



Thomasville Road Multi-Use Path Feasibility Study – Live Question & Answer Session #1

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Some comments and questions were reworded for clarity

Jack Kostrzewa, CRTPA: My name is Jack Kostrzewa, I'm the project manager for the Thomasville Road Multi-Use Path. One of the things that we were looking at in terms of this project is having these Q&A sessions along with the virtual room. If you have not gone to the virtual room, there's an opportunity in there to look around at more information, some maps, some ideas about the project itself. Let me first say that we wanted to do a quick presentation and then open it up for questions or comments that you've got regarding the project. The project began about a little over a year ago, and we have been working with Kimley-Horn and Associates. Kate, Lindsay, and David are from Kimley-Horn and Associates, and with me tonight from CRTPA is Suzanne Lex. The project itself begins at Betton Road and terminates at the Market District, which is North of I-10 and really kind of jumped off at Thomasville Road. We're thinking maybe around the Metropolitan Blvd area, Live Oak plantation area. We've gone through this process, we've done a lot of the gathering of information, existing conditions, taking a look at what's out there, you know where the utilities are, trees, and so forth, and we've kind of taken the approach that what we're going to be doing is going out first, determining the feasibility of the project itself, and then enter into these next phases of public involvement. We'll take the input that we get from you all will up with some alternatives and come back in a couple months to present that information to you in terms of what we foresee as an option to move forward with. So, if you're joining us and you have questions about like where's the right-of-way? Or do you need right-of-way? Are you going to take any of my property? How much is the project going to Cost? When is the construction of the project? Those are the kind of things that we don't know. At this point, we're just identifying, again, the existing conditions and we will come back with some alternatives in a couple of months to present to you in a similar virtual meeting format. If we do have an opportunity to go out and have public meetings, we'll certainly pursue that and set up something along the way when we have an opportunity to. So, with that information, I'm going to turn it over to Kate and she's going to give you a brief overview of the virtual room itself. So, if you have an opportunity to go and you haven't been there, we can put the link in the chat for people to use.

Katelyn Widness, Kimley-Horn: If you haven't had a chance to look at the virtual room, what we have in there is a lot of information that has been developed and gathered during feasibility phase of this project. Lindsay just put the link in there if you'd like to open that and haven't had a chance to yet. A lot of what that includes is project background information – why this is a significant corridor when it comes to multimodal connectivity in our community, how it relates to other projects that are happening within this area of Tallahassee and Leon County, as well as information about what we've gathered during feasibility related to stakeholders that we've met with, some frequently asked questions based on those stakeholders, what type of challenges we're seeing out there, as well as the completed activities, which is a lot of site visits, we've gone out there and walked the corridor multiple times. We've biked the corridor multiple times. We've collected some right-of-way data based on the property appraiser's website, and coordination with Tallahassee Leon County Planning Department to understand some of the trees that are out there. So really, it's just been a lot of data gathering and that information is presented in the virtual room with opportunities for you to provide your comments which we will also take here tonight. So that's really what we want to do, is answer any questions you might have, take any comments related to the information or about this project. Like Jack said, we want to gather this



information to then be able to come up with some alternatives to present to the public during this next round of public engagement. At the top of your screen you should have a smiley face with a hand next to it, and that's your ability to raise your hand. If you want and you have a question or comment, you could raise your hand. You can also go in there and there is a. It looks like a quote bubble at the top. You can press on that and you should have a conversation that shows up on the right side of your screen where you can go in there and you can type in a question if you prefer that as well to comment. Like I mentioned, we're recording this. We're going to transcribe it as well, so will have all of this a part of the public engagement process and it will be available on the CRTPA's website after next week's Q&A session, which is on Monday. People can go in there, view the conversation and be able to look at any of the questions or comments that we gathered. With that, I'll see if anybody has any questions or comments to kick us off with tonight. We'll try to keep people muted as much as possible just so there isn't background noise. If you have a question or comment, we'd love to hear it. We've already gathered some great comments through the virtual website and gotten some good information so far, so that's exactly what we're looking for.

Jack Kostrzewa: I see Mary Kay raised her hand.

Mary Kay Falconer: One question I had, I'm thinking maybe this is for a different phase, is the safety standards that are followed by FDOT for Thomasville Road and I think the information that was provided in the virtual room was about ADA compliance. On one side of the road we do seem to be ADA compliant, on the west side we are not. Jack or Kate, is there anything more that you can provide on that as far as clarifying what the standards are, and is there going to be other design elements brought into this, such as complete streets or anything else, that will be important on safety standards?

Jack Kostrzewa: From the perspective of complete streets, we're only dealing with a shared use path. We're not looking at reinventing the corridor. A lot of times, what's associated with complete streets is taking a whole section of a street and identifying all the features to anticipatorily make improvements to the roadway, to the shared use path, to the sidewalks to make that whole area more multimodal if there's nothing there. In this instance, we are focusing on just the shared use path. But there are features that will be looking at in terms of safety from an intersection perspective at those signalized intersections along the corridor so that we can have safe crossings for people. We're looking at areas where we're not having to put people in a situation where the slope is too steep, such as what we're looking at for Armistead Road if you're going down towards McCord Park. But in terms of ADA standards, the sidewalk out there on the east side right now, if I remember correctly, does meet ADA standards. The one on the west side, I would hardly call a sidewalk, it's more like a patch of asphalt that was spread out. Now if that was brought up to standard, you have to do a lot of earthwork to make that happen, but that's something that has to be determined through this process in terms of putting the path on the east side or west side, and it was certainly a lot more earth work to make the west side ADA compliant.

Mary Kay Falconer: OK, so you're envisioning that the multi-use path is definitely going to be on the east side, right? We might not be doing as much infrastructure modification on that side.

Jack Kostrzewa: We're looking at we're looking at all options at this point, we're not eliminating anything until we get some input from you all, and then move forward with what we can introduce in the corridor



from a perspective of minimizing right-of-way, if we need it at all. And there are parts in here that are very tightly squeezed in there, but at the same time we don't want to keep crossing the road either. We don't want to keep crossing Thomasville Road to avoid right-of-way takings or anything like that. But at this point, we're looking at property appraisal maps and thinking that will be pretty much in a good spot to not acquire right-of-way.

Mary Kay Falconer: I was just wondering if you have any more neighborhoods to contact and to communicate or present to that you know of?

Jack Kostrzewa: We have one presentation and it's next week like next Wednesday. We sent out notifications to all the neighborhoods along the corridor, which includes a lot of the of the businesses as well. We have had several meetings with businesses and several meetings with homeowners. So, we do have one scheduled for next week. Pat Martin - you can go ahead and unmute yourself and ask away.

Pat Martin: OK, you know what? This strikes me as a solution in search of a problem. And I've lived here since 1983 and I see maybe one bicyclist every few days. And I live in a little neighborhood that has one in and out street, which is a little private road next to Oven Park and we are pretty much blown away by this, and not in a positive way. So, I just don't get it. I don't understand. I think you're solving a problem that isn't here. I think you should consider that. I don't know where you got your money or what kind of dedicated money it is, but I'm not sure you're going to spend it wisely.

Joanne Southerland: This is Joanna. I ride a lot, and so it would be really nice to have a safe ride on Thomasville Road, before somebody gets killed. There are a lot of cyclists in our community and there are not that many safe paths. This is a really important road to get to places.

Jack Kostrzewa: So just to try to fill everyone in a little bit, there's a number of projects that have identified this corridor in the past. We started off with the Greenways Master Plan that was completed by the Tallahassee-Leon County Planning Department. In addition to that, the Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan for Tallahassee and Leon County also identified the project as a linkage between Midtown and Market District. Using the same kind of principle of having major arterial roadways, we want to have major arterial bikeways to make connections to neighborhoods, parks, and schools. The idea is to tie these activity centers together, such as Midtown and Market District in order to facilitate that. Obviously, there will be a lot of people, I got that up and down that corridor every day, driving to work. And I see people out there walking and riding bikes and running all the time. So to say that they're not out there, maybe it's just when you're going by that they're not out there, but there are a lot of people out there that utilize corridor for transportation and for getting back and forth from area to area. Whether it's just to go out for a run or to make their way to Midtown or to the Market District for food or for whatever reason, they're going shopping as well. I've had a couple conversations with people who say that they that they use it pretty regularly biking to go into the Market District and then back home around the Lafayette Park area. So, there are people out there that are looking for it, and it's an identified start for what we're trying to do is to build this system to make sure that we're addressing the needs of what we're anticipating to be as a larger connection to regional networks as well as to more local networks as identified in the Bike and Pedestrian Master Plan

Pat Martin: I don't deny that it's used for people to walk. I walk up to three or four miles every day. I'm a



big Walker and there are a lot of people are not. A lot of people in my neighborhood walk, and in fact, almost all of us do, so I'm not arguing against that. I just think its overkill and I think it's going to cause a lot of problems for our neighborhood. I don't know how other neighborhoods feel about it, but I would think that the one at Laverne Woodlands would have similar feelings to ours. And I suspect the one up at Live Oak Plantation would as well. I'm willing to listen to you, but I really do think you've decided this without real justification. So, one person likes to bike there, they don't even ride on the sidewalk now when there's no one on the sidewalk. In Durango, Colorado, they have a sign that says if there are no pedestrians, bikers use the sidewalk. And why can't we do that here? We have a wonderful sidewalk on the east side, and that's just a simple solution with a little paint. Instead of building a 10 foot or 12 foot or whatever it is. I mean I love the Saint marks trail, and I walk on it and I ride on it, then right on it, but I don't think it's appropriate in this neighborhood. I'll listen to you, and I'll try to be open minded, but this was very worrisome to me. Thank you for listening.

Jack Kostrzewa: It's not a problem and one of the things that we always have is an option not to move forward with the project. That's always an option. We don't make the decisions; we will move this to the CRTPA board, and they'll make the decision based on the information that we gathered from the feasibility study project as well as the public involvement component.

Pat Martin: So, it will not go to the City Commission?

Jack Kostrzewa: It's not a city project. This is a Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency or CRTPA project. Thomasville Road is a state road, CRTPA are the ones who facilitate transportation planning efforts on behalf of the State and act as the conduit between the community and the Department of Transportation for state roads

Pat Martin: Does that mean FDOT is involved in this?

Jack Kostrzewa: Involved in it in the sense that they always wait for the CRTPA respond to them on behalf of the community. So, when we have a project, this is why we go out and we get the information during the feasibility. We address the public involvement component and then our board makes that determination as to whether we move forward or not. And if the community says they don't want it, then our board will say "Thank you, we're done," and then we won't take it to the Department at that point. If the community says yes, they want it and the board also says yes. Let's move forward, then we start more detailed discussions with the Department of Transportation because we will say the community wants this. This is what they're looking for.

Pat Martin: Is the board a combination of City and County Commission?

Jack Kostrzewa: Sure, it's a good question. The CRTPA board is made up of Tallahassee City Commission members and Leon County board members. It's made up of members from Jefferson County, Wakulla County, Gadsden County, and Gadsden County cities. So, it's a four-county region.

Pat Martin: Yes, that's I'm familiar with that. Thank you.

Jack Kostrzewa: Jane had a question comment.



Jane: I live in Killearn and I am really looking forward to this trail. I think it will be very helpful for the people in the Northeast to be able to get to other places in a way other than with the car. I'm really looking forward to that opportunity to let me go into Midtown or down to Woodgate or other places like that, and feel a lot safer while doing it. And one of the other things I was wondering is, is there going to be a connection north at some point.

Jack Kostrzewa: That's a great question. So right now, there's a couple different groups working to facilitate multimodal construction in the area. Blueprint is building a park which is around the Premier Gym area near Maclay Commerce Boulevard. There's a big storm water facility in a big field there and Blueprint is working on building up a park in there. In addition to that, the city is working with them to build a sidewalk on the west side up to a point to about the entrance to Premier Gym is. In that area there's a bunch of things going on, what we're trying to do is make that connection from that park and down to Thomasville Road, because a lot of people, I've talked to about 5 or 6 people who ride regularly and are road riders, who will not use or go anywhere near the interchange. And what they do is go to Live Oak Plantation and go to Timberlane School Road, and then up Timberlane Road, which is kind of circuitous route, but that's the safest route for them. Those are the kind of connections that we're looking to make, so when it when you're coming out of Killearn, you can jump on Maclay Road, you can come down Maclay Boulevard, you can go to the park, use the park, cut in through Timberlane Road, come down Timberlane School Road, come down Live Oak Plantation Road and make the connection to the trail that we're looking at on the west side of the road. We're guessing the west side at that point, so that connection would be something that would take you down into the Downtown area and then the connection into Midtown, which are two other projects that we've got going on as well, so all the way down to Monroe Street.

Jane: That would be great.

Katelyn Widness: Jane, there's actually another proposed project on North Meridian Road which will obviously be very challenging, but there are conversations of how do we get from Maclay Road up to places like Bannerman and Orchard Pond where there are other existing facilities to expand this into more of that regional connectivity, as well as get more neighborhoods able to access, like you said, other areas without having to use their cars. I believe that's a part of the Greenways Master Plan.

Jane: Right, because if we could get over to Orchard Pond, that would be great.

Katelyn Widness: Yep, exactly, and then that can bring this all the way into Gadsden County and Havana and that's that regional connectivity.

Jane: Fabulous. What is the timeline for this if it goes forward?

Jack Kostrzewa: We have design money and if it moves forward, that would probably be starting in about a year from now. And then after that, we don't know. Since it was identified in Blueprint's plan, we're looking for a partnership with Blueprint to move forward. If we were to move into construction, we would be looking at a partnership there. So, it's hard to say. Sometimes you have the best of intentions. For instance, for right now. Or, you know, we look at the right-of-way. We're using the



property appraiser's office, and we may run into a situation where the on-ground truth in the right-of-way is a little bit different than what's on the property appraiser's website, so when we get into design we will have a better idea, if the project moves into design, we'll have a better idea of what we're facing in terms of what the needs are, and if we don't need right-of-way, then we can skip an entire step in the process and go right to construction, which will probably cut about a year to a year and a half off of the project when it gets to that point. So, at this point, the real answer is I can't tell you right now. We're not sure.

Jane: OK, thank you.

William Clark: This is Bill Clark. Can you hear me?

Jack & Kate: Yes.

William Clark: I live next door to Pat Martin. We live sandwiched between Oven Park and the Thomasville Baptist Church. Coming in by our little subdivision changes all the time. Number one, you can't see anybody coming going towards Betton because there's no view there. Number two, the people in the Baptist Church don't seem to know that we're here. I don't know if they're going to know that there's people going up and down on bikes or walking or running, but every time you come out to Thomasville Road it's like danger waiting. It's just a hazardous area, so I think you should take that into consideration.

Jack Kostrzewa: Absolutely. We are well aware of the situation with Rose Hollow. About a year and a half/two years ago, it may be longer, we went out and there was a safety study that was completed and there are some issues that they identified in that study. So, we're well aware of what the issues are of trying to get in and out of Rose Hollow and the difficulties with Oven Park and the Church don't make it any easier. As we move forward, we will keep that in mind, and as what this project itself will be looking at is safety, in terms of signage, making sure that people are aware of what's going on, so it's a big component of what we're looking at. We don't want people in a worse situation in there in now, for sure.

William Clark: OK, thank you.

Katelyn Widness: Any other questions or comments? Mary Kay?

Mary Kay Falconer: Yeah, I just want to make sure I register my thoughts on Thomasville Road at this point. I've biked it. I've walked it. At this point, I think it is very unsafe for both pedestrians and for cyclists, and look forward to the multi-use path improving the safety of those who like to walk along that road and bike it. So even crossing the Thomasville Road, the intersections Jack that you had mentioned, I don't think that any of those are safe to tell you the truth. Again, those running red lights. It is a very risky situation and the speed limit on Thomasville Road, again at 45 MPH. Blairstone Road is only 35 MPH, and the design of Blairstone is much, much better for pedestrians and cyclists. Thomasville Road with 45 MPH and then people going 50, 55, 60 MPH, there is no way that the current situation is safe for pedestrians or cyclists. Any mode like that would be, I think, in jeopardy. So just wanted to make sure I expressed my opinion on that.



Joanne Southerland: I second what Mary Kay says. And I live in the area. It's not safe at all. And I've traveled the world, and I think that Tallahassee could do better in terms of in terms of multi-use paths and routes. and multi-use.

Jack Kostrzewa: Whoever was just speaking, if you can repeat that because I didn't get the last 30 seconds so you can repeat that.

Joanne Southerland: I just said that I've traveled all over the world and used multi-use trails pretty much everywhere and I think Tallahassee could do better, especially on Thomasville Road since it is such a major artery. And that's just my opinion, and I would like to be able to be safe there. Since it's so pretty, thanks.

Jack Kostrzewa: Thanks for repeating that. It was just very, very garbled so thank you. Suzanne Lex, you have a question?

Suzanne Lex: Perhaps you could touch on if this project were to move forward to the next phase for design. Some of the public involvement and some of the input and consideration that's taken at that time regarding impacts with access and trying to accommodate clear sight, things like that, as part of the next step in in in the process for the trail.

Jack Kostrzewa: We'll come up with some alternatives, including a no build alternative, and we'll take a look at some opportunities because there's always opportunities to improve safety, whether it's at an intersection or whether it's at a business that has a driveway that needs some special considerations because of sight distance where you can't look right and left and see down the road. So those things are all considered. The best thing that we have right now out there is the fact that we have an existing sidewalk that we can always improve upon. So if there's issues out there with the sidewalk now, then they're probably not going to get any better, unless we take a special look at what we're doing in terms of the paths constructions to address those issues and hopefully minimize those impacts that that might occur from that. So, we're always taking a look at those opportunities. Again, in in some instances, we finished the trail down on US 98 and some of the more interesting features that they've introduced into that is, there's a lot of stop signs along that that corridor or for the trail, because in instances where you have a lot of bicyclist on a trail, it doesn't matter whether it's a trail or sidewalk. They are going to be situations where they have to stop, and that's the first part of the course of action is always an educational program. Second thing is when down on that trail, we've also considered you know having to cross the trail. There are two crossings. One is at the signal that is just about across from Wakulla High School, and there's another one on the other side of the Wakulla River which is on the east side of the Wakulla River, and it's an actuated signal that has an all stop condition. So as that signals actuated, everything comes to a stop. And what we found down there is that when you're on that trail and you pull up to that signal whether you hit it or not, people are slowing down and stopping. Even the drivers are learning to change their conditions based on what they see out there. And out there is a very clear line of vision, so it's a little bit different from the perspective of driveways for residential and driveways for businesses. But we will take a look at a lot of the safety issues. which are typically engineering side design issues because at the planning level we're looking at this big, huge overview of the project and



then when you get down on the ground is when we really start getting into the design and taking a look at what opportunities are out there to put things in place to make it safer overall.

Suzanne Lex: Thank you, that's good information to know.

Jack Kostrzewa: And just as a second step, we will go through this process then we'll come back with alternatives based on those comments, and it'll show you graphically what we're talking about in terms of how things would be addressed potentially if the project moves forward, and how those things can be introduced into what we're what we're wanting to do, where a potential crossing may occur based on safety, based on things that are minimized in terms of conflicts with other modes of transportation, such as cars. We want to minimize the impacts and the conflicts that we would have with cars as well as making sure that it's a safe existing signal to make sure that a safe crossing for everybody, whether they're walking, running, or riding a bike.

Suzanne Lex: Thank you.

Jack Kostrzewa: Well if there's no more questions you all can hang out in the room. If you come up with any questions or think about something that you want to ask us, just go ahead. Otherwise will be here as long as need be to answer questions regarding the project. We didn't have a formal presentation of PowerPoint or anything like that, we just wanted to hear from you and get your thoughts on this on the trail itself.

Katelyn Widness: And I would encourage everyone if you haven't been able to yet, to go on to the virtual meeting because there's an option for a comment form so you can provide some more details in there and let us know specificity of why you support this project, or you don't support this project, or you'd like to see it on the east side of the corridor, or west side of the corridor. That's a lot of the information that we're looking for, so I encourage everyone to just fill out one of those forms.

Suzanne Lex: Thank you Kate.

Jack Kostrzewa: And thanks everybody for your input too.