
Public Involvement Plan

For Kurt Street Preliminary Engineering Study

From US 441 to SR 19 (Bay Street)

Lake County Public Works



County Project ID: RSQ # 06-054

In accordance with "Scope of Services", this Public Involvement Plan is submitted to Lake County for its review and approval.

Submitted by: **TYLIN**INTERNATIONAL

Fraser S. Howe, Jr., P.E.

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Revision: 1

Approved: _____
Project Manager

Date: _____

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Public Involvement Plan

1. Introduction

The Public Involvement Plan for the Kurt Street transportation improvement project is in compliance with Florida Statutes (FS) 286.0105 Board Meeting; 286.011 Public Meetings and Records; and 339.155 Transportation Planning.

Lake County recognizes that the success of any transportation improvement is dependent upon a successful public outreach effort. As such, it is committed to conducting a pro-active Public Involvement Plan that focuses on soliciting community interaction throughout the project development process. The County believes that the positive value of implementing a strong public involvement effort will result in public awareness of and support for the project.

This Public Involvement Plan will be updated and amended throughout the project development process. The plan outlines the public involvement approach to be taken with the project and lists generally the media affiliates, public agencies, organizations, and persons to be contacted, as well as the means used to involve each of them in the Preliminary Engineering process. The County, using its Consultant, will prepare responses to public inquiries as a result of the public involvement process. The collection of public input will occur throughout the project duration.

2. General Description and Limits

Proposed improvements to: Kurt Street, Eustis, Florida
Project Limits: From US 441 to SR 19 (Bay Street)

3. Project Background

Kurt Street from US 441 to SR 19 (Bay Street), is approximately 1½ miles long, see Figure 1 Project Location Map. For study purposes the project is divided into two segments: one from US 441 to Golflinks Avenue and the other from Golflinks to Bay Street. The existing roadway has two travel lanes with un-paved shoulders within a 66-foot wide right-of-way. The objective the study is to determine the number of lanes needed to provide an adequate level of service for the projected traffic demand along the roadway corridor. Both three-lane and four-lane alternatives will be considered.

The Lake-Sumter Metropolitan planning Organization (MPO) Long Range Transportation Plan calls for Kurt Street to accommodate bicycles and pedestrians and future transit routes. These will serve the major properties along Kurt Street: Eustis Plaza; Lake County Technical School; Stuart Cottrell Ballfields; Eustis Heights Elementary School; TECO/Peoples Gas; the Eustis Community Fellowship Church and several condominiums and apartment complexes.

4. Project Goals

The purpose of this study is to evaluate Kurt Street within the project limits to determine short term and long term enhancements that will be beneficial to the roadway network. The Study process includes a comprehensive public

involvement plan. The plan is essential to developing, evaluating, and implementing solutions that best serve the public interest.



• Figure 1 Project Location Map

The Preliminary Study will provide documented information necessary for the County to reach a decision on the type and design of the proposed roadway improvements. Alternatives to be evaluated will include a no-build scenario and short and long term build alternative improvements. Project documentation will be developed in compliance with applicable local requirements.

This document outlines the following:

- The plan for involving the public throughout the project process.
- The means by which the Project Team will disseminate project information and solicit input from the community.
- The Project Team's methods to inform and involve appropriate state, regional, county and local agencies and public officials in planning, review, and approval of the project.

5. Identified Stakeholders and Audience

Public involvement activities are much more effective when efforts are targeted toward people who will actively contribute to the development and decision-making processes surrounding transportation improvement projects. Every effort will be made to encourage the participation of those citizens and/or groups that accurately represent the full range of issues and opinions. Settling for only those who are willing to actively participate may give undue influence to a potentially small segment of the affected community.

Generally, there are six reasons why people choose to participate in a public involvement activity:

REASON TO PARTICIPATE	FOR KURT STREET PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING
Proximity: People who live in the immediate area of a project or must travel through an area to work or shop. Participation will be based on a perceived benefit or challenge presented by the project.	See for people who live in the immediate area of a project, as well as businesses located in the project area. These include: Eustis Plaza Condos; Pepermill Condos; Deerwood Apts; East Lake subdivision; West Lynnhurst
Economy: If groups of people perceive they have a strong economic interest in the outcome of a decision, they are likely to participate. <i>For example, if a transportation project affects the entrance to a shopping center, expect strong participation from the owners, as well as shopkeepers who lease space in the facility.</i>	Lake Eustis Area Chamber of Commerce P.O. Box 1210, Eustis, FL 32727 (352) 357-3434; fax: (352) 357-1392 Eustis Plaza (at US441); Kurt Street Professional Park; TECO Peoples Gas;
Utility: People who frequently use a road or intersection to be constructed or improved will likely participate to stay informed of the project schedule.	Daily commuters
Society: If a sector of the public is interested in protecting a historic site, maintaining access to specific services or preserving a community resource, participation is likely. The same applies if they perceive a project to have environmental or health effects.	Lake County School Bus Yard (School bus routes) Lake Technical School Stuart Cottrell ballfields Eustis Heights Elementary School
Propriety: People will participate to protect/preserve the community sense of place.	
Legality: Government agencies have statutory requirements. One agency may be concerned about air quality, another about wildlife resources, and another about wetlands. Providing effective ways for government agencies to participate is as crucial as creating ways for the average citizen to participate.	

There is no single “public,” only a seemingly endless multitude of varying interests and groups. By identifying people with an interest in the project and enlisting their participation, better projects can be designed to meet community needs.

We have made a thorough evaluation of those affected by the project as well as those with the potential to overtly or covertly influence the resulting decisions to facilitate the development of strategies targeted at these groups. These strategies will dictate which materials will be effective or if different types of materials are necessary for the different audiences identified. Knowing how to communicate effectively with the target audience will permit the most efficient use of available resources. More importantly, knowing the audience and effective communication will build trust and credibility as well as dictate what future public involvement opportunities will be effective.

The initial Master Contact List was compiled from the Lake County GIS Parcel map, within the following boundaries: 100’ on both sides of Kurt Street and W Lakeview Avenue from US 441 to Bay Street (SR 19)

The following local, regional, state and federal agencies, having a concern in this project due to permitting authority, have been identified and will be contacted directly by the County's Consultant at the outset of the project. Shortly after Notice-to-Proceed, a letter will be sent to each of the officials listed below informing them of the beginning of the project. Additionally, notification for the **Kickoff Public Meeting**, the **Alternatives Public Meeting** and the **Preferred Alternative Meeting** will be sent on County letterhead at least ten (10) days prior to the meeting. See for additional contact information.

State

- **Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP)**
Vivian F Garfein, Director
Central District Office
3319 Maguire Blvd, Suite 232
Orlando, Florida 32803-3767
- **Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FFWCC)**
Greg Holder, Regional Director
Southwest Region
3900 Drane Field Road
Lakeland, FL 33811-1299
- **Office of Cultural and Historical Programs**
Division of Historical Resources
R.A. Gray Building
500 S. Bronough Street
Tallahassee, FL 32399-0250
- **Florida DOT, District 5**
Mr. Steve Homan
719 Woodland Blvd
Deland, FL 32728

Regional

- **St. Johns River Water Management**
4049 Reid Street
Palatka, FL 32177
- **Lake-Sumter MPO**
1616 S. 14th St.
Leesburg, FL 34748

Local

- **Lake County Public Works**
PO BOX 7800
Tavares, FL 32778
- **City of Eustis**
Jim R. Myers, Jr., City Manager
400 Morin Street
Eustis, FL 32726
- **Lake County Water Authority (LCWA)**
107 N. Lake Avenue
Tavares, FL 32778-3119

- **TECO Peoples Gas**
702 N Franklin street
Tampa, FL 33601-2562
- **Progress Energy**
40 S. Dewey St.
Eustis, Fla.
(800) 700-8744
- **Lake County Schools**
201 West Burleigh Blvd.
Tavares, FL 32778

The following local, state and national elected and/or appointed officials and public interest groups having a direct or expressed interest in the project study have been identified and will be contacted by the Consultant.

Lake County

- Commissioner Jennifer Hill, District 1
- Commissioner Elaine Renick, District 2
- Commissioner Debbie Stivender, District 3
- Commissioner Linda Stewart, District 4
- Commissioner Welton G. Cadwell, District 5

The Kurt Street Preliminary Engineering project is located within District 4.

Eustis City Commission

- Mayor James T. Rotella
- Vice-Mayor Evelyn H. Smith
- Commissioner Jonnie C. Hale
- Commissioner Karen LeHeup-Smith
- Commissioner Scott M. Ales

Lake County Schools

- Anna P. Cowin, Superintendent
- Kyleen Fitcher, Vice Chairperson / School Board Member for District 5

The Kurt Street Preliminary Engineering project is located within District 5

Other Public Interest Organizations

- **Lake Eustis Area Chamber of Commerce**
P.O. Box 1210.
Eustis, FL 32727
- **Lake County Health Department**
16140 US Highway 441
Eustis, FL 32726

- **Agency for Health Administration**
2727 Mahan Drive
Tallahassee, FL 32308

6. Outreach Approach

To identify and communicate with people in the community, different methods and tools need to be employed to conduct a successful outreach effort.

Outreach is any effort intended to offer the community the opportunity to participate in the planning process. Outreach efforts enlist those currently involved in the process and those who may not have been previously involved. Outreach efforts also attempt to reach those who may not be represented by the traditional groups that are already active. We have attempted to identify individuals who would not otherwise be involved, make them aware of the transportation implementation process and invite their input.

The following techniques will be employed to notify the public of the Kurt Street Preliminary Engineering Study.

- 6.1. Direct mail list - the following will be contacted by direct mail:
 - 1) Property owners whose property lies, in whole or part, within 300 feet on either side of the centerline of each project alternative. (Section 339.155 F.S.),
 - 2) Local elected and appointed public officials for Lake County and the City of Eustis,
 - 3) Lake County Constitutional Officers,
 - 4) Local Elected or appointed officials or individuals who request to be placed on the mailing list for this project, and
 - 5) Public and private groups, organizations, agencies or businesses that request to be placed on the mailing list for this project

- 6.2. Newspapers
 - News releases to the media
 - Public notices - legal and display

Lake Sentinel
633 N Orange Avenue
Orlando, Florida 32801
407-931-5901

- 6.3. Informational newsletters –Three (3) newsletters will be distributed, one before each of the three public meetings listed below. The newsletters will be mailed to elected officials, property owners, businesses and interested persons included on the mailing list.
 - 6.3.1. Newsletter # 1 – Distributed as an invitation prior to the project kickoff meeting providing basic information regarding the project. Property owners and elected officials will receive this approximately 14 days prior to the meeting.

- 6.3.2. Newsletter # 2 – Project status and notification regarding the alternatives meeting. Property owners and elected officials will receive this approximately 14 days prior to the meeting.
- 6.3.3. Newsletter # 3 – Project status and notification regarding the County Commission preferred alternative meeting. Property owners and elected officials will receive this approximately 14 days prior to the meeting.
- 6.4. Internet web page

The website www.KurtStreetStudy.com has been created and will be maintained throughout the study. Meeting dates, notices, and updated information will be provided to keep the public involved. Documents will be uploaded as they become available to allow the public the ability to comment.
- 6.5. Public Meetings

The following information meetings will be held to involve the public and interested agencies in the project development process and to inform interested parties of the project's current status:

 1. Kickoff Public Meeting – Held to inform the community of the initiation of the project, its purpose and the activities to be performed.
 2. Alternatives Public Meeting - The purpose of this meeting is to present to the public the results of the study to date and obtain comments on the alternatives being considered. Visual displays and an informational presentation will be presented. The format of this meeting will be an open house to answer questions and receive comments.
 3. Preferred Alternative Public Meeting - A public meeting will be held once the draft Preliminary Engineering report has been approved by the County.
 4. Informal Meetings - Meetings, as required and approved by the County, will be held with civic groups, concerned individuals and citizens groups.
- 6.6. Coordination with City of Eustis

Four (4) weeks before the **Alternatives Public Meeting**, copies of maps depicting the design concepts under consideration, along with draft copies of engineering and environmental study documentation, will be furnished to the City for their review and written comments.

Similarly, updated information will again be forwarded to the City prior to the **Preferred Alternative Public Meeting** for their review and comments.
- 6.7. Analysis and Evaluation of Public Intent

A progress report will be developed to summarize the public meeting/workshop results and recommendations. The report will also contain the overall input provided through the other public involvement techniques utilized in the project development process. The report will be forwarded to the County Project Manager.

6.8. Preferred Alternative Public Meeting

In compliance with the "Project Scope" and Section 339.115, F.S., a **Preferred Alternative Public Meeting** will be held. The Public Meeting Checklist will be prepared prior to holding the **Preferred Alternative Public Meeting**.

Preferred Public Meeting Site:

Eustis City Hall
10 N Grove Street
Eustis, Florida 32726-3412
(352) 483-5430

Public Meeting Advertisement - public meetings will be noticed in the newspapers listed under 6.2.

- a. Letters of invitation: Letters will be written to all property owners as required by Section 339.155, F.S. and to local government officials to notify them of the upcoming Public Hearing.
- b. Preferred Alternative Public Meeting Preparation: The meeting will be conducted by the County Project Manager or his/her representative. PowerPoint presentations, graphics and handouts will be prepared to supplement the oral presentation. Coordination of the meeting, including location arrangements, equipment supply, set up of outdoor signs, tables, chairs and other equipment, preparation of letters, handouts and slide presentation materials, will be the responsibility of the Consultant. All meeting exhibits and materials will be submitted to the County two (2) weeks before the meeting for review.
- c. Environmental and Engineering Documents for Public Inspection
 - Draft Preliminary Engineering Report
 - Concept Design Plans
- d. Location of Documents for Public Review: Public notice will be provided in the Preferred Alternative Public Meeting advertisement and by mail as to where the study documents are located for public review.

Public review site is:

Eustis Memorial Library
120N. Center Street. Eustis, FL 32726
(352) 357-5686
- e. Title VI and Title VIII Civil Rights Acts: Notification during the Preferred Alternative Public meeting will be provided in the presentation, by handout, signage and through availability of personnel on the Title VI Program and the Relocation Assistance Program which complies with Title VIII.
- f. Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA): Notification of the County's intent to comply with the Americans With Disabilities Act will be provided in the public advertisements, by invitational newsletters to property owners and

local officials, by handout, and by selection of a public meeting site that meets all ADA requirements.

g. Preferred Alternative Public Meeting Follow-Up

The following procedures will occur after the **Preferred Alternative Public Meeting**:

Responses to Questions and Comments: Questions and comments received from the public, but not answered at the **Preferred Alternative Public Meeting**, will be followed up after the meeting. The study team will prepare all letters of response for review and concurrence by the County before to being mailed to the person or group who posed the question or comment. A copy of all responses will be included in the project files and within the Preferred Alternative Public Meeting Summary.

Document Availability: Public notice will be provided by mail and/or by newspaper advertisement as to where the **final Preliminary Engineering Report** is located for public review.

Preferred Alternative Public Meeting Summary: A Report summarizing the overall input provided by the public at the **Preferred Alternative Public Meeting** and through other public involvement techniques will be developed. This report summarizes the response to comments received from the public involvement processes.














6.9. Public Information During Phase 2 – Final Design

The public information effort will continue during the design process to inform the public of the project’s status.

7. Schedule of Activities

The specific public involvement action steps and techniques are coordinated with the project schedule. The timing (who will do what, within what timeline, with what response in compliance with federal, state and local requirements) is calculated to achieve the desired results.

• Table 1 Schedule of Public Involvement Activities for Kurt Street Preliminary Engineering Study

PUBLIC MEETINGS	MAY 07	JUN 07	JUL 07	AUG 07	SEP 07	OCT 07	NOV 07	DEC 07	JAN 08	FEB 08	MAR 08	APR 08	MAY 08
Newsletter #1													
Kickoff Meeting													
Small Group Meetings													
Newsletter #2													
Alternatives Meeting													
Coordination Meetings													
Newsletter #3													
County Commission Preferred Alternative Meeting													

8. Collecting & Analyzing Public Comments

Comments obtained at public involvement milestones are the reward for an effective outreach strategy. The public's input is what all the outreach activities are intended to produce. Public comments provide the technical project personnel with the information they need to make transportation decisions that meet community needs. For this to happen we must synthesize and analyze the myriad of comments received into a format that facilitates their inclusion into project level decisions.

We will collect public comments for the purpose of determining the potential effect of a transportation project on a community. An effective public involvement process requires a procedure for handling public feedback. Careful processing of public comment is critical to maximize responsiveness to the community. By being responsive to the community, trust and credibility are gradually built with each response. All comments received will be analyzed, acknowledged and catalogued.

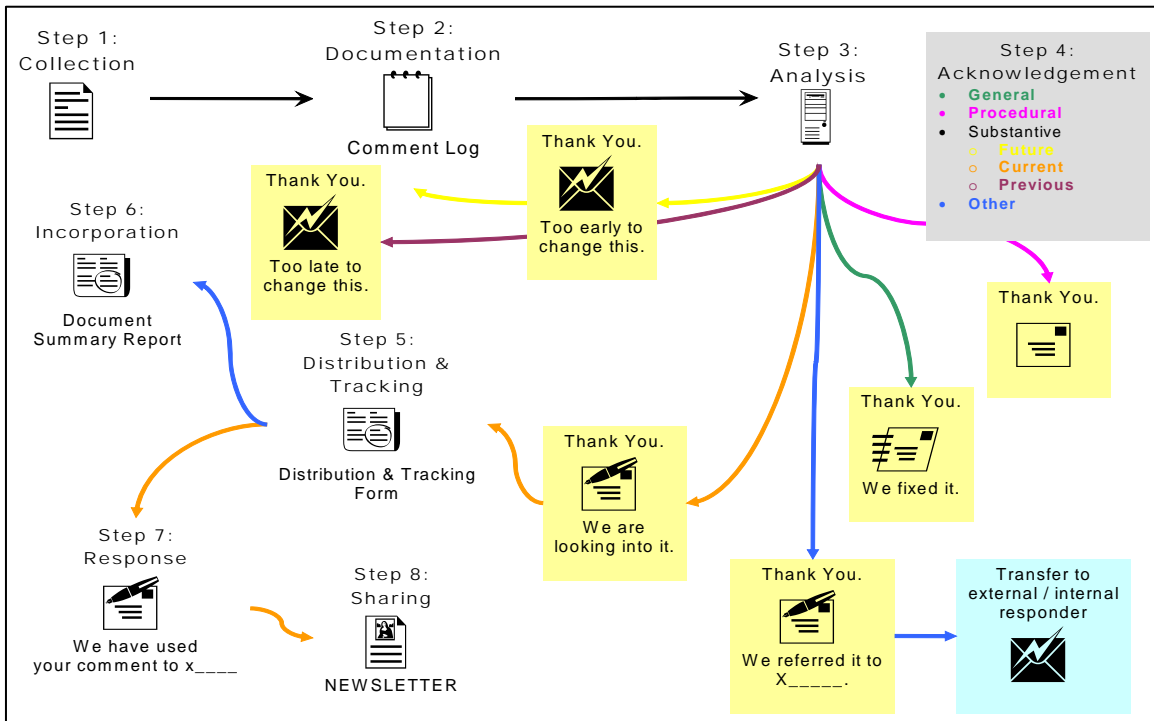
We will handle public comments using the process shown in **Error! Reference source not found.**

Step 1. Collect comments anytime!

Step 2. Document *all* comments;

Step 3. Analyze comments by category: general, procedural, substantive (*future, current, previous*), or other;

Step 4. Acknowledge comments *within 10 working days.*



• Figure 2 Public Comment Flow Process

We will respond to “general” comments with a letter acknowledging interest in the project.

We will respond to “procedural” comments with a letter acknowledging interest in the project, in addition to information regarding the action that has been/will be taken.

We will respond to “substantive” comments upon determining whether the comment pertains to the current, previous or future project phase as follows:

- Current project phase – respond with a postcard or letter acknowledging their interest in the project. Include a brief description of the action being taken to address the comment and when to expect resolution. Determine if the comment can be included in the project concept.
- Previous project phase – respond with a letter acknowledging interest in the project. Include an overview of the project history and decisions that have been made earlier in the process and information on how to become involved in current or future project decisions.
- Future project phase – respond with a letter acknowledging interest in the project. Include a brief overview of the future project schedule indicating when the decision will be made and that the comment will be passed on.

We will respond to “other” comments with a letter acknowledging interest in the project and how the comment has been handled. These comments should be routed to appropriate County personnel or non-County personnel.

- Step 5.** Distribution and tracking – *follow-up!*
- Step 6.** Incorporation – look for *innovative solutions*;
- Step 7.** Response - give a *complete* answer;
- Step 8.** Sharing: newsletter, website, fact sheet.

9. Documentation/Synthesis

Whenever a staff member makes a presentation or public appearance or attends a meeting or community event, a simple, easy-to-complete report will be prepared to document the event. The report will include the number of attendees and handouts distributed and an analysis of public comments.

Incorporating the input received through the outreach campaign depends on the type of information received and the project needs. For example, very supportive comments and recommendations would not lead to any major changes in the plan or project and would not require special planning. However, serious objections to a proposed project should be given careful consideration.

10. Monitor the Outreach Activities

One of the most important steps in public involvement is to determine the effectiveness of our outreach effort. Public involvement activities will be evaluated throughout the project so that we can expand successful techniques while modifying less successful techniques.