeast Gateway project. The current PD&E study is the first step in the development of this infrastructure project.

Will there be accommodations for transit along the new facility?

Currently, StarMetro does not operate in the areas surrounding the study area. Coordination with StarMetro will take place throughout the PD&E study and should there be plans for a future expansion of transit within the area, the study will accommodate those accordingly.

Why don't you align the new facility with Roberts Road or Bannerman Road?

This PD&E study is being conducted for Phase 1 of the project, which is to develop a preliminary set of concept plans for a four-lane Welaunee Boulevard from Fleischmann Road over I-10 and north to an intersection with a two-lane extension of Shamrock Street, east of Centerville Road. The development of an alignment and conceptual roadway plans for Welaunee Boulevard north of the intersection with the Shamrock Street extension is not part of Phase 1. Under the proposed Phase 2 scope of work, feasible alignments of Welaunee Boulevard north to Roberts Road will be developed and evaluated.

How will this impact intersections such as Capital Circle NE and Welaunee Boulevard and Centerville Road and Welaunee Boulevard?

The comprehensive area-wide traffic analysis that will be conducted for this study will evaluate several intersections beyond the study limits of the PD&E study, including the Welaunee Boulevard intersections at Capital Circle NE and Centerville Road. As these intersections are outside of the study limits for the PD&E study, specific improvements to relieve traffic congestion at these intersections will not be recommended as part of this study. The project team and Blueprint staff have coordinated and will continue to coordinate with the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA) and with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to discuss the findings of projected future traffic conditions at these intersections.

Who will benefit from this new facility?

This transportation infrastructure is required to support the planned and approved new development in the Welaunee area. The adopted Tallahassee-Leon County 2030 Comprehensive Plan, which guides the timing and location of Tallahassee's future growth, has identified the Northeast Gateway/Welaunee Boulevard project as integral to accommodating planned population and employment growth. The roadway network, including facilities for bicyclists and pedestrians, will be public facilities—available to all users and beneficial to the entire community. Therefore, like other public transportation infrastructure, will be managed and maintained by our local government.

How will this impact the Canopy Roads?

A component of the project's purpose is to provide relief to and to preserve the area's Canopy Roads (Centerville Road and Miccosukee Road). Canopy Roads are identified and protected within the Tallahassee-Leon County 2030 Comprehensive Plan. Therefore, the proposed improvements will be developed to minimize any impacts to the Canopy Road protection zone, while providing alternative roadways to relieve future traffic congestion on these corridors.

Why don't you widen the Canopy Roads?

A component of the project's purpose is to provide relief to and help preserve the Canopy Roads. The widening of Canopy Roads, such as Centerville Road and Miccosukee Road, are not being considered as part of this project and were not included within the scope of this PD&E study. In addition, Canopy Roads are identified and protected within the Tallahassee-Leon County 2030 Comprehensive Plan. As a result, the evaluation of widening these facilities in this study or any future study is inconsistent with the current Comprehensive Plan and would require modifications to these foundational planning documents.

When will the I-10 interchange take place?

The potential for an I-10 interchange is an initiative that will be prepared in coordination with and sponsored by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT). FDOT's previous planning efforts, which include their I-10 Master Plan along with the CRTPA's Mobility Plan, identified a potential new interchange along I-10 in

the general vicinity that Welaunee Boulevard will cross. Consideration of a future interchange would begin with commencement of an Interchange Access Review (IAR) process. This includes a lengthy and detailed traffic and land use analysis which must follow procedures, standards and guidelines prescribed by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). At present, the project team does not anticipate this IAR process to begin prior to the commencement of construction of a Welaunee Boulevard overpass.

How long has this project been planned?

Planning for population and employment growth in the 7,000-acre Welaunee area in northeast Tallahassee has been ongoing since 1990 when the Tallahassee-Leon County Comprehensive Plan designated the majority of the Welaunee area as an Urban Service Area (USA). This designation directs future development, including capital infrastructure (roads, waterlines, sewer lines etc.), to properties within the USA. The extension of Welaunee Boulevard and its connection to the existing roadway network is and has always been a critical component of the Welaunee area planning process. The current PD&E study for the Northeast Gateway project is Blueprint's initial detailed planning effort to provide the required transportation infrastructure which supports the projected future population and employment growth in the Welaunee area.

How much will this project cost?

As the PD&E study and subsequent phases progress, a refined project estimate will be developed. The current cost estimate for Phase 1 of the project prepared for and approved in the 2014 sales tax referendum is approximately \$47.3 million.

What is the timeline for this study?

This PD&E study began in late 2018 and is anticipated to be complete in late 2020.

Who is funding this project?

This project is being funded by Blueprint. Blueprint's operating and capital budgets are available on their website at <http://blueprint2000.org/blueprint-budget-resolutions/>.

What if I couldn't attend the Public Kick-Off Meeting?

There will be additional opportunities to attend public meetings as well as provide feedback throughout the PD&E study and through proposed future design and construction activities. All materials that were presented at the Public Kick-Off Meeting are available on the project website (**NEGateway.com**) under the Community Engagement page. In addition, public questions and comments can be submitted to the project team at any time throughout the study by visiting the Contact Us page on the project website.

When is the next public meeting?

The Concept Review Public Meeting is anticipated to be held in March 2020.

Why can't Welaunee Boulevard end at I-10?

It should be noted that a critical requirement of a PD&E study is for the facility being evaluated to have logical termini, which requires the proposed corridor to tie into existing infrastructure. Because of this, terminating Welaunee Boulevard at I-10, without existing interchange access, is not being evaluated as part of this study. Additionally, FDOT and the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), through previous coordination, have indicated that terminating Welaunee Boulevard at I-10 would not likely be supported for an interchange.

What will be the noise impacts from the new facility?

A Noise Study will be completed as part of the PD&E study to ensure that the projected future traffic along Welaunee Boulevard will not exceed the FDOT and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) noise thresholds. If it is identified that the noise thresholds exceed FDOT and FHWA criteria, then noise abatement measures will be considered.

What type of development is anticipated to occur north of I-10?

Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department is currently working with the land owner to finalize the land uses for the property east of Centerville Road and north of I-10 (encompassing approximately 4,677 acres). The draft future land use map presented at the Public Kick-Off Meeting showed that the anticipated land uses include mixed-uses, which may include retail, office, institutional, and residential development. This draft future land use map can be found within the Public Kick-Off Meeting presentation which is found under the Community Engagement tab on the project website. The Planning Department welcomes public input through their Comprehensive Plan amendment review process.

What does the public have input on?

The public may and is encouraged to provide comment and input on all evaluated aspects of the PD&E study. This includes potential impacts of the project on natural resources, impacts on existing communities, provisions for bicycles, pedestrians and transit, roadway design concepts, intersection design concepts, and associated environmental and engineering topics. As design concepts are developed, the public will have opportunities to review and comment on these concepts as well.