

# Lithia Pinecrest Road

## Project Development & Environment Study

# Frequently Asked Questions

[www.LPCSTUDY.com](http://www.LPCSTUDY.com)

### What is the reason for a Public Hearing?

Each State must have procedures approved by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) to carry out a public involvement/public hearing program pursuant to the Code of Federal Regulations, 23 U.S.C. 128 and 40 CFR parts 1500 through 1508. State public involvement/public hearing procedures must provide for:

- Coordination of public involvement activities and public hearings with the entire National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process.
- Early and continuing opportunities during project development for the public to be involved in the identification of social, economic, and environmental impacts, as well as impacts associated with relocation of individuals, groups, or institutions.
- One or more public hearings or the opportunity for hearing(s) to be held by the State highway agency at a convenient time and place for any Federal-aid project which requires significant amounts of ROW, substantially changes the layout or functions of connecting roadways or of the facility being improved, has a substantial adverse impact on abutting property, otherwise has a significant social, economic, environmental or other effect, or for which the FHWA determines that a public hearing is in the public interest.
- Reasonable notice to the public of either a public hearing or the opportunity for a public hearing. Such notice will indicate the availability of explanatory information. The notice shall also provide information required to comply with public involvement requirements of other laws, Executive Orders, and regulations.

### What is the format for the Public Hearing?

The public hearing will include the Recommended Build Alternative and the No Build Alternative based on the PD&E study results. The hearing will consist of two portions - an open house for the public to view the documents, maps, and provide public comments to the court reporter and the formal portion in which the Hearing Officer will read a prepared statement followed by a video presentation and a formal comment period. Project representatives will be available to answer any questions during the open house portion of the hearing.

All of the project documents and maps will be made available for public review at least 21 days prior to the hearing date at a public library near the project corridor and on the project website at [www.LPCSTUDY.com](http://www.LPCSTUDY.com). A court reporter will be present at the hearing to take public comment and record all the comments made during the formal portion of the hearing. Following the public hearing, the project reports and all the comments from the hearing and the public meetings to date will be compiled into a

Comments and Coordination report. This report and other PD&E study documents will be sent to the FHWA for their review and concurrence so that the FHWA would consider granting approval of the Recommended Build Alternative.

### Is the Recommended Build Alternative consistent with the Hillsborough County 2035 LRTP?

The PD&E study's Recommended Build Alternative is partially consistent with the Hillsborough County Metropolitan Planning Organization's (MPO) 2035 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP) Needs Plan. The 2035 LRTP serves as a guide for coordinated, comprehensive inter-jurisdictional transportation planning throughout Hillsborough County. The 2035 LRTP identifies the location, function and size of new or improved transportation infrastructure for unincorporated Hillsborough County and the cities of Tampa, Temple Terrace and Plant City.

### What about right-of-way acquisition?

We understand that when private property right-of-way (ROW) acquisitions are planned in order to implement a transportation project, you may have questions and concerns. To better educate and inform you about the ROW acquisition process and your rights, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has created real estate acquisition and relocation brochures. These brochures and other education materials may be found on their web site: <http://www.dot.state.fl.us/rightofway/Documents.shtm>. Even though these are FDOT brochures, Hillsborough County will use the processes outlined in the brochures to undertake any ROW acquisition necessary for this project.

### Is Lithia Pinecrest eligible for Federal Economic Stimulus dollars?

Lithia Pinecrest Road is not a "shovel ready" project. A "shovel ready" project is a term used to describe a project that meets the all the eligibility requirements under the existing Federal highway, transit, or other grant program. These requirements would include:

- All necessary design work and ROW acquisition is complete.
- The project has completed all environmental reviews.
- The project is consistent with the State Transportation Improvement Program and, if applicable, the MPO's Transportation Improvement Program.
- The project is ready to be put out to bid, and contracts can be awarded and work underway within 90 days of enactment.

Hillsborough County is performing this PD&E study so the Recommend Alternative could be made eligible for any future federal funding options.

# The Traffic Noise Evaluation Process for Lithia Pinecrest Road (CR 640)

The traffic noise assessment for the Lithia Pinecrest Road has been performed using methodology developed and used in response to Federal regulations. The methodology has been approved by the FHWA. The following briefly summarizes the process:

## Identification of Noise Sensitive Sites

Noise sensitive sites are defined as any property (owner occupied, rented, or leased) where frequent human use occurs and where a lowered noise level would be of benefit. Typical noise sensitive sites are residences, churches, and schools.

## Determination of Traffic Noise Impacts

Future traffic noise levels that may be attributed to the Recommended Build Alternative have been determined. The levels were compared to the FHWA noise abatement criteria. For this project, the residences adjacent to Lithia Pinecrest Road were determined to be affected by traffic noise if the future computer-predicted exterior traffic noise level is 66 dBA (decibels) or more or if the residences are predicted to experience a traffic noise increase of 15 dBA or more when compared to existing noise levels. If a noise sensitive site is determined to be affected by traffic noise due to the implementation of the Recommended Build Alternative, abatement was considered.

## Consideration of Noise Abatement Measures

For most roadway improvement projects, the typical noise abatement (i.e., reduction) measure is a noise barrier. Noise barriers can be made of various materials but are normally constructed of concrete. The barriers are also typically located on the public right-of-way between the roadway and the affected noise sensitive sites. To be considered a feasible noise abatement measure, analysis must demonstrate that a noise barrier would provide at least a 5 dBA reduction in traffic noise at a noise sensitive site.

The cost reasonableness of providing noise barriers as an abatement measure was evaluated. This evaluation ensured that prudent economic judgment is used in the expenditure of public funds. Among other factors, this evaluation considered the number of noise sensitive sites benefited and the cost of a barrier.

The results of the barrier analysis indicated that barriers would not be considered a feasible or reasonable noise abatement measure for affected residences in unplatted areas or for the affected residences in the Van Sant, High Point Estates, and Oakwood Ravine subdivisions. Although the analysis indicates that some of the affected residences in Lithia Oaks, the one affected residence in Fish Hawk Trails and the affected residences in Fish Hawk Ranch would be benefitted by noise barriers, the cost of the barriers is not considered reasonable (the cost exceeds the guideline).

Noise thermometer

