

REGIONAL PERSPECTIVES

A Quarterly Publication of the North Central Florida Regional Planning Council
Spring 2001



Theme of this edition: *I-75 Corridor Council*

I-75 CORRIDOR TO PROMOTE HERITAGE TOURISM IN NORTH CENTRAL FLORIDA

The Florida Department of Transportation, in conjunction with The I-75 Corridor Council, is nearing completion of a plan for the I-75 corridor from Wildwood to the Florida/Georgia State line. Consultants hired to complete the plan, Lochrane Engineering and the team's Landscape Architect, Buford Davis, ASLA, have developed concepts that will blend the historic landscapes of the area with indigenous tree plantings and "hardscape" reflecting the area's history.

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The NW Quadrant of the US 90 Interchange as it exists today



The interchange with the proposed landscape and hardscape improvements commemorating the OluStee battle.

I-75 CORRIDOR COUNCIL SEEKING INTERCHANGE SPONSORS

The I-75 corridor plan discussed in the accompanying article will be completed and available to the Corridor Council in June of this year. As described, the plan will include detailed designs for three priority locations, the S.R. 44/ Florida Turnpike interchange at Wildwood (southern gateway), the I-75/I-10 interchange (east/west gateway), and the Florida/Georgia state line (northern gateway).

This will begin the second phase of the project, the hunt for public/private groups or companies to sponsor interchanges serving their areas. Essentially, this will involve contracts between the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) and units of local government (cities and counties) bisected by the corridor, and contracts between those same units of local government and the public/private sponsors.

Although it may vary from one unit of local government to another, the responsibility of sponsors will essentially require them to fund any 'extra' improvements needed to implement the heritage tourism theme for the interchange, and then provide for any 'extra' costs that may be associated with the annual maintenance of the interchange. The FDOT will provide annual stipends

(which basically only cover the costs of regular mowing) to those units of local government with whom they enter into contract—which will partly offset the annual costs to sponsors.

The corridor plan will include specific estimates of construction and annual maintenance costs for the three priority areas, as well as the costs associated with a prototypical interchange. The plan will also include proposed heritage tourism themes for each of the interchanges, along with a list of potential sponsors.

Once the plan is available, it will be presented to the affected units of local government and potential sponsors at locally-held public meetings to begin the process of plan implementation. At this time, it is expected that these meetings will be scheduled beginning in July of this year.

In the meantime, call Chuck Kiester at 352/955-2200 ext. 102, for any questions regarding this program.

WEB PAGES OF INTEREST

North Central Florida Regional Planning Council - <http://ncfrpc.org>

The Original Florida - <http://originalflorida.org>

North Central Florida Economic Development Partnership - <http://originalfloridabusiness.org>

North Central Florida Local Emergency Planning Committee - <http://www.ncflepc.org>

North Central Florida Areawide Development Co., Inc. - <http://adco.org>

I-75 Corridor Council - <http://www.i75floridagateway.com> or <http://www.i75project.com>

NCFRPC SERVICES AVAILABLE TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS AND BUSINESSES

- ◆ local comprehensive plans
- ◆ land development regulations
- ◆ transportation plans
- ◆ transportation disadvantaged plans
- ◆ disaster mitigation and recovery plans
- ◆ emergency response plans
- ◆ hazardous waste verification
- ◆ CDBG grant applications
- ◆ CDBG grant administration
- ◆ FRDAP grant applications
- ◆ tourism development
- ◆ general economic development
- ◆ small business loans

*(I-75 Corridor to Promote Heritage Tourism
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The goal of the project is to make the portion of I-75 in north central Florida more than a “pass through” to the theme parks of the Orlando Area. Corridor Council Chair, Penny Wheat, has stated that the interchanges in the north central Florida area need to be more than just refueling stops for cars. “We need to show visitors *The Original Florida* with all its springs, rivers, forests and its historic sites, neighborhoods and downtowns.”

The project encompasses landscaping and hardscaping of twenty-two (22) interchanges, the Florida/Georgia State Line, and finally the areas between the interchanges. The FDOT has already set aside \$1.5 million for implementation of the proposed landscaping concepts for the SR 44 and I-10 Interchanges, and the Florida/Georgia State Line. In addition to the funding of the first three projects, the FDOT is committing \$1.0 million each year for the following four years for future projects. Future funding will be allocated to other areas of the I-75 Corridor based on the Matrix Alternative Ranking that was approved by the Council in January of this year. The results of this ranking are shown in the table,

The ranking of each potential project was based on the site’s tourism potential, regional impact, existing unique site features, beautification potential, connectivity, coordination with planned projects to the interchange, and traffic volumes in the vicinity. Scheduled interchange improvements could be advanced through private or public sponsorship (i.e., funding) outside of the FDOT.

The conceptual designs for SR 44, I-10 and the Florida/Georgia State Line have already been completed and accepted by the Corridor Council. Visi-





tors to the project website, **I75project.com**, can view the details of the design.

The most unique feature of the landscape project is the incorporation of hardscape reflecting the area’s heritage tourism connections. The hardscape concepts for the US 90 interchange in Lake City reflect the area’s Civil War history. The largest land battle in the state of Florida during the war was fought at Olustee, just east of Lake City. More than 10,000 troops were involved from both sides in 1864. The battle, reenacted every February, brings over 50,000 visitors to the area. The landscape and hardscape concepts for this interchange are shown in the photos on Page 1.

Hardscape themes for each of the twenty-two interchanges are included in the plan. The hardscape concept for the SR 44 interchange has been taken to an even greater level, and can also be viewed from the web site. For the heritage hardscape to become reality, sponsors will need

to be identified to cover the costs for design, construction and maintenance (see accompanying article).

Once completed, traveling I-75 through north central Florida will be much more than a means for getting from one place to another rapidly. The trip will be educational and entertaining, and will connect visitors to many interesting places they never knew existed. After all is said and done, the journey can often be more exciting than arriving at one’s destination. *(Article supplied by Lochrane Engineering)*

Interchange	Ranking	Score
 State Line	1	
 I-10	2	
 SR 44	3	
SR 26	4	24
US 441	5	23
CR 234	6	21
SR 40	7	20
SR 331/SR 121	7	20
US 90	7	20
SR 136	8	19
SR 326	9	18
US 129	9	18
CR 484	10	17
US 27	10	17
SR 24	10	17
SR 47	11	16
SR 200	12	15
SR 222	12	15
CR 318	13	14
US 441/US 41	13	14
SR 6	13	14
SR 143	13	14
CR 236	14	12
 This area hasn't been included in the evaluation because it was previously designated a priority by the I-75 Corridor Council.		

PUBLIC AVAILABILITY NOTICE OF HAZARDOUS MATERIALS INFORMATION

The Emergency Planning and Community Right to Know Act of 1986, also known as Title III of the Superfund Amendments and Reauthorization Act (SARA) requires emergency planning, and emergency notification of accidental releases. The legislation also mandates that information concerning chemical inventories of certain facilities be made available to the public. Regional Planning Council provides staff to the North Central Florida Local Emergency Planning Committee which serves as a repository of Title III chemical data.

The public has access to a variety of chemical specific data and information about facilities reporting under provisions of the Act. Accordingly, pursuant to Section 324 of the Title III Act, the following information is available to the public upon request during business hours of 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday.

- * Section 302: Chemical Notification
- * Section 304: Emergency Follow-up Notice
- * Section 311: Materials Safety Data Sheets
- * Section 312: Hazardous Chemical Inventory (Tier two) Form
- * North Central Florida Regional Hazardous Materials Plan

Citizens and businesses seeking information on any of the above provisions should contact **Dwayne Mundy at 352/955-2200, ext. 108 or email: mundy@ncfrpc.org.**

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