

March 18, 2024



## AGENDA ITEM 7 D

### TOWN OF HAVANA RESOLUTION OF SUPPORT

TYPE OF ITEM: Action

#### STATEMENT OF ISSUE

This item seeks approval of CRTPA Resolution #2024-3-7D (**Attachment 1**) to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) supporting to the Town of Havana's desire to reduce the lanes of US 27 through downtown Havana. **NOTE:** The item was originally considered at the November 2023 CRTPA meeting with members voting to delay action.

#### RECOMMENDED ACTION

Option 1: Adopt CRTPA Resolution #2024-3-7D supporting the Town of Havana's efforts to reduce the lanes of US 27 through downtown Havana.

#### LATEST INFORMATION

This item was first presented to the CRTPA Board at the November 21, 2023, meeting. During discussion of the item, members voted delay action until additional information was received from the Town of Havana. During the discussion, Commissioner NeSmith offered to discuss the item with the Town to gain more clarity on the Town's desire.

At the February 19 CRTPA meeting, Commissioner NeSmith updated the Board on the item and noted that he was scheduled to speak with the Town of Havana the following week and would bring back information updated related to the conversation. Subsequent to the February CRTPA meeting, Commissioner NeSmith notified Greg Slay, CRTPA Executive Director, that he had spoken with Kendrah Wilkerson, Town Manager. As a result of the conversation, Commissioner NeSmith stated that Gadsden County does not have any issues with the Town's desire to reduce lanes on US 27 through downtown Havana.

#### HISTORY AND ANALYSIS

In [February 2020](#), the CRTPA approved a study ("The Town of Havana Main Street Assessment") that evaluated the feasibility of reducing the lanes of US 27 through downtown Havana (between 9th and 5th avenues) in order to improve the walkability of Main Street and minimize impacts of the roadway within the downtown area.

The assessment identified four alternatives including a recommended alternative (Alternative 4) which proposed three lanes (two northbound and one southbound) in order to maintain northbound capacity for evacuation purposes. The study identified that reducing the lanes on this portion of US 27 through downtown Havana from four lanes to two lanes would not adversely affect traffic flow.

In late 2023, the CRTPA was contacted by a consultant representative for the Town of Havana that is identifying downtown planning efforts through a study funded by the State of Florida. Included in these efforts is a recommendation to reduce lanes on US 27 through downtown Havana, as desired by the Town. Specifically, the Town is seeking to reduce the total number of lanes from four to three (resulting in a single north and south bound lane that is divided by a shared left turn lane). More information related to the Town's desire to reduce lanes on US 27 is contained in a memorandum received on November 13, 2023 (see **Attachment 2**).

To that end, the CRTPA was requested to support the Town's request for lane reduction on US 27 in downtown and has developed a resolution for provision to the FDOT that supports the Town of Havana's efforts.

## **OPTIONS**

- Option 1: Adopt CRTPA Resolution #2024-3-7D supporting the Town of Havana's efforts to reduce the lanes of US 27 through downtown Havana.  
(RECOMMENDED)
  
- Option 2: Provide other direction.

## **ATTACHMENTS**

- Attachment 1 - CRTPA Resolution #2024-3-7D
- Attachment 2 – Havana Memorandum

**CRTPA RESOLUTION 2024-3-7D**

**A RESOLUTION OF THE CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AGENCY (CRTPA)  
SUPPORTING THE TOWN OF HAVANA’S EFFORTS TO  
REDUCE TO THE NUMBER OF LANES ON US 27**

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**Whereas**, the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency (CRTPA) is the organization designated by the Governor of Florida on August 17, 2004 together with the State of Florida, for carrying out provisions of 23 U.S.C. 134 (h) and (i)(2), (3) and (4); CFR 450.324, 326, 328, 330, and 332; and FS 339.175 (5) and (7); and

**Whereas**, the purpose of the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency is to "Create an integrated regional multimodal transportation network that provides the most options for moving people and goods economically, effectively and safely while protecting the environment, promoting economic development and maintaining a high quality of life with sustainable development patterns"; and

**Whereas**, the CRTPA adopted in February 2020 the Town of Havana Main Street Assessment that identified that reducing lanes on US 27 through downtown Havana from four lanes to two lanes does not adversely affect traffic flow.

**NOW, THEREFORE LET IT BE RESOLVED BY THE CAPITAL REGION TRANSPORTATION PLANNING AGENCY THAT:**

The CRTPA supports efforts by the Town of Havana to reduce the total number of lanes on US 27 from 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue to 9<sup>th</sup> Avenue from four to three. These improvements would consist of a single south bound lane, a single north bound lane divided by a shared left turn lane.

Passed and duly adopted by the Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency on this 18<sup>th</sup> day of March 2024.

**Capital Region Transportation Planning Agency**

**Attest:**

**By:** \_\_\_\_\_

Quincee Messersmith, Chair

**By:** \_\_\_\_\_

Greg Slay, Executive Director



## MEMORANDUM

**DATE:** November 13, 2023

**TO:** Greg Slay, Executive Director, CRTPA

**CC:** Kendrah Wilkerson, Town Manager, Havana  
Greg Burke, CRTPA  
Suzanne Lex, CRTPA

**FROM:** Justin Ford, P.E.

**SUBJECT:** US 27 Lane Reductions – Town of Havana, Gadsden County, FL

**BACKGROUND**

In 2022, the Town of Havana received funding from the Florida Dept. of Economic Opportunity (now FloridaCommerce) to complete the planning efforts for improvements to their downtown area. As the economic center of the community, improvements to this area were deemed critical to ensure the commercial viability of the area into the future. Through this funding, the Town was able to procure Dewberry Engineers to complete a study of the area, meet with stake holders and develop a Feasibility study of the desired improvements. The outcome of the feasibility study resulted in three primary areas of focus, the pedestrian safety/experience along US 27, hardscape improvements within the designated downtown area, and utility and drainage upgrades to the area.

As part of Dewberry's due diligence, a coordination call was held with representatives from the CRTPA to discuss options for improvements along US 27 in Havana, from 6<sup>th</sup> Ave to 9<sup>th</sup> Ave. During that call Dewberry was made aware of a study completed by RS&H in the fall of 2019 that evaluated lane reductions within the area of concern. The recommendations outcome of the study was to reduce the total lanes from four to three, a single south bound lane and two north bound lanes. This would allow for greater separation between pedestrians and passing motor vehicles. The CRTPA subsequently voted in February of 2020 to support the project.

Based on this information, Dewberry carried this recommendation forward in the draft feasibility report that was presented to the Town Council on August 29, 2023. During that meeting, several members of the Council noted concerns about left turning movements, and subsequent delays for the southbound traffic. It was requested the Dewberry consider the option of single southbound and northbound lanes, divided by a shared left turn lane.

Following that meeting Dewberry prepared a conceptual layout of the proposed adjustments for consideration by FDOT and the CRTPA. Preliminary discussions were also held with Colby Cleveland from FDOT, District 3 as well as a follow-up conversation with CRTPA staff (Greg Slay, Greg Burke, and Suzanne Lex). Through those conversations it appears that there may some willingness by FDOT to allow the desired lane reductions.

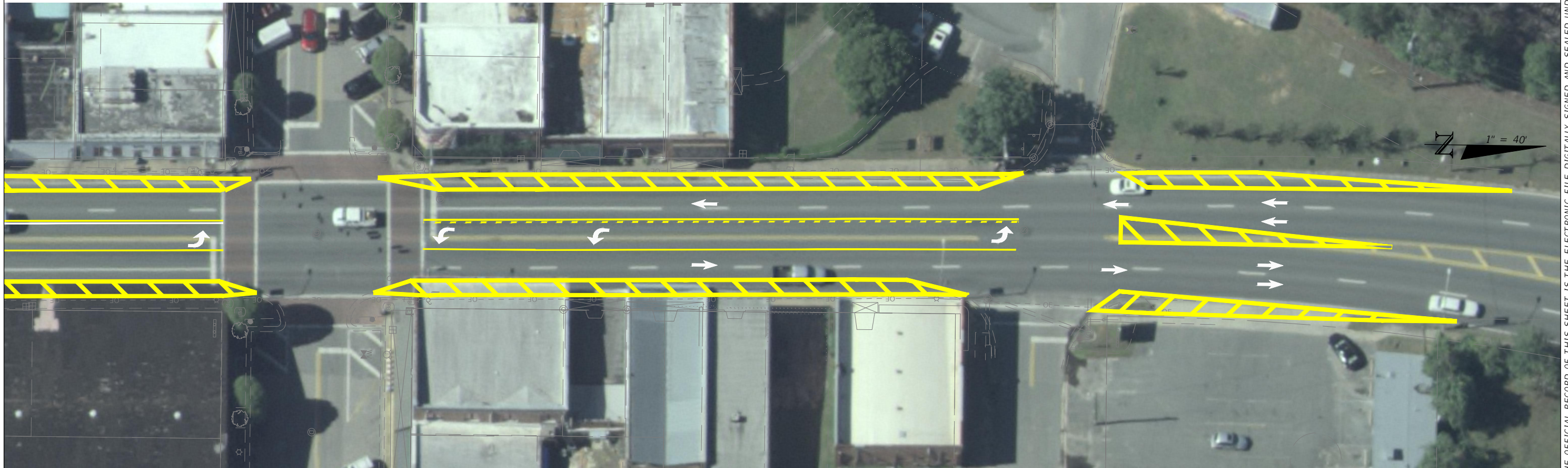
**ANALYSIS**

The proposed improvements come with a series of challenges that must be overcome in order to realize the desired outcome, which is the reduction of the roadway from four existing lanes to three lanes, single north and south bound lanes divided by a shared left turn lane. First, FDOT has clearly indicated that no funding has been allocated for this project, and that if the project were to move forward in the near future, the Town of Havana would be required to support the project financially. The Town understands that challenge and will proactively seek funding sources for these improvements, along with the other improvements identified by the Feasibility Study.

Additionally, the concern regarding capacity reductions to a critical evacuation route have been considered. This concern is based upon the need for a northern evacuation route for residents south of Havana, including Tallahassee/Leon County in the event of a storm or other threat. The Town proposes that in those instances that the shared left turn lane be designated as a north bound lane, and if the need demands, all three lanes be allocated as a north bound evacuation route.

#### **REQUESTED ACTION**

To support the Town of Havana's efforts to improve the downtown experience for residents and visitors, the Town is formally requesting the support of the CRTPA in the form of Board action to recommend FDOT's approval of the modifications to US 27 from 6<sup>th</sup> Ave to 9<sup>th</sup> Ave, reducing the total number of lanes from four to three. These improvements would consist of a single south bound lane, a single north bound lane divided by a shared left turn lane. A concept drawing of these improvements is included as **Attachment A**. A definite timeline for these improvements has not been established; however, having the approval of FDOT for the conceptual modifications will aid in the effort to secure design, permitting and construction funding for the project.



REVISIONS			
DATE	DESCRIPTION	DATE	DESCRIPTION
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**ATTACHMENT A**

HAVANA STREETScape IMPROVEMENT PLANS		
ROAD NO.	COUNTY	FINANCIAL PROJECT ID
---	GADSDEN	---

**MAIN STREET - INTERMIN PLAN VIEW**

SHEET NO.  
6.2

THE OFFICIAL RECORD OF THIS SHEET IS THE ELECTRONIC FILE DIGITALLY SIGNED AND SEALED UNDER RULE 61G15-23.004, F.A.C.