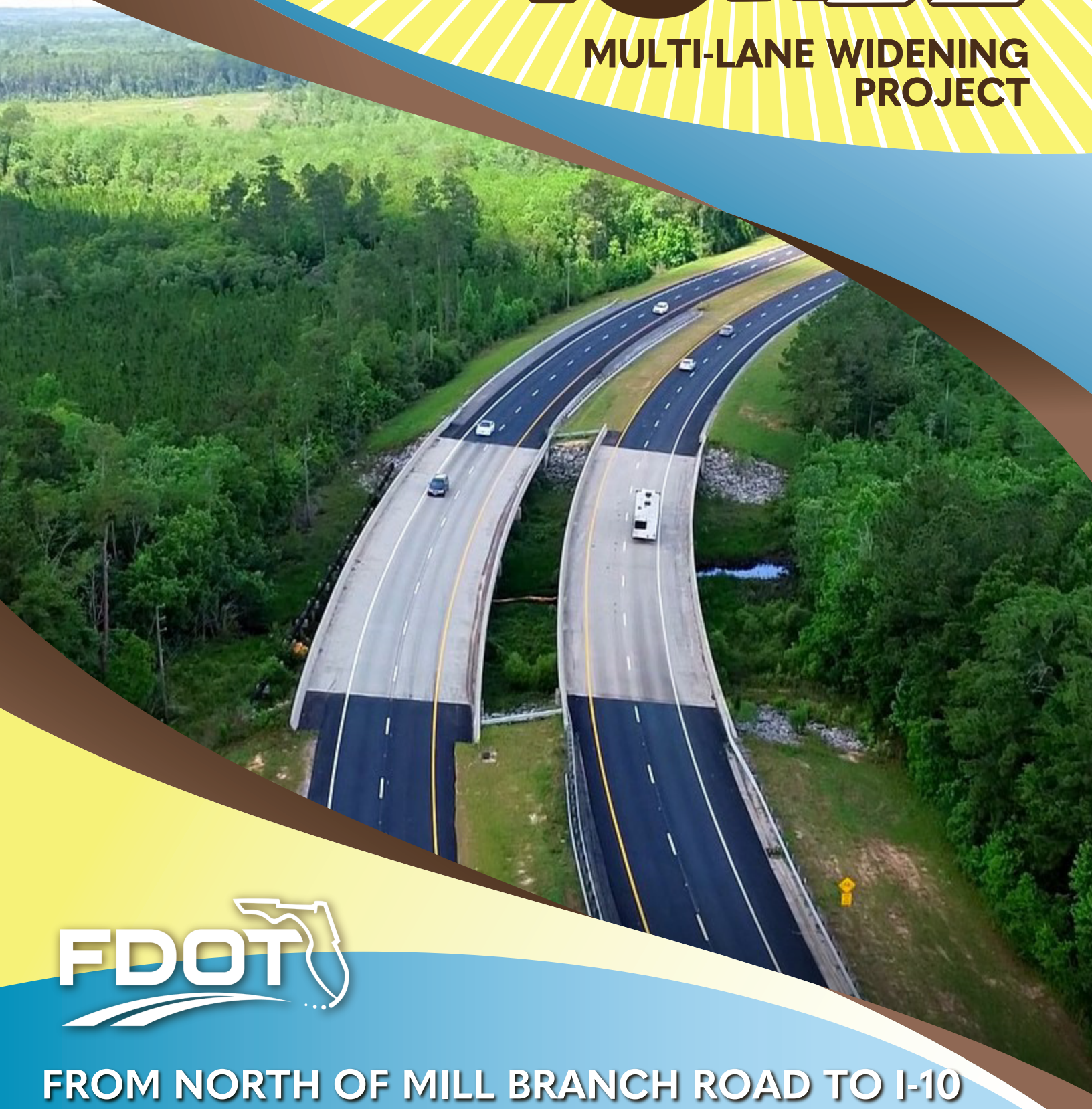
2021 FINAL NEWSLETTER

State Road 79

MULTI-LANE WIDENING PROJECT



FDOT

FROM NORTH OF MILL BRANCH ROAD TO I-10

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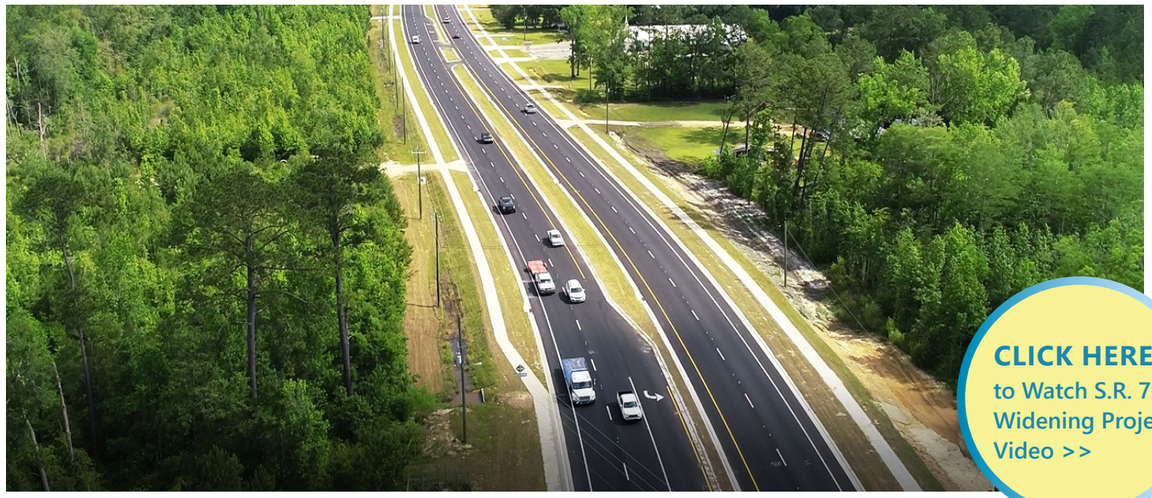
State Road 79

PROJECT OVERVIEW



CLICK HERE to Watch S.R. 79 Widening Project Video >>

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) celebrates completion of the 44-mile State Road (S.R.) 79 four-lane widening project connecting Interstate 10 (I-10) in Holmes County to U.S. 98 in Bay County. The corridor provides local and regional businesses, residents, tourists and commuters direct access from I-10 to Florida Panhandle beaches. It also allows better access to and from local military bases, Northwest Florida Beaches International Airport, Port of Panama City, and numerous area attractions.

This north-south hurricane evacuation route enables emergency personnel to reach their destination faster and safer while improving ease of access for motor vehicles and commercial traffic.

The final 20-mile stretch from north of Mill Branch Bridge in New Hope to I-10 in Bonifay was completed in summer 2021. FDOT widened the existing two-lane rural roadway to a four-lane divided highway, providing job growth and economic development opportunities in Washington and Holmes counties.

Several features have made this widening project more efficient for motorists.

WIDENING BRIDGES OVER CYPRESS CREEK AND OPEN CREEK

Two new bridges increase travel capacity from two to four lanes.

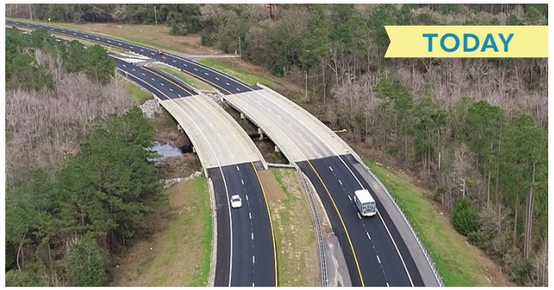
The new bridge designs are an example of FDOT's commitment to environmental stewardship. Rather than demolish the existing bridges, original bridges over Cypress and Open creeks were preserved and reconstructed. This design allows water in creeks and major waterways to flow freely with minimal impact to the environment.

Southbound Cypress Creek Bridge was completed in 2015 and northbound Cypress Creek Bridge was completed in 2017. Construction of the northbound Open Creek Bridge was completed in 2016. Both bridge structures were originally constructed with one bridge span and two-lane traffic. An additional bridge span was added to accommodate widening from two to four travel lanes.

(ABOVE) Aerial drone technology captures a bird of prey flying over Cypress Creek Bridge.

CYPRESS CREEK BRIDGE

Remember when? This October 2015 photo above captures beginning phases of Cypress Creek Bridge construction. Wooden deck forms provided temporary foundation support prior to concrete placement.



Here is a look at Cypress Creek Bridge today.

OPEN CREEK BRIDGE

(LEFT) Open Creek Bridge under construction in 2016.

(ABOVE) Aerial drone technology details Open Creek Bridge construction between 2015 and 2021.

(LEFT) In addition to the new bridge span, large riprap rock (crushed rock of various shapes and sizes) is included along the Open Creek Bridge banks to prevent erosion and ensure minimal environmental impacts.

FUN FACT

Concrete bridge road surfaces have a low repair rate and long service life of approximately 40 years. Asphalt road surfaces typically have a 10-year life span that may require additional repair and patch work due to extreme weather conditions such as high heat or excess rain.

INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

Important safety features have been added to four intersections at Fanning Branch, Douglas Ferry, Marshall, and Leavins roads.

Crews adjusted the height levels of each intersection to better align with the new S.R. 79 road. This safety improvement increases driver's sight distance (the length of the road that is visible to a driver) and reduces potential blind spots.

FANNING BRANCH ROAD

Fanning Branch Road intersection upgrades provide safe access to the new roadway.

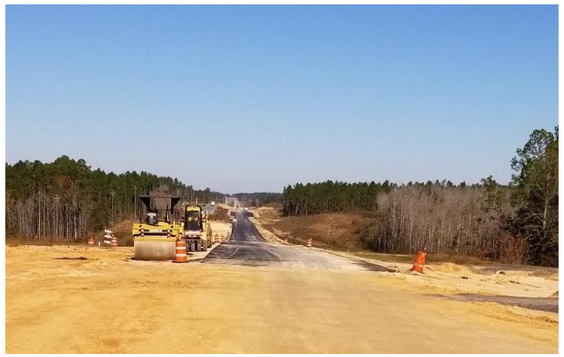
DOUGLAS FERRY ROAD

Before construction began, Douglas Ferry Road was higher than the new S.R. 79 northbound lanes. The intersection included lowering the height of the road. The improvement allows drivers a clear view of on-coming traffic.

(TOP RIGHT) Douglas Ferry Road intersection when S.R. 79 was a two-lane highway.

{BOTTOM LEFT) Douglas Ferry Road intersection during construction of two S.R. 79 southbound lanes.

(BOTTOM RIGHT) Douglas Ferry Road at S.R. 79 intersection today.



MARSHALL ROAD

Changing the roadway's height and position at the Marshall Road intersection provides a safer intersection by increasing the driver's ability to view cross traffic in both directions.

LEAVINS ROAD

Improvements at Leavins Road help motorists eliminate potential blind spots and increase line-of-sight, enabling them to see oncoming vehicles, wildlife, and pedestrians.

(TOP) Marshall Road during construction.

{BOTTOM) Marshall Road at S.R. 79 intersection today.

(TOP) Leavins Road during construction.

{BOTTOM) Leavins Road at S.R. 79 intersection today.

TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS

Several environmental-friendly upgrades in the city of Vernon make travel more efficient for commuters.

VERNON TRAFFIC IMPROVEMENTS INCLUDE:

- An enhanced caution signal at County Road (C.R.) 279/Moss Hill Road for added safety.
- Upgrades to the water line system providing clean water to city businesses and residents.
- Improved sewer line and stormwater drainage systems.
- New driveways at more than 100 homes and businesses.
- Three miles of new sidewalk.

(ABOVE) During construction of the four-lane widening in Vernon, roadway grading operations were a familiar sight.

MOSS HILL ROAD INTERSECTION

(ABOVE) C.R. 279/Moss Hill Road intersection today.

(RIGHT TOP and BOTTOM) An enhanced caution signal at the C.R. 279/Moss Hill Road intersection was added to accommodate travelers during their commute.

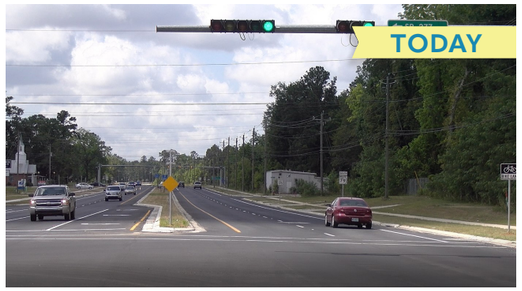
DRAINAGE, SIDEWALKS, AND DRIVEWAYS

(BOTTOM, RIGHT TOP and BOTTOM) Vernon's four-lane widening improvements include upgraded water lines providing clean water to residents and businesses.

(LEFT) Improvements include over 100 home and business driveways with angled entries between the roadway and sidewalk area.

(BELOW) Three miles of new sidewalk in Vernon provide a safer route for pedestrian traffic.

COURT AVENUE INTERSECTION



(LEFT and RIGHT) Part of the S.R. 79 at S.R. 277/Court Avenue intersection upgrades include removal of a raised median.

A ROAD IN THE MAKING

Roadways are only as good as the foundations they are built upon. Careful attention to detail during earthwork, grading, and limerock placement operations provide motorists a strong road foundation and the enjoyment of smooth road travel for years to come.

Hundreds of truckloads of embankment material were used to construct the new road. Excavator operators loaded thousands of cubic yards of embankment and subgrade material into oversized dump trucks for distribution throughout the project.

Large earth-moving equipment including motor graders, bulldozers and steel drum rollers were a familiar site throughout the widening project. Crews used heavy equipment to scrape, grade, fill, and finish the road foundation.

(TOP & BOTTOM LEFT) Crews use motor graders to place limerock and ensure the roadbed is level just south of Union Hills Road in Washington County.

KEEPING WATER OFF THE ROADS

An important step in maintaining safe driving conditions includes capturing stormwater runoff before it reaches travel lane surfaces. Curb and gutter, drainage pipe, box culverts, and stormwater ponds are key drainage features that ensure motorist safety and help keep water off the road.

S.R. 79 not only supports traffic, but also acts as a channel to divert water from the road into the curb and gutter system that directly ties into the drainage system. This is important because without proper planning, the flow of water along the roadway could interfere with traffic or weaken the roadway's foundation.

CURB AND GUTTER SYSTEM

The curb and gutter system serves to redirect large amounts of sediment and other debris into the stormwater system that might otherwise be deposited onto the roadway.

(LEFT) Concrete curb along roadway outer edges prevents erosion and captures surface debris and excess water runoff. Curb and gutters also provide pavement delineation between the roadway and sidewalk.

FUN FACT

Over 40 truckloads of concrete (equal to the weight of 450 Chevy Camaro cars) were used to construct curb and gutter and median crossovers in 2020.

STORMWATER DRAINAGE SYSTEM

Over 32 miles of new pipe is included in the vast drainage network. To ensure motorist safety, excess rainwater is directed away from road surfaces to a carefully planned stormwater drainage system. Whenever a roadway is widened, the area's stormwater drainage system is upgraded to redirect rain and groundwater away from road surfaces. The pipes are made of steel, concrete, or black high-density polyethylene.

FUN FACT

This turn out is called a "bullnose" due to the shape of the curb section. Dozens of turn out, turn lane, and median crossings were constructed, allowing motorists to make right or left turns onto cross streets or turn around without interrupting the traffic flow.

(TOP and MIDDLE) Crews add drainage improvements near Pompey Avenue in the city of Vernon.

(BOTTOM) Stormwater drainage pipes are installed under side roads and driveways and provide a channel for relocating excess water runoff from the roadway into nearby ponds.

STORMWATER MANAGEMENT PONDS

The drainage pipe network transports excess runoff and stormwater-transported debris to 36 ponds. The ponds collect and filter out sediment and debris, then deliver water naturally back into the ecosystem.

(BELOW) Part of the stormwater drainage system includes a weir and skimmer (white structure). The weir controls the water level in ponds while the skimmer prevents debris from passing through the skimmer, into the weir, and entering the ecosystem.

(LEFT) Stormwater retention ponds are fenced in for safety and sod is placed along the steep slopes to prevent erosion.

(RIGHT) Early stages of pond construction near Union Hill Road in Washington County. The excess soil removed from the pond site is redistributed to other areas to build the new roadway.

BOX CULVERTS

Eleven box culverts create safer driving conditions for motorists and ensure minimal environmental impacts to surrounding creeks and major waterways. Box culverts allow natural water flowing in environmentally sensitive areas to travel from one side of the road to the other without interruption.

FUN FACT

Did you know? The largest box culvert on the S.R. 79 corridor is near Clayton Road. Box culverts get their name because they are either square or rectangular, like a box.

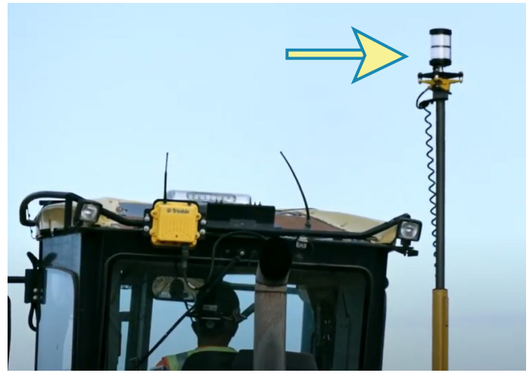
(TOP) Crews install reinforced steel bars called rebar on the final box culvert before placing concrete on the structure south of the city of Vernon between Dawkins Street and Pompey Avenue.

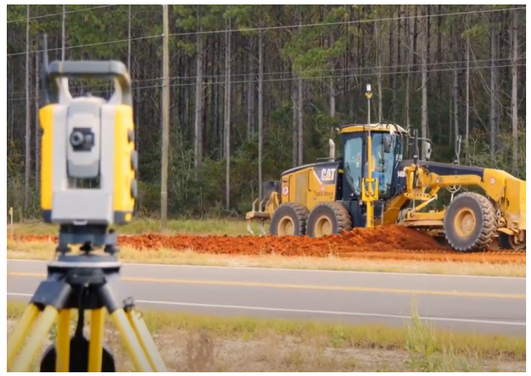
{BOTTOM LEFT and RIGHT) Two box culverts under construction near Acy and Hightower roads in Washington County.

FUN FACT

During construction of the box culvert located near Pompey Avenue, contractors used over 360 cubic yards of concrete (equal to the weight of 288 Ford F-150 trucks), more than 68,000 pounds of reinforcing steel (equal to the weight of 12 large SUV's) and close to 64 tons of riprap (crushed rock of various shapes and sizes equal to the weight of 42 Honda Civic cars).

NEW TECHNOLOGIES





FUN FACT

GPS technology provides instant roadway updates during earth-moving operations and is used with bulldozer and motor grader heavy equipment to measure the height of the material as it is distributed.

GPS TECHNOLOGY

New technology was implemented during construction. Crews added machine-controlled systems on heavy equipment. The GPS technology yields greater productivity, increases accuracy and improves planning while reducing work costs.

(TOP and MIDDLE) The arrows in these photos point to the motor grader's GPS technology used to control the roadway's grade during construction. The system measures the height of the material to ensure the material spreads evenly.

(BOTTOM) The GPS base station receives satellite positioning information and broadcasts the information to the accompanying motor grader heavy equipment.

DRONE TECHNOLOGY

(ABOVE) A drone pilot prepares to fly a drone over a section of S.R. 79 south of Vernon. FDOT drone operators hold both FAA commercial and remote certifications.

FUN FACT

On a good weather day, FDOT drone operators can fly a drone as high as 400 feet.

ROADWAY SAFETY AND MARKING

Several driver and pedestrian safety features are included along the project. Advanced technology road surface pavement markings provide guidance and information to motorists. Pavement markings include white and yellow line striping on the road, traffic indicators, and rumble strips.

LINES ON THE ROAD: THE IMPORTANCE OF ROADWAY STRIPING

Striping and pavement markings communicate information to motorists by delineating traffic lanes and bringing awareness to no-passing zone areas. They also assist in increasing visibility.

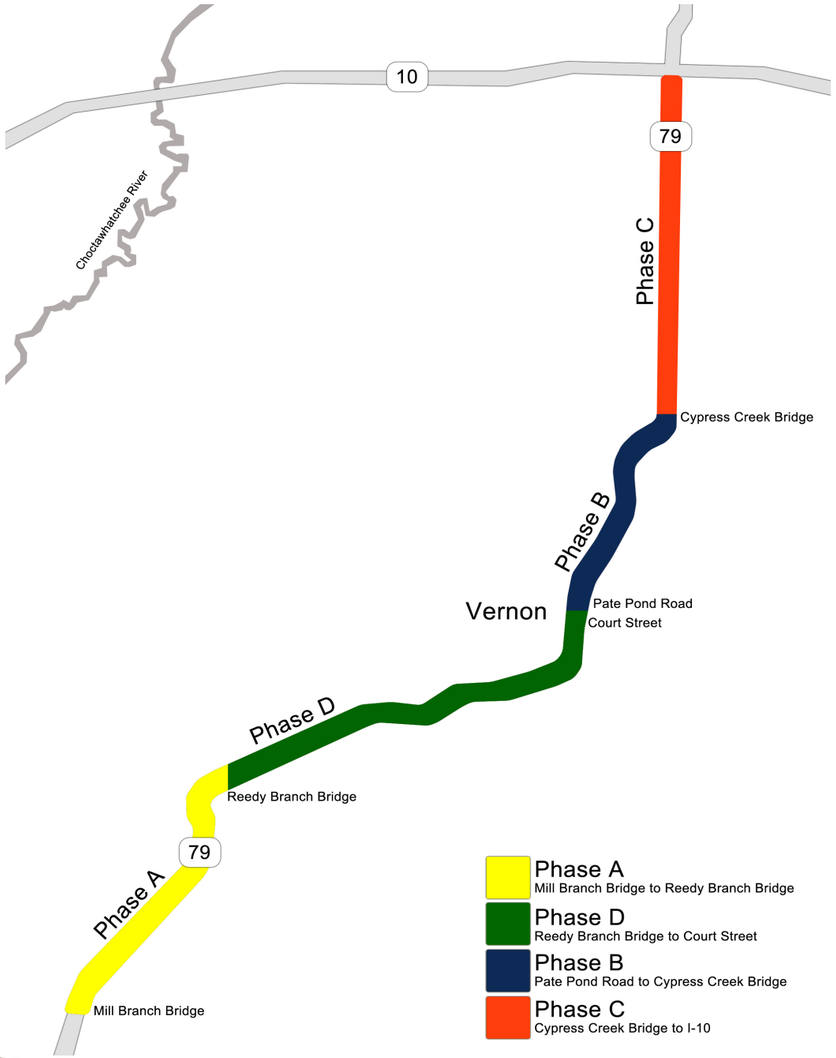
Raised Pavement Markers or RPM's serve as noise generators to inform motorists when they are traveling outside or across a designated traffic lane. Their fluorescent yellow color is an important safety feature because RPM's reflect white light at night.

(TOP RIGHT) Reflective elements in striping paint enable pavement markings to reflect light from vehicle headlights back to the driver especially during inclement weather when visual awareness of many road markers becomes more difficult.

In response to FDOT's commitment to travel safety when maneuvering the intersection, flashing beacon stop signs and rumble strips are additional safety features added for motorists traveling along Douglas Ferry Road at S.R. 79. Rumble strips are rows of raised strips placed across the roadway to alert drivers through vehicle vibration and noise to slow down.

PROJECT MAP

The project was broken into four phases as indicated on the map below to minimize traffic impacts.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

Should you have questions regarding the project please contact:

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Email billy.robinson@dot.state.fl.us

IAN SATTER
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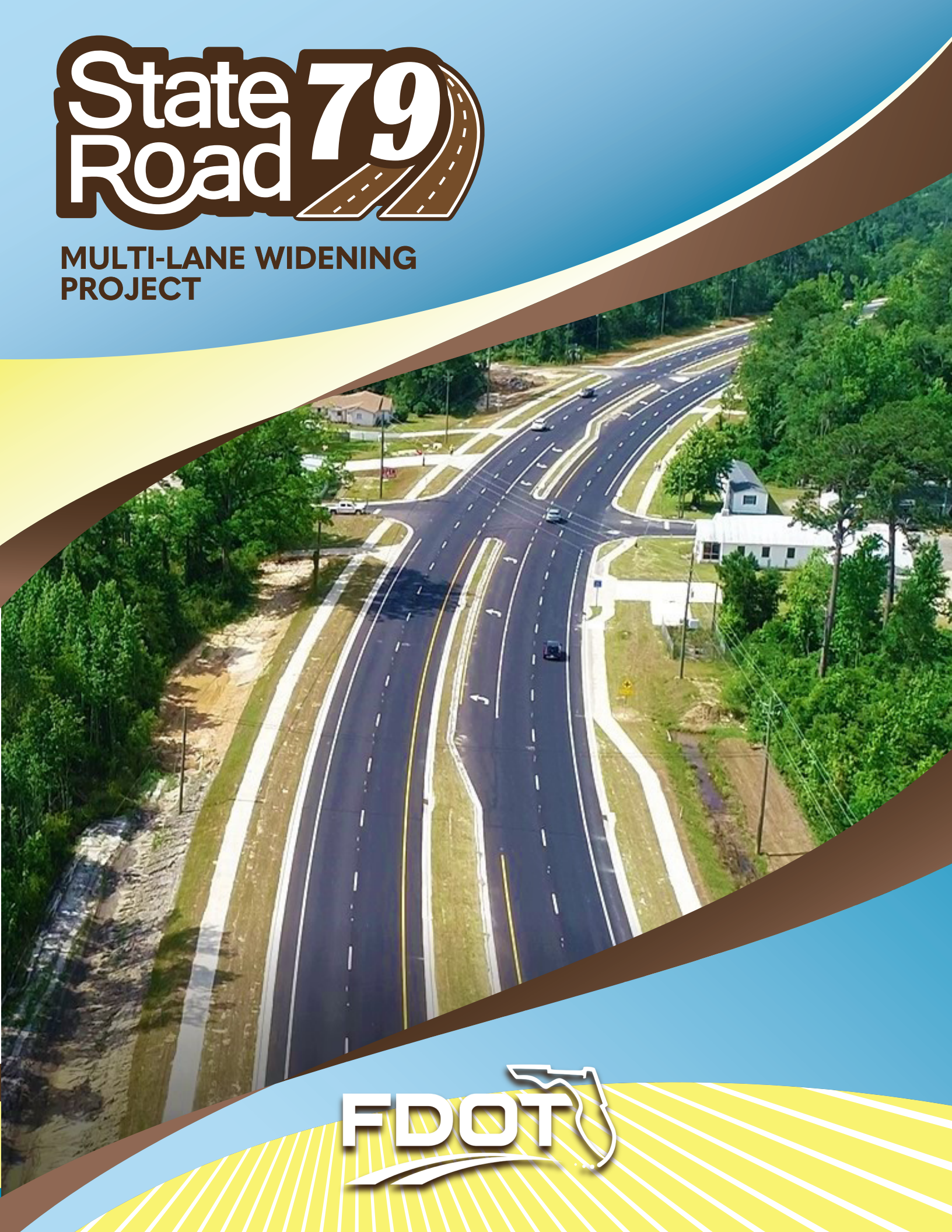
WWW.NWFL-ROADS.COM

FDOT

State Road 79

MULTI-LANE WIDENING PROJECT



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WELCOME

State Road 79 • Design Build Project

State Road 79, Phase D, Reedy Branch Bridge to Court Street in Washington County

Tuesday • August 5 • 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.
Vernon Community Center • 2808 Yellow Jacket Drive • Vernon

Financial Project Identification Numbers
220773-9-52-01 and 220773-9-56-01

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE ROAD 79 • DESIGN-BUILD PROJECT

Phase D • Public Information Meeting

Tuesday • August 5 • 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Vernon Community Center • 2808 Yellow Jacket Drive • Vernon

This Design-Build project consists of four-laning 20 miles of State Road (S.R.) 79 from Mill Branch Bridge to Interstate 10 (I-10) in Washington and Holmes counties. There are four phases:

PHASE A

Includes improvements to S.R. 79 from Mill Branch Bridge to Reedy Branch Bridge for a length of 4.5 miles. A rural typical section with grassed median will be constructed from the beginning of the phase to south of New Hope. An urban typical section will be constructed with pedestrian facilities from south of New Hope to the end of the phase.

PHASE B

Includes improvements to S.R. 79 from Pate Pond Road to Cypress Creek Bridge for a length of 3.2 miles. A rural typical section with grassed median will be constructed. A new bridge will also be constructed over Cypress Creek.

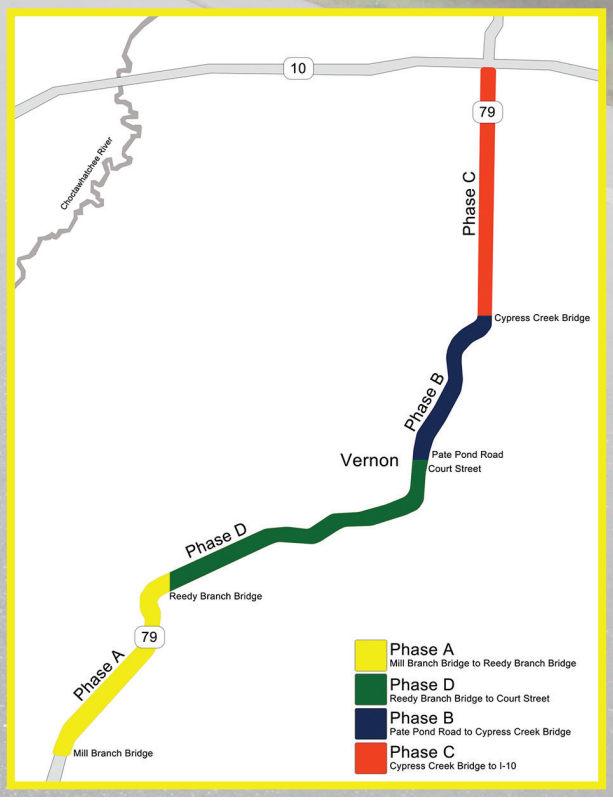
PHASE C

Includes improvements to S.R. 79 from Cypress Creek Bridge to I-10 for a length of 6 miles. A rural typical section with grassed median will be constructed. A new bridge will also be constructed over Open Creek.

PHASE D

Includes improvements to S.R. 79 from Reedy Branch Bridge to Court Street in Vernon for a length of 6.4 miles. A rural typical section with grassed median will be built from Reedy Branch Bridge to south of Vernon at the intersection of Cook Circle. An urban typical section will be designed with pedestrian facilities from Cook Circle to Court Street. A new traffic signal will be installed at Sapp Street.

All phases will include utility relocation and stormwater treatment.



FOR MORE INFORMATION

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Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Project Manager
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Email: billy.robinson@dot.state.fl.us

Ian Satter
District Three Public Information Director
Phone: (850) 330-1205
Email: ian.satter@dot.state.fl.us

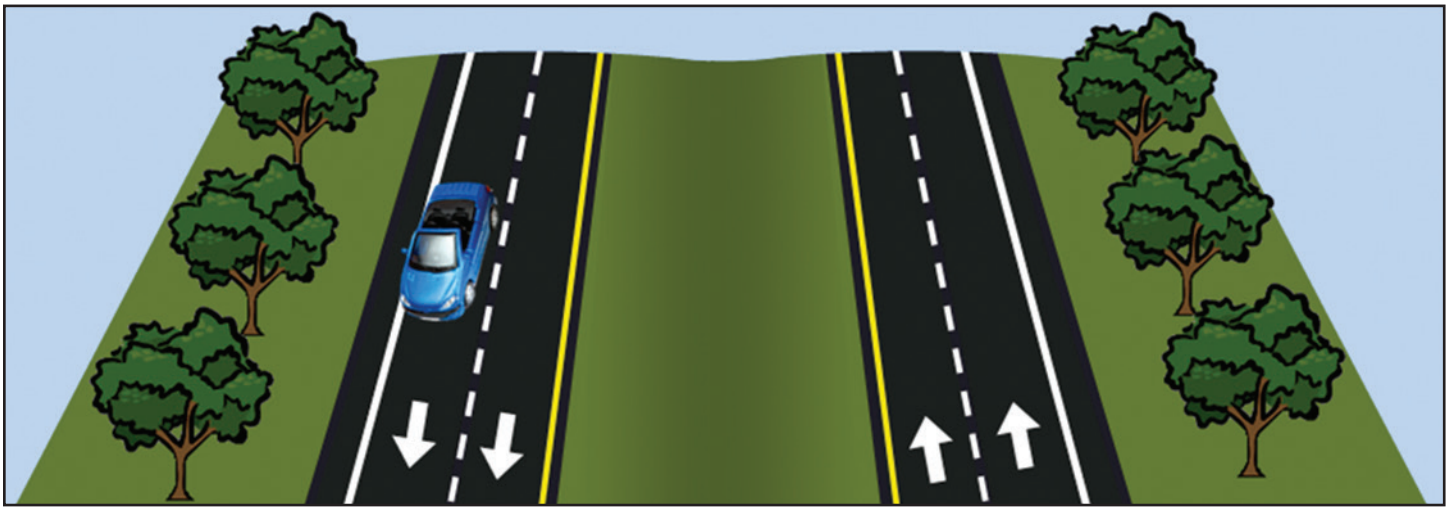
Financial Project Identification Numbers
220773-9-52-01 and 220773-9-56-01

MEETING INFORMATION

This meeting is being held to announce the construction of Phase D of the S.R. 79 Design-Build project. Construction is scheduled to begin fall 2014. Maps, drawings, and other information will be on display. The meeting will be an open house format. There will be no formal presentation. Representatives from FDOT will be available to explain proposed improvements, answer questions, and receive comments.

Those wishing to submit written comments/questions may do so at the meeting, via email at billy.robinson@dot.state.fl.us, or by mailing them to Billy Robinson, FDOT Project Manager, Ponce de Leon Operations Center, 1723 Sunrise Circle, Ponce de Leon, Florida 32455. All comments must be postmarked on or before Friday, August 15, 2014.

EXAMPLE OF A RURAL TYPICAL SECTION



SAFETY FEATURES

- The addition of two travel lanes
- Access management improvements
- Chain-link fencing at stormwater retention ponds
- Guardrails approaching all bridges

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FDOT Florida Department of Transportation

State Road 79 • Phase D from Reedy Branch Bridge to Court Street
Design-Build Project • Washington and Holmes Counties

PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

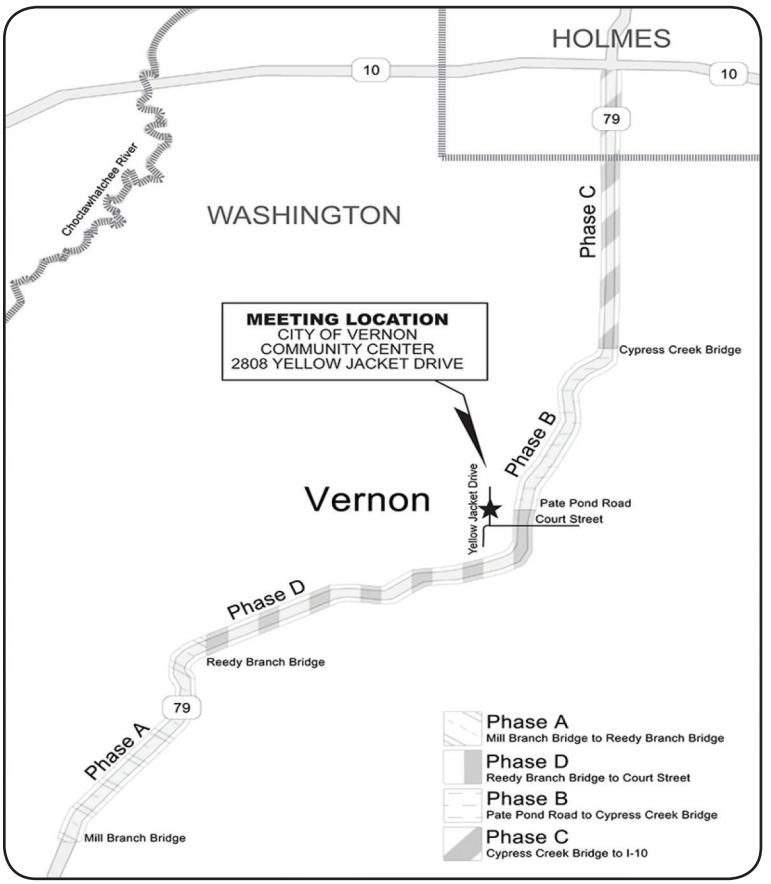
MEETING INFORMATION

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) invites you to attend a public information meeting concerning Phase D of the State Road 79 Design-Build project from Reedy Branch Bridge to Court Street in Vernon, a distance of approximately 6.4 miles.

- Tuesday, August 5, 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.
- Vernon Community Center
  2808 Yellow Jacket Drive, Vernon

Construction is scheduled to begin in fall 2014. Maps, drawings, and other information will be on display. The meeting will be an open house format. There will be no formal presentation. Representatives from FDOT will be available to explain proposed improvements, answer questions, and receive comments.

Those wishing to submit written comments/questions may do so at the meeting, via email at billy.robinson@dot.state.fl.us, or by mailing them to Billy Robinson, FDOT Project Manager, Ponce de Leon Operations Center, 1723 Sunrise Circle, Ponce de Leon, Florida 32455. All comments must be postmarked on or before Friday, August 15, 2014.



Financial Project Identification Numbers: 220773-9-52-01 and 220773-9-56-01

PROJECT INFORMATION

A rural typical section with grassed median will be built from Reedy Branch Bridge to south of Vernon at the intersection of Cook Circle. An urban typical section will be designed with pedestrian facilities from Cook Circle to Court Street. A new traffic signal will be installed at Sapp Street.

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability, or family status. Persons who require special accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact Billy Robinson, FDOT Project Manager, at (850) 836-5713 at least seven days prior to the meeting.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

Billy Robinson
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Ian Satter
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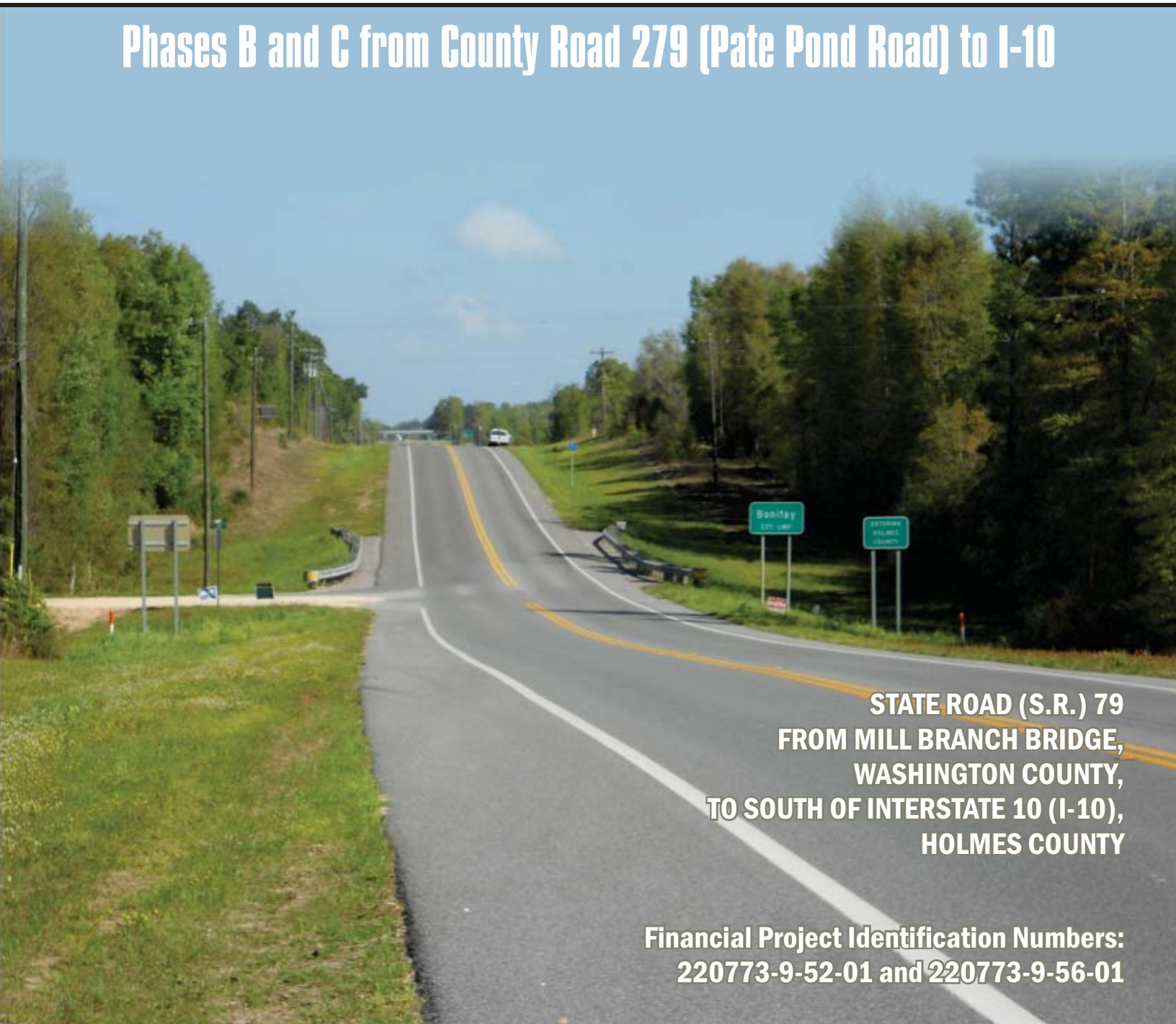
PUBLIC INFORMATION MEETING

DESIGN/BUILD

S.R. 79 MULTI-LANING

Phases B and C from County Road 279 (Pate Pond Road) to I-10



STATE ROAD (S.R.) 79
FROM MILL BRANCH BRIDGE,
WASHINGTON COUNTY,
TO SOUTH OF INTERSTATE 10 (I-10),
HOLMES COUNTY

Financial Project Identification Numbers:
220773-9-52-01 and 220773-9-56-01

Florida Department of Transportation
State Road 79 Design-Build Project
Public Information Meeting
August 6, 2013
City of Vernon Community Center

This Design-Build project consists of four-laning 20 miles of State Road (S.R.) 79 from Mill Branch Bridge to Interstate 10 (I-10) in Washington and Holmes counties. There are four phases as follows:

PHASE A

Includes improvements to S.R. 79 from Mill Branch Bridge to Reedy Branch Bridge for a length of 4.5 miles. A rural typical section with grassed median will be constructed from the beginning of the phase to south of New Hope. An urban typical section will be constructed with pedestrian facilities from south of New Hope to the end of the phase.

PHASE B

Includes improvements to S.R. 79 from Pate Pond Road to Cypress Creek Bridge for a length of 3.2 miles. A rural typical section with grassed median will be constructed. A new bridge will also be constructed over Cypress Creek.

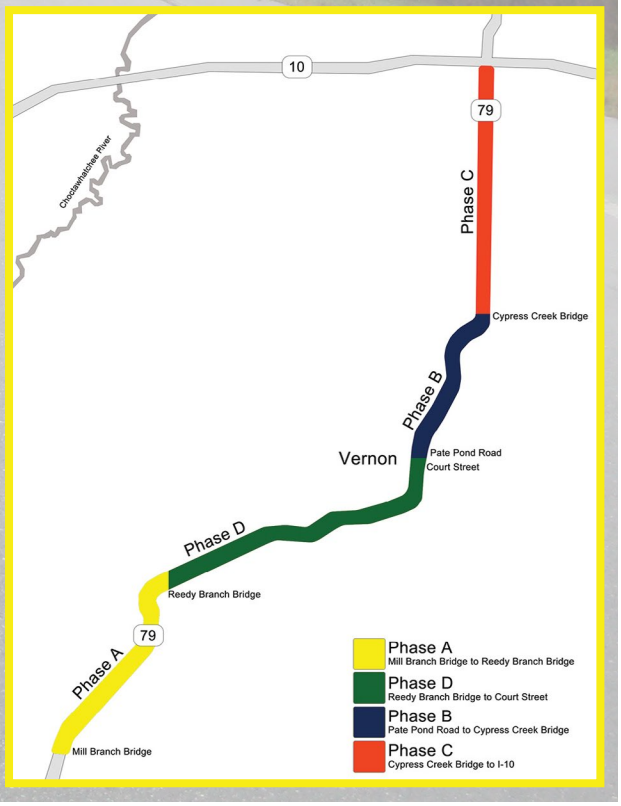
PHASE C

Includes improvements to S.R. 79 from Cypress Creek Bridge to I-10 for a length of 6 miles. A rural typical section with grassed median will be constructed. A new bridge will also be constructed over Open Creek.

PHASE D

Includes improvements to S.R. 79 from Reedy Branch Bridge to Court Street in Vernon for a length of 6.4 miles. A rural typical section with grassed median will be constructed from Reedy Branch Bridge to south of Vernon at the intersection of Cook Circle. An urban typical section will be constructed with pedestrian facilities from Cook Circle to Court Street. A new traffic signal will be constructed at Sapp Street.

All phases will include utility relocation and stormwater treatment.



FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT:

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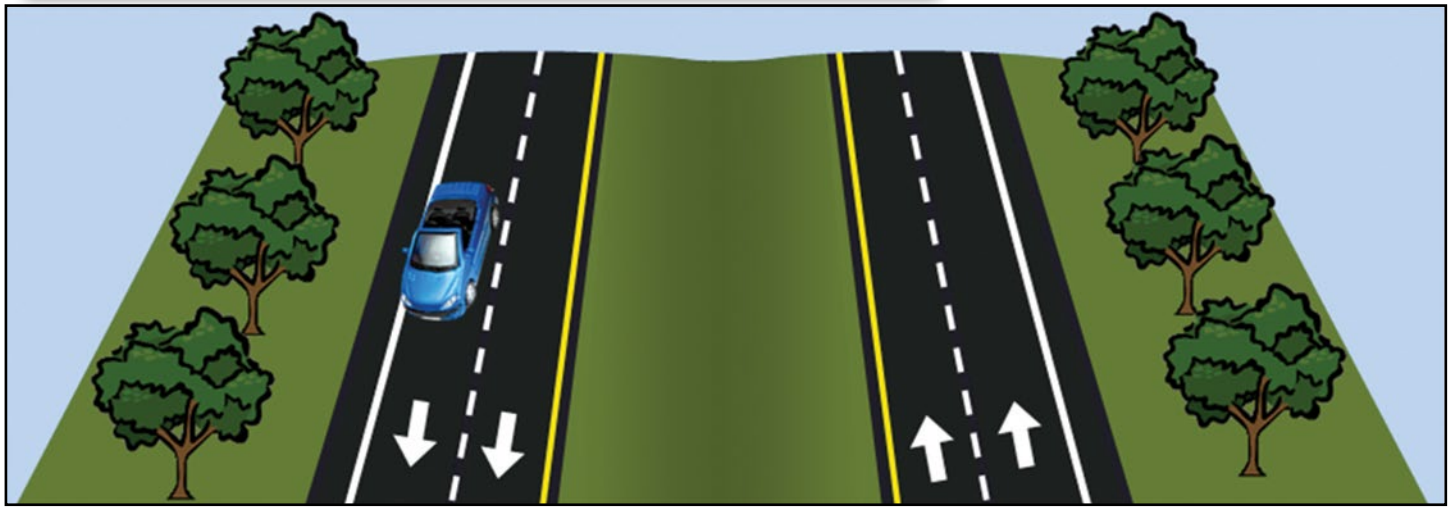
Financial Project Identification Numbers:
220773-9-52-01 and 220773-9-56-01

MEETING INFORMATION

This meeting is being held to announce the construction of Phases B and C of the State Road 79 Design-Build project. The meeting will be conducted in an open house format (no formal presentation is scheduled). FDOT representatives will be on hand to answer questions and receive comments. Proposed improvements extend from County Road 279 (Pate Pond Road) to I-10. The principle intent of this portion of the project is to widen 9.2 miles of the existing roadway from two to four lanes. A rural typical section with grassed median will be constructed. New parallel bridges over Cypress Creek and Open Creek will also be built. Construction is scheduled to begin fall 2013.

Those wishing to submit written comments/questions may do so at the meeting or by mailing them to the FDOT Project Manager, Billy Robinson, Ponce de Leon Operations Center,1723 Sunrise Circle, Ponce de Leon, FL 32455. All comments must be postmarked on or before Friday, August 16, 2013.

EXAMPLE OF A RURAL TYPICAL SECTION



SAFETY FEATURES

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