

**Plantation/Palmetto Extension
From Idlewild Street to Abbott Street**

**Public Workshop Memorandum
Workshop #1**

Lee County Project #4065

The Lee County Department of Transportation held a public information workshop on May 23, 2002 at the Life Church in Fort Myers. The purpose of the meeting was to gather public opinion regarding the three alternative alignments developed for the extension of Plantation Road from Idlewild Street to Abbott Street. The main goal was to determine what alternative the public preferred. A total of 118 people signed in at the registration table. Copies of the sign-in-sheets are attached.

The Lee County Metropolitan planning organization (MPO) is made up of FDOT, Lee County and all incorporated cities within the county. All these governmental entities work together in an attempt to meet the transportation needs shown by the MPO staff for the county as a whole. Lee County DOT makes it a practice to hold public meetings on all new roadway alignments and major roadway widenings. Those public meetings are held to inform and solicit input from the public regarding the specific project being presented. In the case of the Plantation Rd. extension the input solicited was a choice of alignment options from Idlewild to Abbott.

The initial 2020 Long Range Transportation Plan was adopted in 1994-95 and included a proactive public involvement program. The 2020 Plan was updated in 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999 and 2000 and public hearings were held to gather public input on the plans during each of the updates. All MPO public hearings are advertised in the News Press. It is now the intent of Lee County and the MPO to hold a joint public meeting to discuss the Plantation Road corridor and alternatives to it and the alignment options available between Idlewild and Colonial.

The original meeting was advertised in the May 16, 2002 edition of the News-Press as a ¼ page display ad. Letters announcing the public workshop were mailed on May 2, 2002 to persons with property adjacent to the proposed alignments. The Lee County Department of Public Resources transmitted a press release to local media on May 16, 2002. Copies of the notification for the workshop are attached.

The meeting was conducted in an open-format style that allowed the public to view the project material between the hours of 5:00 to 6:30 pm. Representatives from the Lee County Department of Transportation were stationed at the display boards to explain the project data and answer the public's questions.

The public was provided with comment forms at the public meeting in order to have their opinion recorded as public record. A total of 95 comment forms were received from the meeting and during the comment period following the meeting (which was extended beyond the two week period to incorporate additional public comments). In addition, some comments were made via phone conversations. Correspondence from the public is attached to this memorandum.

The comments were analyzed and recorded in Table One. In addition to recording the general comments, forms were also analyzed by location to the project area. Comments received by property owners within and directly adjacent to the project area indicate 8 respondents object to the project. Twenty respondents from this area are in favor of Alternative C. Most objections to the Plantation/Palmetto Extension project and the future four-laning of Plantation Road were from respondents south of the project area within communities and roads adjacent to Plantation Road. Two comments were received from areas outside the Plantation Road corridor. Distribution Maps 1-4 (see attached) record the number of comments received by street name.

TABLE ONE

Want Alternate "C"	Want buffer between road and residences	Need enforcement of speed limits
23	2	1
Eliminate truck traffic	Concerned about safety issues	Don't want extension or 4-laning
10	15	56
Include bike/ped facilities with any new roadway	Keep existing neighborhoods in tact	Connect Plantation to Metro
2	1	2
Expand Metro & Six Mile Cypress instead of extending Plantation	Crime will increase	Want a wall to divide Plantation from neighborhood
14	7	2
Do not connect any of the residential streets with the extension	Need to address drainage issues	Improve neighborhood with paved streets and city water
9	5	1
Spend this money on I-75 expansion	Alternative B	Downsize the project and use the road as a secondary facility
1	3	1

Most respondents who chose an alternative preferred Alternative C. Those who chose an alternative expressed a desire for a separation between the new road and the existing neighborhood for safety and aesthetics. In addition, persons in the neighborhood adjacent to the new facility expressed a desire not to connect any of the existing streets to the new roadway. A number of respondents were opposed to the project however, most of these were not within or adjacent to the Idlewild Street to Abbott Street project limits and many of the objections were regarding the future four-laning of Plantation Road from Daniels Road to Colonial Boulevard.