TECHNICAL REPORT COVERSHEET

DRAFT CONCEPTUAL STAGE RELOCATION PLAN

Florida Department of Transportation

District One

S.R. 70 PD&E Study

Limits of Project: From C.R. 721 S to C.R. 599/128th Avenue

Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, Florida

Financial Management Number: 450334-1-22-01

ETDM Number: 14491

Date: November 2025

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) pursuant to 23 U.S.C. § 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated May 26, 2022 and executed by the Federal Highway Administration and FDOT.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District One, is conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study to evaluate the proposed widening of State Road (S.R.) 70 from a two-lane, undivided roadway to a four-lane, divided roadway, from County Road (C.R.) 721 South to C.R. 599/128th Avenue in unincorporated Highlands and Okeechobee Counties.

This Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan (CSRP) focuses on the right-of-way impacts associated with the proposed improvements to S.R. 70 and addresses any social or economic impacts in relation to potential relocations. Demographic data was gathered on the study area, Highlands and Okeechobee Counties, and the State of Florida as a means of comparison to the overall implications of impacts to the area. Information is provided on demographic data such as age, income, race, and other household statistics.

There are two potential residential relocations on a single parcel, and no potential business displacements associated with the improvements to S.R. 70.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

This Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan (CSRP) was prepared in accordance with the Sociocultural Effects Evaluation chapter of the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Manual, Section 9.1 of the FDOT Right of Way Manual, and Federal Highway Authority (FHWA) Technical Advisory T6640.8A (October 30, 1987) to comply with the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 as regulated by Section 339.09(2) Florida Statutes (F.S.), Section 421.55, F.S. and Section 49 Code of Federal Regulations (C.F.R.), Part 24.

The purpose of the CSRP is to summarize the potential relocations and impacts that may result from the proposed improvements to State Road (SR) 70 and to determine whether there is a sufficient supply of replacement housing or businesses available. Information is provided regarding the project area demographics, residential relocations, potential impacts to businesses and social facilities, available replacement property, and relocation assistance.

1.1 PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The FDOT, District One, is conducting a PD&E Study to evaluate the proposed widening of SR 70 from a two-lane, undivided roadway to a four-lane, divided roadway, from County Road (CR) 721 South to CR 599/128th Avenue in unincorporated Highlands and Okeechobee Counties. The existing facility is a two-lane, undivided roadway with no multi-modal accommodation. The proposed facility is a four-lane, divided roadway with a shared-use path on the south (eastbound) side. The total project length is approximately 8.6 miles and the project limits are shown in **Figure 1**. SR 70 is part of Florida's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) highway network and designated state hurricane evacuation route network. As part of the National Highway System, SR 70 is critical in the transportation network as it facilitates local and regional traffic and the movement of goods/freight.

1.2 PURPOSE AND NEED

The purpose of the project is to address traffic safety conditions on S.R. 70 from C.R. 721 S to C.R. 599/128th Avenue in Highlands and Okeechobee Counties. Other goals of the project are to maintain important east-west connectivity within the regional transportation network and accommodate freight activity within the area. The need for the project is based on safety, area wide network/system linkage, and transportation demand. By addressing safety, emergency evacuation, traffic safety conditions, and incident response times will improve. Area wide network/system linkage will aid in maintaining important east-west connectivity within the regional transportation network and transportation demand will accommodate freight activity.

Atlantic Ocean Project Location Gulf of America NW423UDAYENUE HIGHLANDS COUNTY End Project 70 Begin Project Canal C-41A GLADES

Figure 1: Project Location Map

1.3 PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

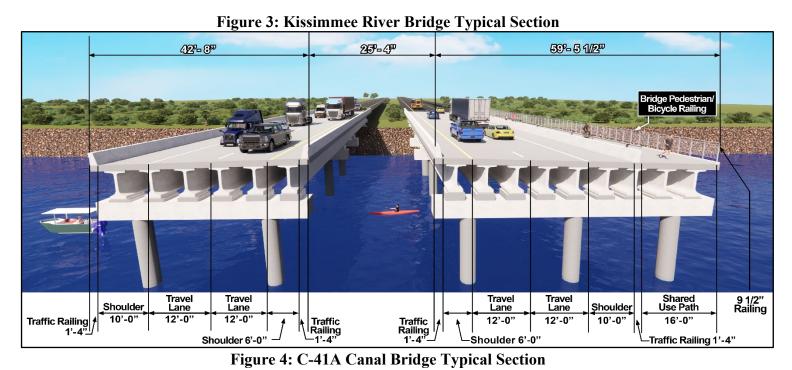
The Preferred Alternative aligns with the goals of the SR 70 Corridor Vision Report and meets the purpose and need for the project as it provides for improved traffic safety conditions, emergency evacuation, and response times. It also enhances transportation network connectivity along this east-west roadway and in the region, as well as enhances freight movement. The Preferred Alternative has a rural typical section with an open roadway drainage system for the four-lane construction. The typical section includes: two (2) 12-foot travel lanes in each direction; a 40-foot median with eight-foot inside shoulders (four-feet paved); 12-foot outside shoulders (five-feet paved); and a 12-foot shared use path on the south side of SR 70 adjacent to the eastbound travel lanes. The average width needed for the right-of-way is 260 feet but varies throughout the alignment from 210 feet to 290 feet. The target, design and posted speed are 65 miles per hour (MPH). **Figures 2-4** depicts the Preferred Alternative typical sections for the roadway and bridges.

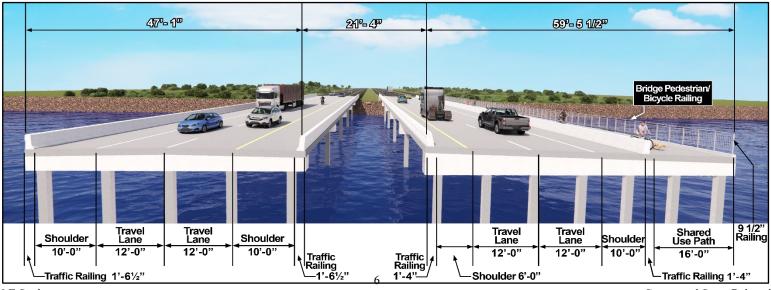
The roadway stormwater runoff will be collected and conveyed in roadside ditches on each side of the travel lanes to stormwater management facilities that will be constructed along the corridor. Offsite and onsite stormwater runoff will be handled separately. Therefore, the typical section includes a second ditch on the north (westbound) side of the roadway to collect and convey offsite stormwater flow.

The existing two-lane Kissimmee River bridge will require demolition and two new bridge structures, each carrying one-directional traffic, will be constructed. The existing bridge over the Slough Ditch (C-41A) Canal that currently carries two lanes of traffic will be retained and will carry westbound traffic in the future condition. A new two-lane bridge will be constructed on the south side of the existing bridge and will carry the eastbound traffic.

Proposed Right+of+Way 260°-0° (Average) Right-of-Way--Right-of-Way Existing Varies (70°-0° to 100°-0°) Proposed Varies (1247-0" to 1347-0") Proposed Varies (6"-0" to 112"-0") Natural Cround Shared Use Path Travel Lane Travel Lane Shoul-der Shoul-der Travel Lane Travel Lane Right-of-Way Right-of-Way Shoulder Shoulder 12'-0" 12'-0" 12-0" 8'-0" 12'-0" 12'-0" 12'-0" 82-02 12'-0" 32'-0" Median 40'-0"

Figure 2: Roadway Typical Section





S.R. 70 PD&E Study From C.R. 721 South to C.R. 599/128th Avenue Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan FPID: 450334-1-22-01

2.0 DEMOGRAPHICS

This section describes the demographic data for the project area, Highlands County, Okeechobee County, and the State of Florida.

2.1 POPULATION

US Census data and estimates for the Highlands County, Okeechobee County, and the State of Florida are provided in **Table 1**.

Table 1: Estimated Populations

Area	2020	2023 Estimates
Highlands County	101,235	103,808
Okeechobee County	39,644	40,249
Florida	21,538,187	21,928,881

Source: US Census Bureau Annual Population Estimates April 1, 2020 and December 12, 2024

US Census Bureau, 2019 - 2023 American Community Survey (ACS) 5 – year estimate data was evaluated for the project area using the US Census Bureau American Fact Finder database. Data was collected for Census Block Group 1 within Census Tract 9615.00 and Census Block Group 2 within Census Tracts 9106.02 and 9101.01. **Figure 5** identifies each Census Block Group evaluated and which tract it belongs to.

OKEECHOBEE HIGHLANDS COUNTY COUNTY FLORIDA 98 **[441]** Block Croup 2, Census Tract 9101.01 Block Croup 1, Census Tract 9615 Elock Croup 2, Census Tract 9103.02 Legend **GLADES COUNTY** Project Limits County Boundary Block Group, Census Tract Block Group 1, Census Tract 9615 Block Group 2, Census Tract 9101.01 Block Group 2, Census Tract 9106.02

Figure 5: Project Specific Census Block Groups and Tracts

Tables 2, 3, and 4 summarize the sex, race, and populations 65 years of age and over within the designated Census Block Groups and Tracts of the project area.

Table 2: Population by Sex

Block Group, Census Tract			2, 9101.01 (Okeechobee)		2, 9106.02 (Okeechobee)	
	Estimate	%	Estimate	%	Estimate	%
Male	200	66.01	411	60	649	50.31
Female	103	33.99	274	40	641	49.69

Source: US Census Bureau 2019-2023 American Community Survey (ASC) 5-Year Estimates

Table 3: Population by Race

Block Group, Census Tract	1, 96 (High	15.00 lands)	2, 910 (Okeec	01.01 chobee)		06.02 chobee)
Race	Estimate	%	Estimate	%	Estimate	%
White Alone	302	99.67	571	83.36	1124	87.13
Black or African American Alone	0	0	0	0	11	0.85
American Indian & Alaskan Native Alone	1	0.33	0	0	0	0
Asian Alone	0	0	0	0	10	0.78
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander Alone	0	0	0	0	0	0
Some Other Race Alone	0	0	0	0	137	10.62
Two or More Races	0	0	114	16.64	8	0.62

Source: US Census Bureau 2019-2023 American Community Survey (ASC) 5-Year Estimates

Table 4: Population Age 65 Years of Age and Over

Block Group, Census Tract	1, 9615.00 (Highlands)		2, 9101.01 (Okeechobee)		2, 9106.02 (Okeechobee)	
	Estimate	%	Estimate	%	Estimate	%
Population Age 65+	267	88.12	313	88.67	276	21.40

Source: US Census Bureau 2019-2023 American Community Survey (ASC) 5-Year Estimates

2.2 HOUSING

Information related to occupancy, household size, and households built before 1950 is provided in **Table 5**.

Table 5: Housing Data

Block Group, Census Tract	1, 9615.00 (Highlands)		2, 9101.01 (Okeechobee)		2, 9106.02 (Okeechobee)	
	Estimate	%	Estimate	%	Estimate	%
Owner Occupied Housing	183	100	278	78.75	495	92.52
Renter Occupied Housing	0	0	75	21.25	40	7.48
*Housing Units Built Before 1950	0		7		5	
**Average Household Size (persons)	1.0	66	1.94		2.41	

Source: US Census Bureau 2019-2023 American Community Survey (ASC) 5-Year Estimates

^{*} Only estimate number available, percentage column cannot be calculated accurately due to lack of data.

^{**} Only estimate number available, percentage column cannot be calculated accurately due to lack of data.

Table 6 provides a broader look at household data for Highlands County, Okeechobee County and the State of Florida.

Table 6: Household Data

Housing Units/Housing Status						
Okeechobee County Highlands County Florida						
Owner-Occupied	11,323	36,257	5,756,809			
Renter-Occupied	3,864	9,686	2,794,102			
Vacant	3,345	12,143	1,531,445			
Total Housing Units	18,532	58,086	10,082,356			

Source: US Census Bureau 2019-2023 American Community Survey (ASC) 5-Year Estimates

2.3 INCOME AND EMPLOYMENT

Information on household income and employment was gathered for the project area. Median household income, the number of people whose income ranks below the poverty level, and household income ranges are provided in **Tables 7** and **8**, respectively.

Table 7: Household Income

Block Group, Census Tract	1, 9615.00 (Highlands)	2, 9101.01 (Okeechobee)	2, 9106.02 (Okeechobee)
Median Household Income in the past 12 months*	\$30,456	\$38,339	\$46,097
Households with income in the past 12 months below poverty level	7	53	16

Source: US Census Bureau 2019-2023 American Community Survey (ASC) 5-Year Estimates
*In 2023 inflation-adjusted dollars

Table 8: Income Range by Household

Block Group, Census Tract	1, 96 (High	15.00 lands)	2, 910 (Okeec		2, 91 (Okeec	06.02 Phobee)
	Estimate	%	Estimate	%	Estimate	%
<\$10,000	7	3.83	5	1.42	8	1.50
\$10,000 to \$14,999	0	0	0	0	8	1.50
\$15,000 to \$24,999	40	21.86	9	2.55	25	4.67
\$25,000 to \$34,999	0	0	54	15.30	55	10.28
\$35,000 to \$49,999	75	40.98	21	5.95	47	8.79
\$50,000 to \$74,999	0	0	141	39.94	101	18.88
\$75,000 to \$99,999	44	24.04	21	5.95	18	3.36
\$100,000 to 149999	1	0.55	95	26.91	107	20
\$150,000 to 199999	0	0	7	1.98	78	14.58
\$200,000 or more	16	8.74	0	0	88	16.45

Source: US Census Bureau 2019-2023 American Community Survey (ASC) 5-Year Estimates

Information regarding the number of people employed, unemployed, in the Armed Forces, or who are not in the labor force within the project specific Census Tracts is provided in **Table 9.**

Table 9: Employment Information

Block Group, Census Tract	1, 9615.00 (Highlands)		2, 9101.01 (Okeechobee)		2, 9106.02 (Okeechobee)	
	Estimate	+/-	Estimate	+/-	Estimate	+/-
Employed	1,796	453	1,809	359	786	154
Unemployed	21	41	61	52	38	36
Armed Forces	0	15	0	21	0	15
Not in Labor Force	1,920	324	3,283	254	1,103	223

Source: US Census Bureau 2019-2023 American Community Survey (ASC) 5 – Year Estimates

3.0 CONTAMINATION SITES

A total of nine sites adjacent to or within the vicinity of the project corridor were observed to have potential for contamination or are included in databases recording potential contamination. Of the nine sites, three are ranked as "no risk", three are ranked as "low risk" and three are ranked as "medium risk". The sites are identified in **Table 10** below.

Table 10: Potential Contamination Sites

Site Number	Site Name	Site Location	Risk Rating
1	Lykes Bros Inc – FL Ranch	Corner of Hwy 721 & Hwy 70	Low
2	Glades Electric Cooperative Ing Morris	20899 FL-70	No
3	Florida Gas Transmission Company	20179 State Hwy 70	Low
4	Arrow B Ranch	150 Fulmar Terrace	Medium
5	Circle G Ranch	7200 SW 196 th Terrace	Low
6	Kissimmee River Fishing Resort	15601 Hwy 70	Medium
7	SFWMD/Davis Tract	SE Quadrant of Hwy 70 and C-38	No
8	Gloria Farms Inc	Platts Bluff Road	No
9	Rio Rancho Corp	12300 Hwy 70 W	Medium

4.0 PUBLIC LANDS

The Preferred Alternative results in unavoidable impacts to the Kissimmee River Public Use Area, consisting of 2.48 acres of property that will be converted to transportation use. Details on this impact are provided under separate cover and in the project file. No relocation or replacement of public land is expected to occur with this project.

5.0 RELOCATION IMPACTS

There are two potential residential displacements and no potential business relocations associated with the improvements to S.R. 70. Based on a field review conducted on September 4, 2025, the project team is not aware of any disabled or handicapped residential occupants that will need special assistance. Identified potential relocations are shown in **Appendix A**.

5.1 RESIDENTIAL IMPACTS

Two potential residential relocations are anticipated due to the proposed improvements to S.R. 70. These relocations are manufactured buildings/mobile homes that lie on a single parcel just south of S.R. 70. There are other manufactured buildings and homes that also lie on the same parcel but they are located further south and are not identified as relocations. **Table 11** identifies the potential residential relocations.

Table 11: Potentially Impacted Residences

Property Address	Owner	Parcel Number	Residence Type
15624 SR 70 W, Okeechobee, FL 34974	Eustorgio Garcia Flores and Maricela Pinon	C-26-37-33-A00-0010- 0000	Mobile home
15624 SR 70 W, Okeechobee, FL 34974	Eustorgio Garcia Flores and Maricela Pinon	C-26-37-33-A00-0010- 0000	Mobile home

As shown in Table 10, there are several potential contamination sites located along the project corridor. Site #6, the Kissimmee River Fishing Resort, which is noted as "high" risk, is located on the north side of S.R. 70 but within 200 feet of the residences identified above as potential relocations. As explained in the Contamination Screening Evaluation Report, prepared under separate cover, there is ongoing remediation for groundwater contamination at this site. The current remediation schedule extends into 2026. Based on a review of available records, documented discharges have extended into the existing and proposed roadway right-of-way. Therefore, future phase contamination evaluations of this site will determine if any additional impacts could occur to the properties identified for relocation related to contamination remediation.

5.2 BUSINESS IMPACTS

No relocation or replacement of business impacts is expected to occur with this project.

6.0 RELOCATION AND ASSISTANCE RESOURCES

6.1 RESIDENTIAL LISTINGS

Given the size of the residential parcel that will remain following right-of-way impacts associated with the Preferred Alternative, there is potential that the parcel can accommodate the displaced residences. However, should this not occur, it is anticipated that the existing residential developments in the vicinity of the proposed project can absorb the displaced residents. Internet searches of available properties within the project corridor resulted in numerous comparable units available for rent and for sale. **Table 12** provides examples of some of the available residences.

Table 12: Examples of Available Residential Real Estate

Property Address	For Rent or Sale	Home Type	Bed/Bath	Size (Sq. Ft.)	Year Built	Price
14725 NW 1 st Pkwy #4 Okeechobee, FL 34972	Rental	Mobile Manufactured	1/1	Not available	Not available	\$1,100/mo
17408 Brinkerhoff Lane Okeechobee, FL 34974	Sale	Mobile Manufactured	2/2	914	1968	\$150,000
17502 Broadland Lane, Okeechobee, FL 34974	Sale	Mobile Manufactured	2/1	728	1982	\$124,000
15601 SR 70 W #89, Okeechobee, FL 34974	Sale	Mobile Manufactured	2/2	1,203	1980	\$36,900
15601 SR 70 W #104, Okeechobee, FL 34974	Sale	Mobile Manufactured	3/2	1,224	1974	\$65,500
17402 Brynwood Ln, Okeechobee, FL 34974	Sale	Mobile Manufactured	3/2	1,456	1995	\$220,000

6.2 RELOCATION ASSISTANCE PROCESS

In order to minimize the unavoidable effects of right-of-way acquisition and displacement of people, a Right of Way and Relocation Assistance Program will be carried out in accordance with Section 421.55, Florida Statutes, Relocation of displaced persons, and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-646 as amended by Public Law 100-17).

6.3 COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS PROVIDING RELOCATION ASSISTANCE

In addition to the FDOT Right of Way and Relocation Assistance Program, additional community services have been identified in **Table 13** that may aid the residences being displaced.

Table 13: Local Social Services for Displaced Residents

Organization Name	Location	Phone Number
Highlands County Housing Division	618 S Commerce Avenue Sebring, FL 33870	863-402-6648
Okeechobee County Board of County Commissioners- Affordable Housing Coordinator	1700 NW 9 th Avenue, Ste C Okeechobee, FL 34972	863-824-3078
Lake Placid Chamber of Commerce	18 N Oak Avenue Lake Placid, FL 33852	863-385-8448
Okeechobee Chamber of Commerce	55 S Parrott Avenue Okeechobee, FL 34974	863-467-6246
The Salvation Army Of Okeechobee County	1600 SW 2 nd Avenue #B Okeechobee, FL 34972	863-763-6020

6.4 HOUSING OF LAST RESORT

Pursuant to the FDOT Right of Way Procedures Manual, replacement housing of last resort will be used to assure that comparable decent, safe, and sanitary housing will be made available to a displaced person when such housing cannot otherwise be provided within the person's financial means. The determination may be made on a case-by-case or project-wide basis. Based on the housing research conducted for the preparation of this report, comparable replacement housing is available.

7.0 REFERENCES

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Appendix ARelocation Exhibit

