

APPENDIX C

Public Involvement/Comment Summary

A comprehensive Public Involvement Program was carried out for this study. The program began early in the study and continued throughout the process. The following summarizes this program and detailed information is contained within Section 6 of the 2005 FEIS.

The Notice of Intent was published in the Federal Register on March 27, 2002 and an Advance Notification package was distributed to federal, state, and local agencies and to appropriate United States and State senators and representatives on April 3, 2002. Written comments were received from several of the agencies and have been addressed during the coordination and development of the FEIS.

Throughout the project, FHSRA organized meetings to provide interested parties with project updates. FHSRA held two agency coordination meetings: April 30, 2002 and July 30, 2003. FHSRA also held meetings with the local MPO and committees, elected officials, small groups, and non-governmental organizations. In addition, the FHSRA established a Cultural Resource Committee (CRC) to assist in the evaluation of significant cultural resources, potential effects, and methods for mitigation.

Two series of Public Information Workshops were held in each of the four counties located within the proposed FHSR corridors. The first series of public workshops was held in May 2002 to provide the attendees with an opportunity to review the proposed conceptual corridors, engineering design concepts, and the proposed high speed rail technologies, and to submit their comments. The second series of public meetings was held in January 2003 to provide the attendees with an opportunity to review the retained alignments, eliminated alignments, proposed high speed rail technologies, and construction schedules, and to submit their comments.

A series of Public Hearings was held in October 2003 in three of the four counties at locations along the FHSR corridor. The purpose of this series of Public Hearings was to solicit public comment on the Draft EIS, the proposed FHSR alternatives, the proposed technologies, construction schedules, and other issues related to the development of a high speed rail system.

- Approximately 75 individuals participated in the Hillsborough County public hearing. Ten total comments were received that evening.
- Approximately 112 individuals participated in the Polk County public hearing. Twenty total comments were received that evening.
- Approximately 260 individuals participated in the Orange/Osceola public hearing. Fifty-nine total comments were received that evening.

Comments received through the public hearings are summarized in Chapter 6 of the 2005 FEIS. The public hearings were also documented in detail in the Public Hearing Comments Summary Report prepared under separate cover as a part of the 2005 FEIS.

A newsletter was mailed to all property owners, interested citizens, and local and state officials that summarized the first series of Public Information Workshops, provided a summary of project activities, announced the second series of Public Information Workshops, and listed upcoming events and key project dates.

A web page was developed to provide updated information on FHSR. The following information was displayed on-line: Florida High Speed Rail Screening Report, project schedule, workshop announcements, schedule of elected official and small group meetings, schedule of MPO and committee meetings, workshop results, and handout materials from the meetings. The website also provided a list of frequently asked questions, displayed meeting minutes of all public meetings, and offered viewers the opportunity to submit questions and comments to the project team.

Comments from the following agencies and organizations were addressed in the FEIS:

- Environmental Protection Agency
- Federal Highway Administration
- US Army Corp of Engineers
- Federal Aviation Administration
- Florida Department of Transportation
- Florida Department of Environmental Protection
- South Florida Water Management District
- Southwest Florida Water Management District
- City of Auburndale/Town of Polk City
- City of Lakeland, Community Development Department
- Pinellas County MPO
- Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council
- Environmental Protection Commission of Hillsborough County
- School Board of Orange County
- Polk Group of Sierra Club, Florida Chapter
- League of Environmental Organizations
- Sierra Club, Florida Chapter
- East Polk Committee of 100

The Final Environmental Impact Statement for Florida High Speed Rail from Tampa to Orlando was released in July, 2005. No comments on the FEIS were received.

A comprehensive agency and public outreach program was carried out for the FHSR FEIS Reevaluation. By meeting with interested citizens and agencies during the reevaluation phase, FDOT ensured public participation and input on the changes to the preferred alternative and the resulting potential environmental impacts. Members of the public received direct communication in the form of mailings and the project website.

The public awareness program was developed to insure federal, state, and local officials, property and business owners, interested groups and organizations, and county residents receive the latest information concerning project changes and the status of the reevaluation activities.

A total of 11 meetings were held with local governments, as shown on **Table C-1**, to obtain information about changes to transportation facilities and land use plans that have occurred since the 2005 FEIS.

Table C-1: Local Government Coordination Meetings

Organization(s)	Date	Location
Various Transportation / Transit Agencies	June 29, 2009	FDOT District Seven; Tampa, Florida
Various Planning and Transportation Agencies	June 30, 2009	FDOT District Five Urban Office; Orlando, Florida
Orange County	July 20, 2009	Orange County Offices; Orlando, Florida
City of Lakeland, Polk County, Polk County TPO	July 20, 2009	City of Lakeland Offices; Lakeland, Florida
City of Tampa	July 21, 2009	FDOT District Seven; Tampa, Florida
Greater Orlando Airport Authority	July 21, 2009	GOAA Annex Building; Orlando, Florida
City of Orlando	August 12, 2009	City of Orlando; Orlando, Florida
Tampa Bay Area Regional Authority and Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority	August 13, 2009	FDOT District Seven; Tampa, Florida
City of Plant City and Hillsborough County	August 13, 2009	FDOT District Seven; Tampa, Florida
University of South Florida Polytechnic	August 13, 2009	FDOT District One; Bartow, Florida
International Drive/ETC	August 14, 2009	Embassy Suites; Orlando, Florida

Source: PBS&J, Sept. 2009

In addition an environmental agency coordination meeting was held on September 11, 2009. Invitees included the Environmental Technical Advisory Teams from Districts One, Five, and Seven. Three Public Information Meetings were held along the project corridor in September 2009. This series of meetings provided the public with an opportunity to review the information on the FHSR reevaluation process and results. The meeting included a video presentation and aerial exhibits and displays for the purpose of enhancing public understanding of the changes expected to the proposed project. All oral and written comments received were documented as part of the project records. A summary of these meetings are included in Public Involvement, Section 7 and Appendix C of the FEIS Reevaluation.

- Approximately 77 individuals participated in the Tampa Public Information Meeting. Ten written comments were submitted at the meeting, including two from elected officials: St. Petersburg City Councilman Wengay “Newt” Newton, and Florida Representative Betty Reed (District 59). One comment and one request for information were received via email.
- Approximately 160 individuals attended the Lakeland Public Information Meeting. Forty-eight written comments were submitted at the meeting, and one was received by mail. One request for project information was received by email.
- Approximately 65 individuals attended the Orlando Public Information Meeting. A total of six (6) written comments were submitted at the meeting.

The Florida High Speed Rail Corridor including Tampa to Orlando and continuing to Miami has received substantial support from federal and state elected officials, counties and cities throughout the corridor, local and regional planning organizations, business development organizations and partnerships, transit agencies and major businesses. **Table C-2** identifies resolutions and letters of support throughout Florida for the continued advancement and construction of high speed rail in the state.

Florida High Speed Rail Record of Decision

Table C-2: Resolutions and Letters of Support

Sender	#	Date	Type
State of Florida Governor Charlie Crist and Cabinet		September 15, 2009	Resolution
Florida State Senator Mike Fasano, 11 th District		August 13, 2009	Letter
Florida Legislator- Arthenia Joyner State Senator, 18 th District; Paula Dockery State Senator, 15 th District;; Mike Bennett State Senator, 21 st District; Evelyn Lynn State Senator, 7 TH District; Dennis Jones State Senator, 13 th District; Steve Oelrich State Senator, 14 th District; Faye Culp State Representative, 57 th District; Janet Long State Representative, 51 st District; Jim Frishe State Representative, 54 th District; Peter Nehr State Representative, 48 th District; Bill Galvano State Representative, 68 th District; Ken Roberson State Representative, 71 st District; Joe Gibbons State Representative, 105 th District; Richard Steinberg State Representative, 106 th District; Bill Heller State Representative, 52 nd District; Michael Scionti State Representative, 58 th District; Mike Horner State Representative, 79 th District		August 18, 2009	Letter
Florida State Senator Nan Rich, 34 th District		August 17, 2009	Letter
Congress of the United States, Suzanne M. Kosmas		September 8, 2009	Letter
Congress of the United States, Kathy Castor		October 1, 2009	Letter
Congress of the United States, Adam H. Putnam		September 30, 2009	Letter
Florida House of Representative Ronald A. Brise		September 11, 2009	Letter
Florida State Representative Seth McKeel, 63 rd District		August 14, 2009	Letter
Florida House of Representative Tom Anderson, 45 th District		August 31, 2009	Letter
Miami-Dade County Chairman Dennis Moss		August 21, 2009	Letter
Walt Disney World Co.		September 28, 2009	Letter
Universal Studio		October 2, 2009	Letter
Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce		July 1, 2009	Resolution
City of Orlando		August 13, 2009	Resolution
MetroPlan Orlando	09-18 09-19 09-20	August 12, 2009	Resolution
University of South Florida		September 2, 2009	Letter
Lakeland Area Chamber of Commerce		August 26, 2009	Resolution
Citrus Connection –Lakeland Area Mass Transit	09-02	September 21, 2009	Letter
Greater Orlando Aviation Authority		August 19, 2009	Resolution
Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council	2009-04	September 14, 2009	Resolution
Richard Crotty, Orange County Mayor		July 1, 2009	Letter
Orange County Board of County Commissioners	2009-M-34 2009-M-36	August 11, 2009	Resolution
Osceola County Board of County Commissioners	09-066R 09-067R	August 17, 2009	Resolution

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Sender	#	Date	Type
Polk County Board of County Commissioners		August 18, 2009	Resolution
Seminole County Board of County Commissioners		August 17, 2009	Letter
Polk County Board of County Commissioners	2009-182	August 18, 2009	Resolution
Volusia County Metropolitan Planning Organization	2009-21	August 25, 2009	Resolution
Volusia County Council	2009-140	October 1, 2009	Resolution
City Council of the City of Tampa	2009-942	September 24, 2009	Resolution
City of Plant City	127-2009 128-2009	August 10, 2009	Resolution
City of Lakeland	4778/09- 0444	September 8, 2009	Resolution
City of St. Cloud		September 9, 2009	Letter
City of Maitland, Douglas Kinson, Mayor		August 11, 2009	Letter
Florida Transportation Commission		September 3, 2009	Resolution
Jacksonville Regional Chamber of Commerce		September 30, 2009	Resolution
South Florida Regional Business Alliance		July 9, 2009	Resolution
Miami Dade Expressway Authority	09-05	July 28, 2009	Resolution
Greater Miami Convention & Visitors Bureau		September 29, 2009	Resolution
Tampa Bay Partnership		August 21, 2009	Letter
Central Florida Partnership		August 24, 2009	Letter
Florida Metropolitan Planning Organization Advisory Council		August 5, 2009	Letter
Audubon of Florida		August 24, 2009	Letter
Florida Institute of Consulting Engineers		August 20, 2009	Letter
Connect Us		August 24, 2009	Letter
Connect Us		October 1, 2009	Letter
Central Florida Development Council		August 19, 2009	Resolution
Florida Building & Construction Trades Council		August 24, 2009	Letter
Amalgamated Transit Union		November 15, 2008	Resolution
Hillsborough Metropolitan Planning Organization		August 4, 2009	Letter
Hillsborough County City-County Planning Commission		September 28, 2009	Letter
Polk County Transit Authority	09-02	August 26, 2009	Resolution
Polk Transportation Planning Organization	2009-04	August 13, 2009	Resolution
Polk County Tourist Development Council		October 1, 2009	Resolution
Manatee Chamber of Commerce		August 25, 2009	Resolution
Tampa Downtown Partnership		May 21, 2009	Resolution
Efficient Transportation for the Community of Central Florida (ETC)		September 14, 2009	Letter
Floridians for Better Transportation		October 2, 2009	Letter
Winter Haven Area Transit Policy Board	2009-01	September 9, 2009	Resolution
Florida Transportation Builders Association, Inc		September 28, 2009	Letter

Table C-2: Resolutions and Letters of Support

Sender	#	Date	Type
Ross Vecchio Attorneys at Law, Dennis Ross		September 15, 2009	Letter
Ming Court		September 29, 2009	Letter
Home Builders Association of Metro Orlando		August 26, 2009	Resolution
Polk County Board of County Commissioners		July 22, 2009	Letter
Central FL MPO Alliance	2009-03	October 16, 2009	Resolution
Greater Miami Chamber of Commerce		September 29, 2009	Letter
Town of Melbourne Village	2008-09	September 23, 2009	Resolution
City of Margate	11-548	October 7, 2009	Resolution
East Polk Committee		September 4, 2009	Resolution
City Commission of the City of Hollywood	R-2009-354	November 18, 2009	Resolution