MEMORANDUM

To: Council Members

From: Staff

Date: December 12, 2008 Council Meeting

Subject: Intergovernmental Coordination and Review Log

The attached Intergovernmental Coordination and Review (ICR) Log presents four applications for federal funding of projects or programs. The Review Log contains the applicant’s name, project location, project description, federal funding source, and the amount of funds requested, as well as designation of Notification of Intent if it is a preliminary application. Staff recommendations are provided on the consistency of funding applications with the Strategic Regional Policy Plan.

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Total $270,000 $270,000

Recommendation

Council should approve staff comments and authorize their distribution.

Attachments
TREASURE COAST REGIONAL PLANNING COUNCIL
INTERGOVERNMENTAL COORDINATION AND REVIEW LOG

TCRPC NUMBER: 08-PB-10-01 SAI# FL200810084460C

APPLICANT: Florida Department of Transportation

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Advance Notification – SR 710 Port of Palm Beach Connector

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has submitted an Advance Notification package for the Planning, Development and Environment (PD&E) study of the proposed SR 710 Port of Palm Beach Connector. The project proposes to re-connect SR 710 with US-1 by building a new road (SR 710 connector) south of the Port of Palm Beach between Old Dixie Highway (Dixie) and US-1.

The project would provide a grade separated crossing of the Florida East Coast (FEC) Railroad. The proposed SR 710 Connector corridor would be located just south of the existing Florida Power and Light (FPL) transmission right-of-way immediately north of 59th Street in West Palm Beach.

The main objective of this project is to provide a direct connection from SR 710 to the Port’s South Gate at US-1, which opened in August 2008. The project is also intended to improve the intersection delays in Riviera Beach and promote east-west connectivity. A grade separated crossing may reduce idle time during train runs by diverting local traffic via the SR 710 connector road. According to FDOT, the connector road is anticipated to facilitate emergency service response to St. Mary’s Hospital and redirect cargo traffic off of US-1.

All of the options investigated for the SR 710 Connector Road under the Port of Palm Beach Corridor Analysis Study required the relocation of a few residential or commercial properties. Further analysis is needed during the Project Development and Environment Study. In order to minimize the unavoidable effects of right-of-way acquisition and displacement of people, FDOT will carry out a right-of-way and relocation program in accordance with Florida Statutes.
FUNDING AGENCY: None

PROJECT COSTS: N/A

RECOMMENDATIONS: See project comment sheet.

AGENCIES CONTACTED: Palm Beach County
Palm Beach Metropolitan Planning Organization
Town of Mangonia Park
City of Riviera Beach
City of West Palm Beach
08-PB-10-01: SR 710 Port of Palm Beach Connector
Advance Notification of PD&E Study

Introduction

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) has submitted an Advance Notification package for the Planning, Development and Environment (PD&E) study of the proposed SR 710 Port of Palm Beach Connector. The project proposes to re-connect SR 710 with US-1 by building a new road (SR 710 connector) south of the Port of Palm Beach between Old Dixie Highway (Dixie) and US-1 (Figure 1). The project would provide a grade separated crossing of the Florida East Coast (FEC) Railroad. The proposed SR 710 Connector corridor would be located just south of the existing Florida Power and Light (FPL) transmission right of way immediately north of 59th Street in West Palm Beach (Figure 2).

The PD&E study is part of the Project Development phase of the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process. According to the ETDM manual, “the intent of the process is that through early agency input and continuing involvement, an acceptable project will be developed – a project that addresses the mobility need while simultaneously protecting the extremely valuable community and environmental resources which make Florida unique”.

The main objective of this project is to provide a direct connection from SR 710 to the Port’s South Gate at US-1, which opened in August 2008. The project is also intended to improve the intersection delays in Riviera Beach and promote east-west connectivity. A grade separated crossing may reduce idle time during train runs by diverting local traffic via the SR 710 connector road. According to FDOT, the connector road is anticipated to facilitate emergency service response to St. Mary’s Hospital and redirect cargo traffic off of US-1.

Background

SR 710 previously extended to an intersection with US-1, but currently it terminates at Old Dixie Highway within the City of Riviera Beach. The SR 710 and US-1 intersection was eliminated when US-1 was elevated over the Port via the “Skypass” bridge. As a result, FDOT initiated a study focused on developing alternatives to re-establish the link between SR 710 and US-1. The alternative corridor, later known as the “SR 710 Connector” road was carried forward as the only viable corridor alternative for further study. The original plan was for an at-grade crossing south of the Port at the intersection of the new SR 710 Connector Road and Dixie Highway. The FEC Railway later denied the permit for the proposed at-grade crossing due to safety concerns. As a result, the Port of Palm Beach Corridor Analysis Study was initiated to investigate potential overpass or
underpass options that would connect Dixie to the SR 710 Connector Road and provide grade separation at the FEC railroad tracks.

The Port of Palm Beach Corridor Analysis Study evaluated several alternative corridors. The study recommends developing the SR 710 Connector Road corridor with either an overpass or an underpass. The overpass option elevates Dixie at a T-grade separated intersection with the proposed SR 710 Connector Road (Figure 3). The underpass options involve depressing both Dixie and the connector road and connecting them as an open tunnel to provide the grade separated link at the FEC railroad.

The study area for the corridor analysis includes the Port of Palm Beach, St. Mary’s Hospital, the Royal Palm Memorial Garden Funeral Home and Cemetery, and residential neighborhoods in Riviera Beach and West Palm Beach. The St. Mary’s Hospital property is located approximately 1,500 feet south of the proposed connector road and the Royal Palm Memorial Garden Funeral Home and Cemetery has its main entrance on Dixie/Greenwood Avenue.

The Riviera Beach Heights neighborhood is immediately adjacent to Dixie to the west. The neighborhood is identified as 99 percent minority with 20 percent living below the poverty line. The Pinewood and Northwood neighborhoods in West Palm Beach are located just below the proposed connector road and identified as 63 percent minority with 18 percent living below the poverty line. All the alternatives being studied would result in the acquisition of properties and relocation of residents and businesses, which are among the City of Riviera Beach’s greater concerns (see attached letter). FDOT will carry out a right of way and relocation program in order to minimize the unavoidable effects of right of way acquisition and displacement of people.

A grade separated crossing, whether an overpass or underpass, would result in the closure of, at least, four neighborhood streets in Riviera Beach. According to FDOT, the additional access to US-1 and the improvements to SR 710 will provide some relief to the areas network of roadways.

Analysis

Council recognizes how vital the Port of Palm Beach is to the local and regional economies of the Treasure Coast Region. Additionally, Council believes the Port of Palm Beach, as well as the FEC corridor, will become increasingly important as conventional means of mobility and the transportation of goods are challenged by energy and environmental issues. Council supports enhanced and more efficient access to the port however, not at the expense of the quality of life to neighboring communities. Council’s primary concerns with the proposed SR 710 Connector Road include:

1. The potential retaining wall for an above grade crossing would limit neighborhood access and isolate the Riviera Beach and West Palm Beach communities. The Riviera Beach neighborhood has been previously affected by the SR 710 widening project which runs north of the project corridor along Martin
Luther King (MLK) Blvd. A retaining wall would further divide the neighborhood from the rest of the city. In addition, the retaining wall will limit visibility in and out of the neighborhood fostering a potentially dangerous environment due to lack of natural surveillance. The City of Riviera Beach identifies this negative impact as its most serious concern with the project (see attached letter).

2. In Riviera Beach there are seven neighborhood roads that interconnect with Dixie. At least four of these roads would be closed due to the construction of the proposed corridor. These street closures would fracture the existing network and force traffic onto a more limited number of roadways. The connector road may not provide sufficient capacity to offset the impacts to the neighborhood street grid.

3. According to St. Mary’s Hospital, the potential increased traffic near the connector road may also disrupt the flow of ambulances and private transportation vehicles when time is critical (see attached letter). Emergency vehicles may have to compete with the steady stream of truck traffic on Dixie/Greenwood Avenue in order to access response areas.

4. The proposed project will impact small scale neighborhood businesses that may lack the financial capacity to quickly recover from relocation. The removal of these businesses will reduce the economic activity in this area and exacerbate the issues of poverty and unemployment evident in low income communities. In addition, it forces residents to travel outside the neighborhood for goods and services which, consequently, takes dollars out of the local economy.

5. The proposed project would also displace low income, minority households either through condemnation or reduced property values. Issues such as the cost of new housing, property tax increases and proximity to employment and schools are just a few of the foreseeable challenges. Relocation aid may not provide sufficient compensation for the social and financial effects of displacement.

6. Since the Port of Palm Beach’s new South Gate provides a second point of access from US-1, the significant cost of the proposed connection road calls into question the need for this project. This is one of several points raised by the City of West Palm Beach (see attached letter). The estimated costs are $102 million for an overpass and $155 million for an underpass. Council is gravely concerned that the significant expense of this proposed project and the physical, financial and social burdens it will bear on the community will far outweigh the intended benefits.

Conclusion

The Strategic Regional Policy Plan (SRPP), Policy 7.1.2.5, supports efforts to create strategic interconnected transportation systems, but the overall aim of the SRPP is for a more sustainable region. A sustainable region is composed of healthy cities and stable
neighborhoods. This project would have a significant negative impact on the stability and sustainability of the surrounding neighborhoods. SRPP Goal 8.1 promotes the expansion of transportation infrastructure when the project enhances the quality of life of residents. The project as proposed will create conditions that compound the existing problems of surrounding communities, which is inconsistent with the long term goals of the Treasure Coast Region. There is no justification for walling-off and devaluing entire neighborhoods.

In conclusion, Council recommends the following alternate solutions to the proposed grade separated connector road:

1. Improve the existing at-grade intersections at 45th Street and Blue Heron Boulevard. Improvements should not include any grade-separated options. This preferred option would maintain US-1 (Broadway) as a primary access to the port (particularly the new South Gate), it would not re-direct truck traffic into neighborhoods, it would minimize conflicts with St. Mary’s Hospital access, and it is consistent with Palm Beach County’s intentions to improve lane capacity on 45th Street between Broadway and Pinewood Avenue.

2. Improve internal circulation within the port to enhance circulation between the Port Road (SR 710) entry and the South Gate entry so that ingress and egress options can be better coordinated with train traffic, thereby, reducing vehicle disruptions.

3. Renegotiate with FEC to establish an at grade crossing for the Port’s southern entrance.

Recommendation

The proposed project is inconsistent with the Strategic Regional Policy Plan. More specifically, it does not support Strategy 8.1.1: Provide levels of public services necessary to achieve a high quality of life, cost effectively. It also does not support Policy 8.1.1.3: Encourage patterns of development which minimize the public cost for providing services, maximize the use of existing service systems and facilities and take into full consideration environmental/physical limitations.

Council should adopt these comments and authorize their transmittal to the Federal Highway Administration, Florida Department of Transportation, the Port of Palm Beach, the City of Riviera Beach, the City of West Palm Beach, and Palm Beach County.

Attachments
Figure 2: Project Location Map
Figure 3: Proposed T-grade separated intersection
November 18, 2008

Ms. Marlene Brunot, ICR Coordinator  
Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council  
421 SW Camden Avenue  
Stuart, Florida 34994

Re: Comments on SR 710 Port of Palm Beach Connector Project

Dear Ms. Brunot:

I am writing to inform you of St. Mary's Medical Center's opposition to the proposed SR 710 Port of Palm Beach Connector Project.

West Palm Beach Planning and Zoning Director, Charles Wu, kindly shared his October 28th letter to you (copy enclosed) regarding the proposed connector between Greenwood Avenue and the Port of Palm Beach. In his letter Mr. Wu listed the City's concerns about the project which included the following, "Finally, the shift of truck traffic away from Broadway Avenue and into Old Dixie Highway due to this project would generate additional noise and air pollution in the area where St. Mary's Hospital is located, resulting in increased traffic activity and vehicle types that are not compatible with the activities conducted at St. Mary's." We agree and support Mr. Wu's concern and would like to emphasize the significance of negative impact the connector project would have on St. Mary's.

St. Mary's Medical Center, which opened in 1938, is a 463 bed community hospital and regional tertiary referral center for Palm Beach, Martin, St. Lucie, Okeechobee and Indian River Counties. St. Mary's is noted for adult and pediatric trauma, specialized pediatric care, normal and high risk obstetrics, neonatal intensive care, emergency hyperbaric medicine and stroke. In addition to tens of thousands of the inpatient and outpatient visits from the community, in 2006 we received over 3,000 patient transfers from other hospitals including 663 from outside Palm Beach County. This does not include the over 500 out-of-county trauma patients who were transported directly to St. Mary's.

Three of our four Physician office buildings and a State of Florida Children's Medical Services clinic are located on Greenwood Avenue between 49th Street and 54th Street on the northeast section of our 100 acre campus. Also on or adjacent to St. Mary's property is Quantum House (like a Ronald McDonald House), the Oakwood Mental Health Center, the Hanley Center for chemical dependency and Hospice of Palm Beach County. These facilities have numerous outpatient visits throughout the day. Additionally, St. Mary's master development plan calls for patient care facilities to expand along Greenwood Avenue.
Both our pediatric and adult emergency/trauma departments’ entrances are on Greenwood Avenue. The connector road will increase traffic that will disrupt the flow of ambulances and private transportation vehicles when time is critical. For these reasons and more we object to this project.

I would be pleased to meet with you to further discuss the negative impact the connector project will have on St. Mary’s. You may call me or our Assistant Administrator, Don Chester, who is our contact regarding this issue, at (561) 881-2892.

Sincerely,

Davide M. Carbone, FACHE
Chief Executive Officer

Enclosure

cc:  Don Chester, Assistant Administrator
     Raymond Royce, Holland and Knight
     Rebecca Boyajian, Holland and Knight
     Charles Wu, City of West Palm Beach
     Mayor Lois Frankel
     West Palm Beach City Commissioners
     State Representative, Mary Brandenburg
     State Representative, Priscilla Taylor
     State Senator, Jeff Atwater
     Congressman Alcee Hastings
     Congressman Ron Klein
     James Wolfe, Secretary, Florida Dept. of Transportation
     Randy Whitfield, Director, Palm Beach County Metropolitan Planning Organization
     Jeff Koons, Chair, Palm Beach County Metropolitan Planning Organization
November 19, 2008

Gustavo Schmidt, P.E.
District Planning and Environmental Engineer
Florida Department of Transportation
District 4
3400 West Commercial Boulevard
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33309-3421

Subject: SR 710 Port of Palm Beach Connector

Dear Mr. Schmidt:

This letter is drafted in response to your office’s request for comments regarding the proposed overpass/underpass from SR 710 to the City’s south City limit on Dixie Highway. The City of Riviera Beach strongly objects to the SR 710 Port of Palm Beach Connector due to the extreme negative impact that the proposed overpass or underpass will have to the neighborhood and commercial businesses in the Dixie Highway area of the proposed overpass. The City has expressed objection to the overpass/underpass proposal since the overpass was initially proposed following FDOT’s failure to obtain an, at grade crossing from FEC.

When the City of Riviera Beach approved the construction of the Skypass Bridge on US Highway One, and the closing of SR 710 between Dixie Highway and US, both of which were proposed to accommodate the Port of Palm Beach internal traffic circulation issues, the City was lead to believe that FDOT would replace the FEC railroad crossing at SR 710 and Dixie Highway with a new at grade railroad crossing south of SR 710 at Dixie Highway along the southern City limits. To that end, the FDOT acquired the mobile home park located at the south City limit between Dixie Highway and US Highway One, designed the connector and applied for a permit from the FEC. FEC denied the FDOT permit for the at grade crossing at the site of the acquired mobile home park.

The FDOT then embarked on a study for an overpass between SR 710 and the south City limit and north City limit of West Palm Beach on Dixie Highway. The initial costs indicated that an overpass would cost approximately 160 Million Dollars. In addition, the City determined that the overpass/underpass would destroy commercial businesses on
SR 710 Connector Comments

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Dixie Highway to the south City limit and wall off the neighborhood from SR 710 to the south City limit which would cause serious social impact to this neighborhood and limit access by emergency and police personnel. This is in direct conflict with the City of Riviera Beach’s Comprehensive Plan, Redevelopment Plan, and Citizen’s Master Plan.

The City continues to object to the SR 710 overpass/underpass proposal and will avail itself of all measures at our disposal which are necessary to protect the City from this proposed negative impact. It is the City’s position that the only acceptable alternative to the City is an at grade railroad crossing.

Please provide to the City any additional information regarding this proposal, so that the City can provide input and comments.

Sincerely,

Gloria Shuttlesworth
Interim City Manager

Cc Mayor and City Council
Pamela Ryan, City Attorney
Floyd Johnson, CRA Director
Scott Evans, CRA Planning Director
Paul White, Assistant City Manager
Troy Perry, Acting Assistant City Manager
Mary McKinney, Director of Community Development
Jerrell Harris, Planning and Zoning Director
Lal Sawadi, Consulting Engineer
John Thompson, FDOT
Michael Busha, TCRPC Director
Randy Whitfield, MPO Director
October 28, 2008

Marlene Brunot, ICR Coordinator
Treasure Coast Regional Planning Council
421 SW Camden Avenue
Stuart, Florida 34994

Re: Comments on SR 710 Port of Palm Beach Connector Project

Dear Ms. Brunot:

This letter is in response to your request for comments on the proposed SR 710 Port of Palm Beach Connector (see attached letter). Based on our review of the documents provided in your package, as well as documents presented to the Palm Beach Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) related to this project, the City has the following comments and concerns regarding this proposal:

- This project would provide a new connection of less than 0.3 of a mile between Old Dixie Highway (Greenwood Avenue) and Broadway Avenue (US 1) that is expected to potentially shift traffic away from Broadway Avenue north of 45th Street and from 45th Street between Broadway Avenue and Old Dixie Highway and into Old Dixie Highway north of 45th Street. However, the affected segments of Broadway and 45th street operate within their Level of Service (LOS) and are anticipated to do so well into the future. As a result, it appears that this proposal would provide traffic relief to roadway segments that do not need that relief, putting into question the need for this project.

- The description of the project lists its cost at $102 million. This appears to be a very significant amount for a project that would only provide a roadway connection of 0.3 miles in length (from Old Dixie Highway to Broadway Avenue). In addition, according to presentations given by FDOT and its consultants to the MPO and to the City Commission, the depressed section alternatives being evaluated could cost up to $155 million, not the $102 million referenced in the description of the project (see attached slide provided by FDOT). The City believes that these funds could be better spent on other transportation projects that would provide a more significant benefit to our region.

- The City believes that this project would have significant social, economic, and quality of life impacts on residents and businesses located within the City of West Palm Beach. Both proposals for this road (overpass or underpass) would likely result
in the acquisition of homes and businesses with the resulting displacement of people. In addition, this proposed project would produce significant aesthetic/visual, noise and air quality impacts to the City residents in the project’s vicinity.

- Due to its grade separation, this project will also have a negative impact on community cohesion and connectivity, effectively walling off and isolating certain neighborhoods. This is likely to create a physical environment that may be conducive to antisocial activity such as crime. Further, the removal of existing businesses located along Old Dixie Highway as a result of this project will have a negative impact on the surrounding neighborhoods and on the tax base of our City. Finally, the shift of truck traffic away from Broadway Avenue and into Old Dixie Highway due to this project would generate additional noise and air pollution to the area where St. Mary’s Hospital is located, resulting in increased traffic activity and vehicle types that are not compatible with the activities conducted at St. Mary’s.

- It appears that this project would primarily impact minorities and/or low income residents. In addition, most of the businesses along Old Dixie Highway are minority owned. As a result, this project would disproportionately impact minorities and lower income residents, creating environmental justice concerns.

- The project is inconsistent, or does not meet or further the following Goals, Objectives, and Policies of the Transportation Element of the City's Comprehensive Plan:

  **TE Policy 3.1.1(b):** As the Port’s and the Airport’s cargo handling increases, the City shall discourage truck traffic through adjacent residential neighborhoods.

  **TE Goals 3.2: Modifications to and Operation of the Port and the Airport shall be carried out in a manner which minimizes the negative effects on the environment and which minimizes the conflicts between the Port and the Airport facilities and the areas within the City affected by these facilities.**

  **TE Objective 3.3.1:** The City shall support Airport and Port activities which increase economic opportunities in West Palm Beach; provided the opportunities do not increase the negative effects beyond an acceptable level.

- In addition, the project is inconsistent, or does not meet or further the following amended Transportation Element Objective and Policy which are expected to be adopted in December of this year:

  **TE Objective 3.3.1:** The City shall support Airport and Port activities which increase economic opportunities in West Palm Beach; provided the opportunities do not increase the negative effects beyond an acceptable level negatively impact the quality of life of its residents.

  **TE Policy 3.1.1(eb):** The City shall support the expansion of cruise line facilities at the Port as well as other port activities that increase economic opportunities; provided there are no negative impacts on the City’s infrastructure or on the quality of life of its residents.

  “An Equal Opportunity Employer”
• On July 10th, 2006, the City Commission was given a presentation by FDOT and its consultants on this project, and at the time, the Commission expressed significant concerns on the impact that the project, as proposed, would have on the City and its residents.

I thank you in advance for your consideration to our comments and concerns. If you have any questions, please contact Alex Hansen, Senior Planner, at (561) 822-1463.

Sincerely,

Charles K. Wu, AICP
Planning and Zoning Director

C:      Mayor and West Palm Beach City Commissioners
       Ed Mitchell, City Administrator
       Lorenzo Agbemo, County Planning Director
       Mary McKinney, AICP, Riviera Beach Community Development Director
       Randy Whifflet, PE, Palm Beach MPO Director
       Don Chester, St. Mary’s Hospital
       Alex Hansen, AICP, WPB Senior Planner

Attachments:  TCRPC Letter dated 10/14/08 - Advanced notification SR 710 Port Connector
               FDOT Slide on Port Connector project presented to MPO’s TAC – March 2007
               F:\Comprehensive Planning Division\Transportation\Port of Palm Beach Corridor Study\Port of PB Connector -
               Comment Letter Oct 28-2008.doc

“An Equal Opportunity Employer”
Stuart Lodge, LLC is seeking mortgage insurance from the US Department of Housing and Urban Development’s (HUD) Section 232 program. The company plans to construct a new assisted living facility near downtown Stuart on a three acre property located at 1301 Palm Beach Road. The facility will be designed for Martin County seniors who want to remain fairly independent, but do not want the responsibility of every day home and personal management. Martin County has the strongest need for senior housing beds in this area. There have been no assisted living facilities built in the County since 1995.

HUD’s Section 232 program insures mortgage loans to facilitate the construction and substantial rehabilitation of nursing homes, intermediate care facilities, board and care homes, and assisted living facilities. Stuart Lodge, LLC has submitted plans to the City of Stuart Planning Department and the project is in the process to be the first large commercial building to proceed through the City’s recently adopted “Green Building” policy.

Section 232 applicants are eligible for Multifamily Accelerated Processing (MAP). For new construction loans, the sponsor works with a MAP-approved lender who submits required exhibits for the pre-application stage. HUD reviews the lender’s exhibits and will either invite the lender to apply for a Firm Commitment for mortgage insurance or decline to consider the application further.

The final project costs for Stuart Lodge are currently undetermined as final construction documents are still pending. An appraisal ordered in December 2007 noted a $4,100,000 value (excluding building plans) and the following financials have been estimated:
Revenue $6,044,067
Operating Expenses $2,921,041
Net Operating Income $3,123,026
Loan Payment $1,441,824
Projected Net Income $1,681,202

FUNDING AGENCY: Department of Housing and Urban Development

PROJECT COSTS: Undetermined

RECOMMENDATIONS: The proposed project is consistent with the Strategic Regional Policy Plan. It supports Regional Goal 11.1 – elderly and handicapped residents who are independent and self-sufficient.

AGENCIES CONTACTED: Martin County
City of Stuart
The US Army Corp of Engineers (Corps), Jacksonville District is submitting a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) of the Intracoastal Waterway (IWW) in the vicinity of Fort Pierce Inlet in St. Lucie County. The Corps proposes to conduct periodic maintenance dredging of the area extending from the Indian River/St. Lucie County line to IWW mile 219.46, just south of Bear Point Sanctuary on Hutchinson Island in Fort Pierce.

The accumulation of sediment, commonly referred to as shoaling, has restricted the width of the channel and significantly reduced its depth. Minimum depths recorded from the channel are less than 7 feet causing navigation problems for commercial and larger recreational vessels. Some commercial vessels utilizing this segment of the IWW require at least 9 feet of draft. Vessels are currently being forced outside the authorized channel in search of deeper water, waiting for high tides, or prop dredging through the channel. Removal of the shoal material would maintain the navigable capacity of the project channel. The federal channel would be maintained to its authorized dimensions of 125-feet wide by 12 feet deep. Dredged material would be placed in the previously constructed Dredged Material Management Area SL-2 located 3,300 feet south of the Indian River/St Lucie County line.

This Draft EA presents the beneficial and adverse environmental effects of the no-action alternative, the proposed action and other reasonable alternatives that were evaluated. The proposed action was selected as the preferred alternative to perform the dredging of the IWW in order to maintain authorized depths.

The Corps proposes to conduct pre-and post-dredging surveys for seagrass adjacent to the IWW channel.
Appropriate measures to avoid impacting seagrass are to be implemented. In the event that unavoidable impacts occur outside the channel, then mitigation to offset the impacts will be proposed.

**FUNDING AGENCY:** None

**PROJECT COSTS:** N/A

**RECOMMENDATIONS:** The proposed project is not inconsistent or in conflict with the **Strategic Regional Policy Plan**.

**AGENCIES CONTACTED:** All St. Lucie County Municipalities
Indian River County
TCRPC NUMBER: 08-PB-11-02

APPLICANT: Oakwood Center of the Palm Beaches, Inc.

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: Financing for purchase of property

The Oakwood Center of the Palm Beaches, Inc is submitting a pre-application to the US Department of Agriculture (DOA). The DOA Community Facilities Loan Program provides funds or guarantees loans to develop essential community facilities in rural areas and towns.

The Oakwood Center of the Palm Beaches, Inc is a non-profit 501(c)(3) organization that delivers behavioral health care services in Palm Beach County. The Belle Glade branch is seeking to purchase the facilities it has been leasing for the past three years. The properties located at 808/816 NW Avenue D are situated on approximately 1.4 acres. There are 14 crisis beds and 24 residential beds in these facilities.

The Oakwood Center is staffed by interdisciplinary teams of licensed psychiatrists, psychologists, clinical social workers and other disciplines to provide treatment for depression, anxiety, mental illness and acute psychotic conditions. The goal of the Center is to assist those it serves to maximize their resiliency, recovery and reintegration into the community.

FUNDING AGENCY: U.S. Department of Agriculture

PROJECT COSTS: $270,000 Federal
$270,000 Total

RECOMMENDATIONS: The proposed project is consistent with the Strategic Regional Policy Plan. It supports Regional Goal 8.1 – Public facilities which provide a high quality of life.

AGENCIES CONTACTED: Palm Beach County
City of Belle Glade