

APPENDIX C
Public
Hearing
Materials

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DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

The Florida **Department of Transportation**, District 7 invites you to attend and participate in a Public Hearing for the 118th Avenue (CR 296) Connector Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study. The study limits extend from US 19 to east of the Roosevelt/CR 296 Connector in Pinellas County, FPN: 413622-1 22 00, FAP No.: 9045-054 C. The proposed project involves improving the existing 6-lane highway to a 6-lane controlled access facility with two 2-lane, one-way frontage roads and an elevated ramp from southbound US 19 to eastbound 118th Avenue. The Public Hearing will be held at the following location:

Florida Administrative Weekly

DATE AND TIME: Thursday, August 18, 2005, 5:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.

PLACE: Morgan Fitzgerald Middle School, 6410 118th Avenue, N., Largo, Florida 33773

GENERAL SUBJECT MATTER TO BE CONSIDERED: This Hearing is being held to allow interested persons the opportunity to provide comments concerning the recommended “Build” Alternative for the proposed project. This Public Hearing is being conducted pursuant to Chapter 339 Florida Statutes, 23 CFR 771, 23 U.S.C. 128, Chapter 120, Florida Statutes, and Title VI and Title VIII of the United States Civil Rights Acts of 1964 and 1968.

Individuals requiring special consideration under the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 should contact Mr. Gabor Farkasfalvy, Project Manager, (813)975-6455 or 1(800)226-7220, at least 7 business days in advance of the Hearing in order to accommodate individual needs.

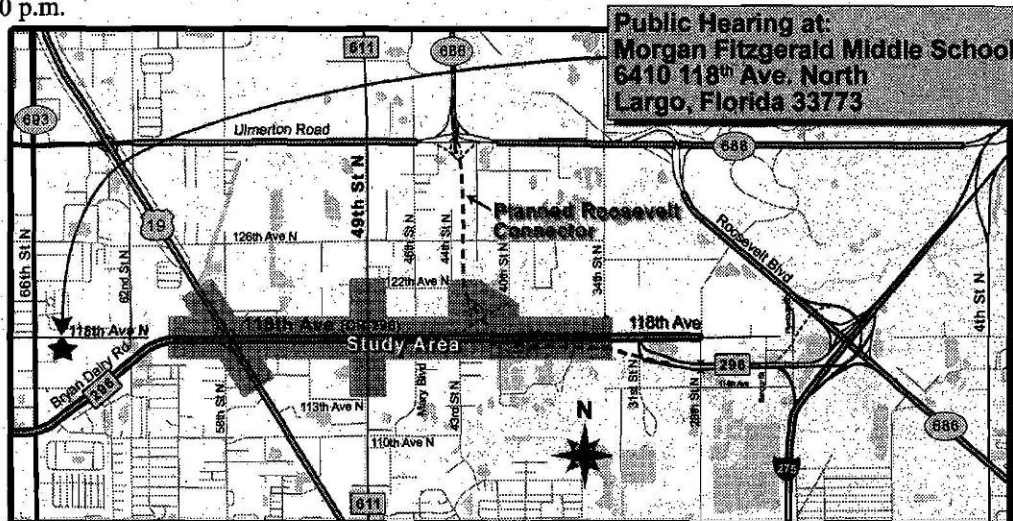
The Department will receive verbal and written comments at the Public Hearing. Written comments not received at the Hearing may be returned to the Department via mail but must be postmarked by Monday, August 29, 2005 to become part of the official Public Hearing record. Written comments should be addressed to: Mr. Gabor Farkasfalvy, Project Manager, Florida Department of Transportation, District Seven, 11201 N. McKinley Drive, MS 7-600, Tampa, Florida 33612.



118th Avenue (CR 296) Connector Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study Public Hearing

FDOT District Seven, WPI Segment No.: 413622 1, FAP No.: 9045-054 C, Pinellas County

You are invited to attend and participate in the Public Hearing for the 118th Avenue (CR 296) Connector Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study. This Hearing is being conducted by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) in cooperation with the Federal Highway Administration. The project limits extend from US 19 to east of the Roosevelt/CR 296 Connector in Pinellas County. The location of the Public Hearing and the Study Area are shown on the map below. The Hearing will be held on August 18, 2005, from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.



This Hearing is being held to give the public an opportunity to express their views and provide comments concerning the location, conceptual design, and social, economic, and environmental effects of the proposed improvements. FDOT representatives will be available to answer questions and discuss the project one-on-one with attendees. Exhibits and other project related materials will be displayed showing the proposed improvements. A court reporter will be available to receive comments in a one-on-one setting. The formal portion of the Hearing will begin at 6:00 p.m., to provide an opportunity to make formal public comments. Following the formal portion of the Hearing, the informal Open House will resume and continue until 7:00 p.m.

The proposed improvements include construction of a 6-lane controlled access arterial highway with 2-lane, one-way frontage roads and a flyover ramp for southbound US 19 to eastbound 118th Avenue. An urban interchange would be provided at 49th Street.

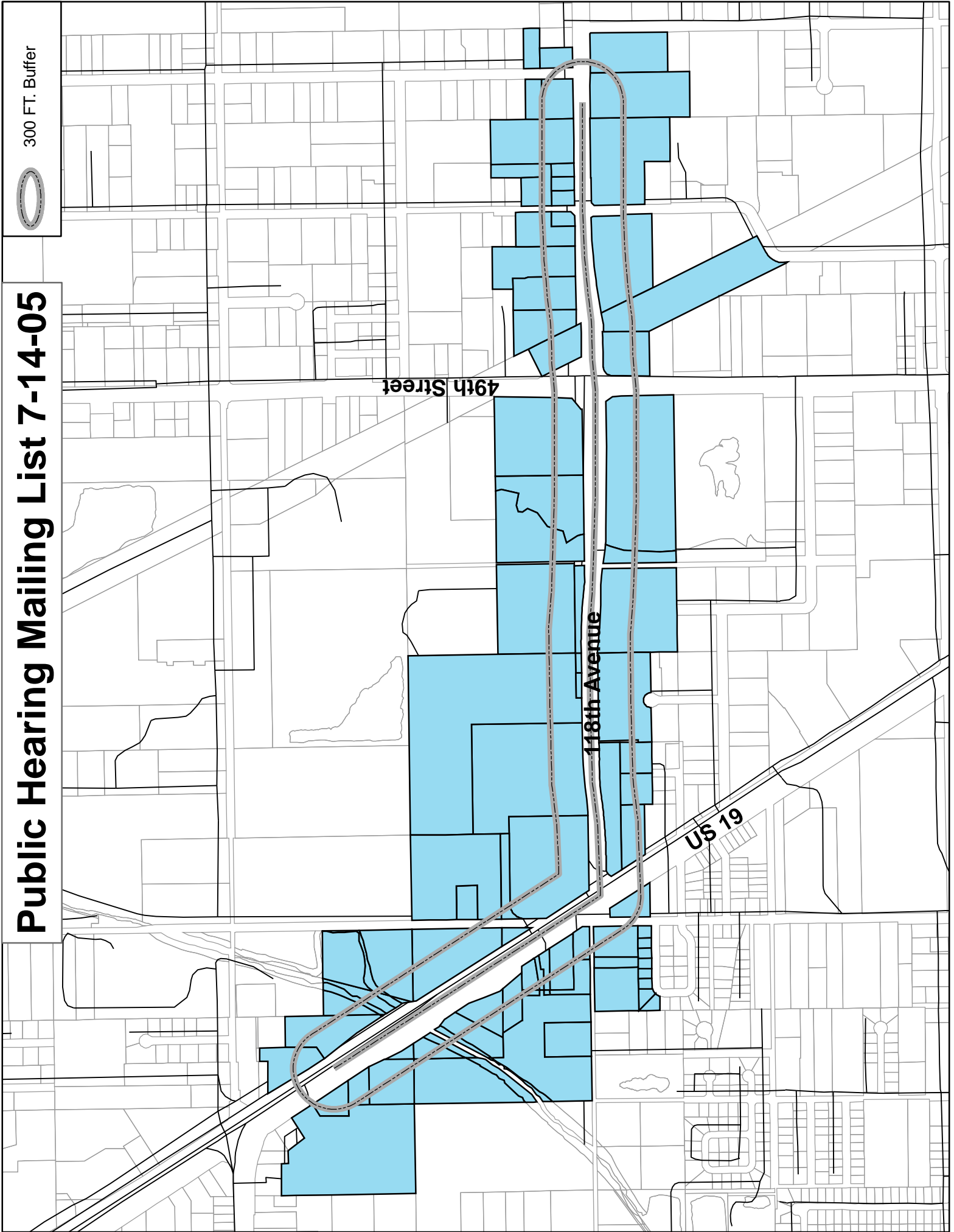
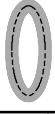
The project reports and conceptual design plans developed by the FDOT will be available for public review from July 28 through August 29 at the Pinellas Park Public Library, 7770 52nd Street, Pinellas Park, Florida 33781, Monday through Thursday 9:00 a.m. to 8:30 p.m.; Friday and Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.; and Sunday 1:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. These materials will also be available at the Hearing site from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on the day of the Hearing. Persons who wish to submit written or oral comments may do so at the Hearing, or they may mail comments to Mr. Robert M. Clifford, AICP; Modal Planning and Development Manager, Florida Department of Transportation, District Seven, 11201 North McKinley Drive, MS 7-500; Tampa FL 33612-6456. All comments must be postmarked by August 29, 2005, to be included as part of the Official Public Hearing Record.

This Public Hearing is being held in accordance with 23 CFR 771, Executive Orders 11990 and 11988, Chapter 399 F.S., Titles VI and VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and 1968, and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. Persons with disabilities who may require special accommodations at the Hearing, or anyone with questions concerning this project should contact Gabor Farkasfalvy, Project Manager, by calling (800) 226-7220 or (813) 975-6455, by email to gabor.farkasfalvy@dot.state.fl.us, or by mail to the Florida Department of Transportation, District Seven; 11201 N. McKinley Drive, MS 7-600; Tampa, Florida 33612-6456.

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The
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Public Hearing Mailing List 7-14-05

300 FT. Buffer



49th Street

118th Avenue

US 19

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ST PETERSBURG FL 33713

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The Recommended Alternative and Potential Project Phasing

The figure below shows a graphic of the Recommended Alternative overlaid on an aerial photograph. It is possible that due to funding availability, and the timing of other future proposed projects, the overall project could be constructed in phases. The graphic is shaded by the three possible phases (yellow, red and blue). The legend at the right and notes below provide highlights of the proposed improvements.

LEGEND	Recommended Alternative
	49TH ST. OVERPASS PHASE
	US 19 FLYOVER PHASE
	ROOSEVELT CONNECTOR PHASE
	OVERLAP OF 49TH ST. OVERPASS PHASE AND ROOSEVELT CONNECTOR PHASE
	TO BE REMOVED DURING US 19 FLYOVER PHASE
	WORK BY OTHERS
	EXISTING ROW
	PROPOSED ROW

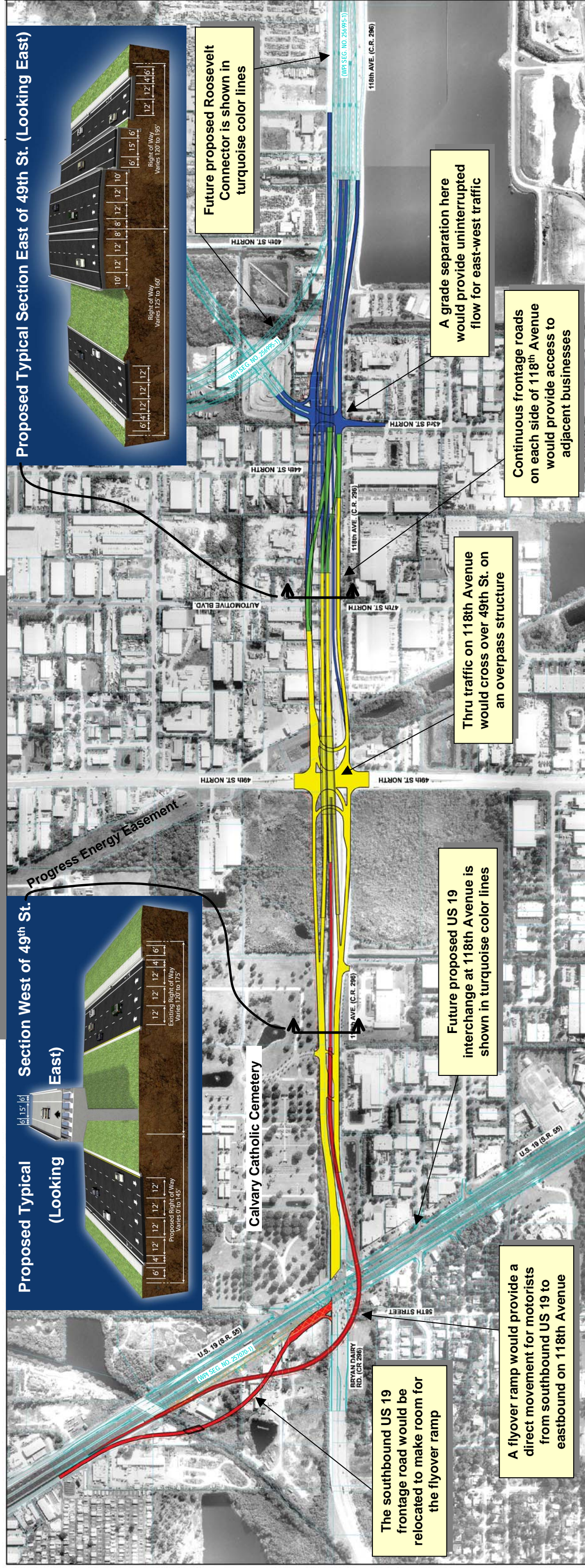
DATE OF AERIAL: OCTOBER 4, 2004

What is a Project Development and Environment Study?

A Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study is a comprehensive study conducted by the Florida Department of Transportation. The Study evaluates social, cultural, economic and environmental impacts associated with the proposed transportation improvements.

This process is mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and other federal requirements when federal funds are to be used for a project. It represents a combined effort by transportation and environmental professionals who analyze information and document the best alternative for a community's transportation needs.

The PD&E Study efforts are accomplished by working in cooperation with other state/federal agencies and local governments. This coordination allows the Department to better determine the effects a transportation project will have on the natural and human environment.



118th Avenue (CR 296) Connector PD&E Study

From US 19 to east of the Roosevelt/CR 296 Connector WPI Segment No. 413622-1



Public Hearing Information

Welcome to the Public Hearing for the 118th Avenue (CR 296) Connector Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study. This hearing is being conducted by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to present information on the Recommended Alternative and to obtain your input regarding the proposed improvements. This hearing will include a presentation, as well as a series of displays, which provide information regarding the proposed roadway improvements. FDOT staff and consultants are available to answer your questions and receive your comments.

Today's Schedule

5:00 PM – 6:00 PM Informal Open House to View Exhibits and Audiovisual Presentation

6:00 PM – Public Comment Period

Ending at 7:00 PM Informal Open House Continues after Formal Comment Period

Ways To Comment

Your comments regarding the proposed improvements can be made in any of the following ways:

1. Make an oral statement during the formal portion of the Public Hearing beginning at 6:00 p.m.
2. Make an oral statement to the court reporter before or after the public comment period.
3. Fill out the Comment Form provided and place it in the comment box in the meeting room.
4. Fill out and mail the Comment Form along with any statements or exhibits to the address shown on the form.

All comment submittals postmarked by August 29, 2005 will become a part of the Official Public Hearing Record. The FDOT will give equal consideration to all comments, regardless of the manner in which they were received, before submitting a final recommendation to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for approval.

118th Avenue (CR 296) Connector PD&E Study

From US 19 to east of the Roosevelt/CR 296 Connector WPI Segment No. 413622-1



The Recommended Alternative

The Recommended Alternative is the Build Alternative described in the study documents as Alternative “Dmod-G.” This is illustrated in plan view in the inside newsletter pages. This alternative includes a third level flyover for the southbound-to-eastbound movements between US 19 and 118th Avenue. The intersection of 49th Street/118th Avenue would be grade separated. The Roosevelt Connector southbound-to-eastbound would be

elevated over 118th Avenue to a third level allowing for the introduction of a second level of the 118th Avenue Connector with the Roosevelt Connector to also pass over 49th Street. This alternative allows the intersection at 43rd Street to remain connected to the 118th Avenue frontage roads. Additional right-of-way would be required, mostly along the north side of 118th Avenue and west side of US 19. Existing and proposed typical sections are shown on the next page.

“Before-and-After” Images of the Recommended Alternative



118th Avenue at 49th Street, looking north

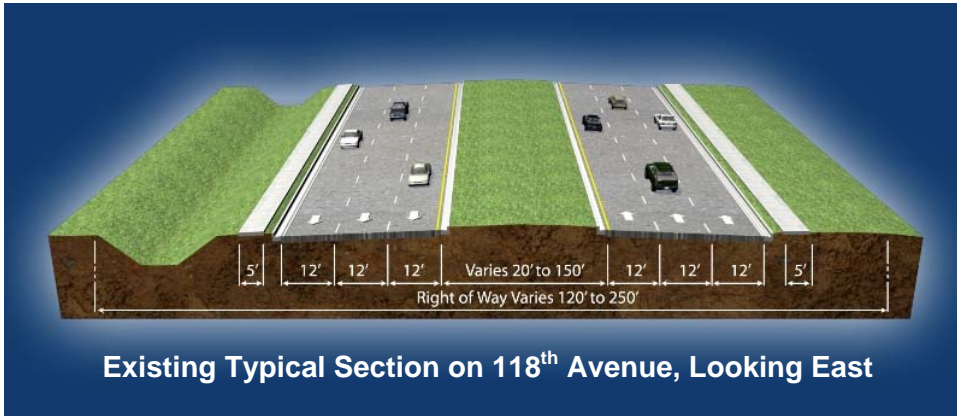


118th Avenue (CR 296) Connector PD&E Study

From US 19 to east of the Roosevelt/CR 296 Connector WPI Segment No. 413622-1



Existing and Proposed Typical Sections



Existing Typical Section on 118th Avenue, Looking East



Proposed Typical Section West of 49th Street, Looking East



Proposed Typical Section East of 49th Street, Looking East

118th Avenue (CR 296) Connector PD&E Study

From US 19 to east of the Roosevelt/CR 296 Connector WPI Segment No. 413622-1



Environmental Effects

The proposed project was evaluated for potential environmental effects as documented in the reports on display here today. A summary of some of these effects is included in the Evaluation Matrix on the following page.

FEDERAL-STATE PARTNERSHIP IN HIGHWAYS

Since 1916, much of the highway construction in the various states has been done under a very successful federal-state partnership, a pooling of funds, and a technical know-how that exemplifies the cooperation possible between the two levels of government.

Although the system has changed and expanded from time to time to meet new conditions, the basic principle has remained the same: the state proposes; the federal government consults, reviews and approves.

The Federal Highway Administration (of the U.S. Department of Transportation) represents the interest of the Federal Government in each individual state's highway program. In Florida, the state Department of Transportation is the principal highway agency.

The improvements of interstate and other federal-aid highways are financed from the proceeds of federal motor fuel and other highway user excise taxes deposited in the Federal Highway Trust Fund. Grant-in-aid funds for use in highway improvements are then allotted to the states in accordance with formulas that give weight to population, area, and postal route mileage; allotments for the Interstate System are based on relative costs to complete the system.

Well in advance of a fiscal year, the states are informed of the amount of federal aid they will be receiving. Hence, they are able to schedule preliminary engineering, right-of-way purchases, and construction accordingly.

The amount of funds contributed by each partner varies according to the type of highway on which they are expended. On primary, secondary, and urban routes, the federal share is roughly 75 percent. (The actual percentage varies from state to state according to the acreage of federal land within the state boundaries.) On interstate highways, the share is approximately ninety percent federal, ten percent state.

In the use of federal aid for highway construction, the states determine the systems to be improved, the projects to be built, and the design and construction standards to be used. The states are responsible for the planning and design of the facilities. They let the contracts and supervise the construction. When completed, the roads remain under the administrative control of the states, which are responsible for the operation and maintenance of the roads. At appropriate stages, the states consult with the regional and local agencies and officials and obtain their approvals as necessary. Similarly at specified steps, the states must consult with and obtain the approval of the Federal Highway Administration, which acts for the Federal Government.

118th Avenue (CR 296) Connector PD&E Study

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Evaluation Matrix

EVALUATION FACTORS	ALTERNATIVES	
	No-Build	Recommended Build Alternative
Business Relocations (No Residential Relocations Involved)		
Number of estimated business relocations	0	29
Right-Of-Way Involvement		
Number of parcels	0	46
Area of ROW to be acquired in acres for roadway	0	23.97
Community Facility Effects ¹		
Number of cemeteries affected	0	1
Cultural/Historical Resources And Public Parks Involvement		
Number of historic sites/structures within or adjacent to ROW	0	0
Number of public parks within or adjacent to ROW	0	0
Natural Environment Involvement		
Estimated number of impacted wetlands or other surface waters in acres	0	5
Estimated Project Costs (Present Value in million \$) ²		
Design costs	\$0	\$10.9
Right-of-Way acquisition costs (excluding ponds)	\$0	\$77.5
Construction costs	\$0	\$90.9
Construction engineering and inspection costs	\$0	\$10.9
Total Costs	\$0	\$190.2

N/A=Not Available

¹ No impacts expected to any churches, schools, child care facilities, nursing homes, hospitals, or public services such as fire/police/EMS facilities.

² Based on cost estimates prepared on March 9, 2005.

118th Avenue (CR 296) Connector PD&E Study

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Project Costs

The estimated costs for the recommended improvements include \$22 million for design and engineering inspection, approximately \$77 million for right-of-way acquisition and approximately

\$91 million for construction. The total estimated project cost is approximately \$190 million. The construction costs were last updated on March 9, 2005.

Right-Of-Way and Relocation Programs

The Florida Department of Transportation will carry out a right-of-way and relocation program in accordance with Florida Statute 339.09 and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policy Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-646 as amended by Public Law 100-7). The brochures, which describe in detail the Department's relocation assistance program and right-of-way acquisition program, are "Your Relocation: Residential", "Your Relocation: Businesses, Farms and Nonprofit Organizations", "Your Relocation: Signs" and "The Real Estate Acquisition Process". These brochures are made available here tonight, and a representative from our right-of-way office is also here to answer your questions. If you have questions following today's Hearing, you can contact Mr. Joe Thompson by phone at 813-975-6495, by e-mail at joe.thompson@dot.state.fl.us, or by mail at The Florida Department of Transportation, District Seven, MS 7-900, 11201 N. McKinley Drive, Tampa, Florida 33612-6456.



The Florida Department of Transportation would like to thank you for your participation in today's Public Hearing.



118th Avenue (CR 296) Connector PD&E Study
Public Hearing Sign-In Sheet

From US 19 to East of the Roosevelt/CR 296 Connector

WPI Segment Number: 413622 1 - FAP Number: 9045-054 C

Thursday, August 18, 2005 -5 to 7 p.m.

Morgan Fitzgerald Middle School - 6410 118th Avenue, Largo, Florida 33773

	Name (Please Print)	Representing	Address
1	Helen Wall	citizen	P.P. F1
2	Don Hennings	WINGAR INN	5000 LAKE BLVD
3	John Wood	MIDWAY SERVICES	4677 118th AVE
4	Bren Smith	Pinecliff, LLC	
5	Chuck Webber	city of P. Park	6051 78th Ave N.
6	Rob Meader	PINECLIFF Co.	
7	Bob Bay	Pinecliff Park	591-0704
8	Tom Shevlin	" "	541-0751
9	Chris Lebeda	Hubcap City	11810 US 19 N
10	JOE KUBICKI	City of St. Petersburg	100 4th St N. St Pet



118th Avenue (CR 296) Connector PD&E Study Public Hearing Sign-In Sheet

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Morgan Fitzgerald Middle School - 6410 118th Avenue, Largo, Florida 33773

Name (Please Print)	Representing	Address
1. MARK MCFADDEN		4245 118 th Ave N Clu
2. <i>[Signature]</i>		540 SEMINOLE BLVD LARGO
3. Terry Young		11801 US 19 N Clu
4. Hanna Nelson	Fowler White	501 E. Kennedy Blvd
5. Pete Yauch	Pinellas Co	440 Court St / Clearwater
6. Bill Bonomo	St-B Cost. Trailers	12004 Rt. 19 /
7. ED MARTENFELD	SPORTS PROPERTIES KNIGHT SHOOTING SPORTS	/ 2000 US Hwy 19 N. 33764
8. James Moyler		12360 66 th St N Hwy 33773
9. Peter Dembek	Property owner	43 -6838 3rd St N St Pete 33762
10. FRANK Blandford	Tourelot Brothers INC.	390 4th St. N. St. Petersburg FL 33701 2802

→ Add to mailing list. frankblandford@tourelotbrothers.com



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Morgan Fitzgerald Middle School - 6410 118th Avenue, Largo, Florida 33773

	Name (Please Print)	Representing	Address
1.	Douglas Reed	Pinellas Resident / PBSSJ	241 23rd Ave. N. St. Pete 33704
2.	PAUL M. McMullen	McMullen Oil Co.	11965 49 th St. N.
3.	RICHARD ROSENSTEIN		
4.	Cheryl D. Magary	MAGARY AutoLand	11922 U.S. 19. N. CLW FL 33764
5.	LARRY GIBSON	MAGARY AutoLand	11922 U.S. 19 N Clw. FL 33764
6.	BILL BECKER	WEST PHARMA. SERV.	5280 118 th Ave No CLW FL.
7.	MAJID AHMADA	MAGIC used Auto Parts	3999 118 Av N
8.	BRETT ROBINSON	SUNCOAST ROOFER SUPPLY	6720 121 AVE N #8 LARGO 33773
9.	Steven McCarthy	Pinellas Park Fire Dept	
10.	Roger Bouverik	BRADWICK ASSOC.	5574 Park Blvd. Pinellas Park, FL 33776



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Thursday, August 18, 2005 - 5 to 7 p.m.
 Morgan Fitzgerald Middle School - 6410 118th Avenue, Largo, Florida 33773

	Name (Please Print)	Representing	Address
1	James Wolfe	INTERPRINT	12350 US 19 N CL FL
2	Mark Martenfeld	Knight Shooting Sports Inc	12000 US 19 N CL FL
3	Patrick DeLorenzo	DeLorenzo Tire	4545 118th Ave
4	KEITH WICKS	Pinalas County Admin	315 - Court St Clearwater
5	JEFF DUKES	WEST PHARMACEUTICAL SUPS	11600 53RD ST N.
6	Kathy Dember	Peter: Kathy Dember	4595 - 118th Ave
7	M/KE CANVES	ATA	2766 SAPHIRE LN, PALM HARBOR FL
8	RON GASPERIN	SELF	6236 FAIRWOLF CT PO 34604
9	Bob + Ange Helike	Self / Plaza Electronics	4667 118 Ave.
10	Charlotte Marlow	SELF	190 112th Ave.



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Thursday, August 18, 2005 -5 to 7 p.m.

Morgan Fitzgerald Middle School - 6410 118th Avenue, Largo, Florida 33773

Name (Please Print)	Representing	Address
1. Scott Pinheiro	City of Pinellas Park	6051 78th Ave PP FL 33781
2. Michael F. Tagarelli	FL Investment Partners	1200 Z W 519
3. Ramon Solis	Pinellas NPO	600 Cleveland and St. Clearwater FL 33755
4. FRANK VAUGHN		3119 OYSTER BAYON WAY CLEARWATER, FL 33759
5. Fred McCleery	West Pharmaceutical Sys	11600 53rd St N Clearwater, FL 33760
6. PAUL HUMPHREY	WEST PHARMACEUTICAL SYS	" " " "
7. GEORGE HOWE	MERCURY MEDICAL	11300-49 ST N CLEARWATER, FL 33762
8. Bill GEORGIANNA NEIDING	LAYMANS	12190 U.S. 19.
9. NIKKI MONAHAN	PINELLAS PARK CHAMBER OF COMMERCE	5851 PARK BLVD PINELLAS PARK FL 33781
10. Hal + Dee Stike	Pinellas Park	5242 115 Ave- S.P.P. 33782



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Morgan Fitzgerald Middle School - 6410 118th Avenue, Largo, Florida 33773

Name (Please Print)	Representing	Address
Stephen Fairchild	PC School District	W.P.S.C. Real Property Mgmt 1111 S. Belcher Rd Largo 33773
<i>[Signature]</i>	Self	1300 Whitehurst Rd No St. Pete 33710
James Byers	PSTA	
Ann Lindberg	St. Petersburg Times	490 1 st Ave. S, St. Pete 33701
George Sinn	Central Fla. Festivity	12625-40 th St., Clear, 33762
JDA KASS	Concerned Citizen	5446 MAGNOLIA TRAIL AP. 33782
John Ardolino	S&J Realty Inc	4625 118th Ave
Rebecca Spain Schwarz	PBS & JTBIC project	5300 W. Cypress St., Tampa, FL
Adam Patterson	HW COACH	#13577 Feather Sound USARUN478A, FL 33762
Ken Fregeau SCOTT RICHTER	Unilove D/B/A Good Hum - BREQUIN	5400 118TH Ave N.



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Morgan Fitzgerald Middle School - 6410 118th Avenue, Largo, Florida 33773

Name (Please Print)	Representing	Address
1. Wayne Bowman	Advised Properties	4585 118th Ave
2. Jim Helinger	FOBS	
3. Bill Wolf	NEWS SERVICES	4677- 118 TH AVE NO
4. Francine Gillo	ME	4805 163 rd Ave N.
5. Steve Spratt	Pineellas Co.	315 County St.
6. BERNARD BUXION-FERRIER	CITY OF LARGO	201 HIGHLAND AVE, LARGO
7. Jim Helinger Jr	Attorney	814 Chestnut St. Clwr. 33756
8. JOHN LANDON	ENGINEER	31622 US 19 N / PAV AVE
9. Jim Symanski	Dixie Tractor	12009 US 19 Pav Clwr
10. Lilian Morken	Interprint	12350 US 19 Clearwater.



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Thursday, August 18, 2005 - 5 to 7 p.m.

Morgan Fitzgerald Middle School - 6410 118th Avenue, Largo, Florida 33773

	Name (Please Print)	Representing	Address
1	Norm Belsou	MAYOR Norm BELSON, Inc	PO Box 17122, Clearwater, FL 33762
2	Karen Seel	BCC	
3	Sarah Ward	Pinellas County Planning / MPO	600 Cleveland Street Clearwater, FL 33755
4			
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118th Avenue (CR 296) Connector PD&E Study From US 19 to East of the Roosevelt/CR 296 Connector

Public Hearing FDOT and Staff Sign-In Sheet

WPI Segment Number: 413622 1 - FAP Number: 9045-054 C

Thursday, August 18, 2005 -5 to 7 p.m.

Morgan Fitzgerald Middle School - 6410 118th Avenue, Largo, Florida 33773

	Name (Please Print)	Representing	Address
1.	Larry Weatherby	ACE - FLA	
2.	LD PARTIDOR	ACE - FLA	
3.	TINA HUBACKER	ACE - FLA	
4.	Gabor Farkasfalvy	FDOT	
5.	Michelle Greene	FDOT	
6.	<i>Alwynne Kelly</i>	FDOT	
7.	Kirk Bogen	FDOT	
8.	Ed Johnson	FDOT	
9.	JEFF NOVOTNY	AMERICAN	
10.	David Bredahl	American	



118th Avenue (CR 296) Connector PD&E Study From US 19 to East of the Roosevelt/CR 296 Connector

Public Hearing FDOT and Staff Sign-In Sheet

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Morgan Fitzgerald Middle School - 6410 118th Avenue, Largo, Florida 33773

	Name (Please Print)	Representing	Address
1	Bob Clifford	FDOT	
2	Adam Perez	FDOT / Proj. Mngmt	
3	DAVE EATON	FDOT / R/W	
4	Tim Drawhorn	FDOT / Proj. Mgmt.	
5	Kris Carson	FDOT PIO	
6	Jerry Comellas	FDOT MPD	
7	Steve Love	FDOT MPD	
8	BAIAN BEATY	FDOT Planning	
9			
10			



Unilever
Ice Cream
5400 118th Ave. North
Clearwater, FL 33760-4315

T: 727-573-1591
F: 727-572-4832
www.icecreamusa.com

August 29, 2005

Robert M. Clifford, AICP
District Modal Planning and Development Manager
Florida Department of Transportation, District 7
MS 7-500
11201 N. McKinley Drive
Tampa, FL 33612-6456

Dear Robert;

Scott Richter, Plant Engineer and I attended the August 18th public hearing for the "118th Avenue (CR296) Connector PD&E Study".

I am requesting a "coordination meeting" with regards to access into and out of the Unilever (Good Humor-Breyers Ice Cream) facility located at 5400 118th Avenue North in Clearwater. After reviewing the proposed plan, we are concerned about access for tractor trailers and routine auto traffic for our 300 employees.

Over the last 5 years, the increased traffic on 118th Avenue North has made it much more difficult to enter and exit the facility in particular when making left hand turns. The proposed plan further limits making left hand turns, and may make access by tractor trailer even more difficult.

We look forward to reviewing potential options before the project enters the "design" phase.

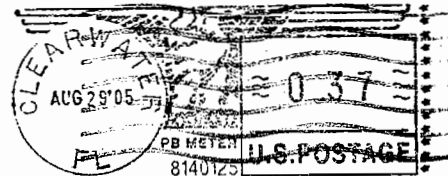
Sincerely;

Kenneth A. Fregeau
Plant Manager




Fold

WEST Pharmaceutical SERVICES 
11600 - 53rd STREET NORTH
CLEARWATER, FL 33760



Robert M. Clifford, AICP
District Modal Planning and Development Manager
Florida Department of Transportation, District 7
MS 7-500
11201 N. McKinley Drive
Tampa, Florida 33612-6456

33612-6456 

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8/21/05 St. Petersburg Times

Project may disturb visits to cemetery

■ A proposed three-tiered road at U.S. 19 and 118th Avenue N will aid traffic, but hinder a woman's trips to her parents' graves.

By ANNE LINDSBERG
Times Staff Writer

PINELLAS PARK — Francine Gillo loves to sit on the bench under an oak tree near her parents' graves and update them on her life.

"They really aren't there, but they are there," she said. "We like to go visit them and talk to them like they are there."

But in recent years, the visits have lost much of their peace.

With the repeated widenings of U.S. 19 N, the road has come closer and closer to the gravesite at the Calvary Catholic Cemetery, bringing with it blowing horns, catcalls and stolen flowers.

"Now, I don't enjoy nothing," Gillo said.

Things may get worse for Gillo. The state wants to make major changes to U.S. 19 and 118th Avenue N. As part of the proposed \$190-million in improvements, there would be a three-tier roadway at that intersection and an elevated road from there to just east of the proposed Roosevelt connector.

Officials with the Florida Department of Transportation discussed the plan Thursday during a public hearing at Morgan Fitzgerald Middle School in Pinellas Park attended by about 55 people. The project would require that the state obtain rights of way from businesses along 118th.

The state says the revamped road will improve safety and increase capacity. Currently, about 50,000 cars a day travel 118th. The state predicts that number will increase to 65,000 daily in 2025.

Some look forward to the project, including Richard Gasperin, who wrote this comment on a form provided by the DOT:

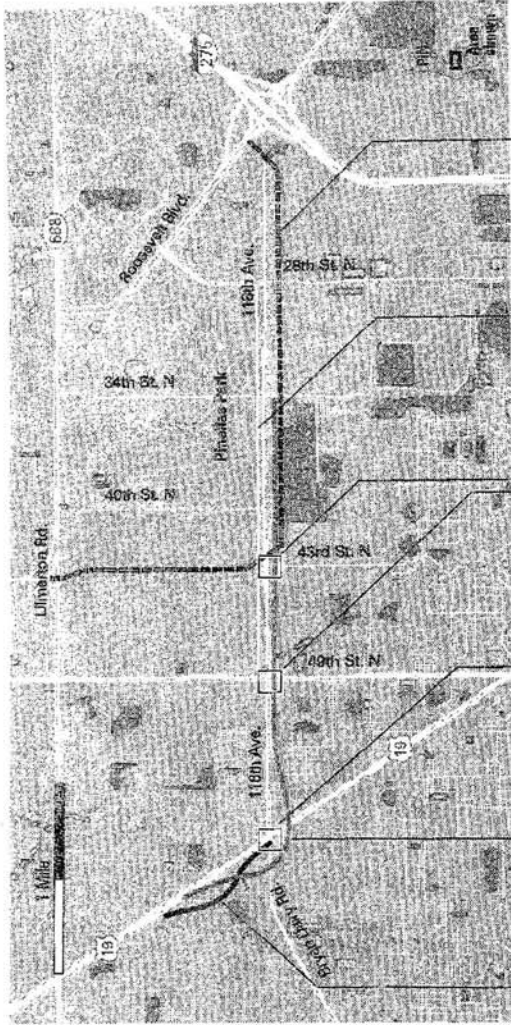
"I look forward to finished construction of the 118th overpass at 49th Street and the U.S. 19 overpass at 118th Avenue," Gasperin said.

Helen Wall also was pleased, writing, "Sounds good. We've been waiting for this. Maybe mass transit next."

Gasperin and Wall will have to wait awhile. The proposal is still in the study stages and the alternative plan is to do nothing. A final proposal will be ready later this year.

The project is not yet funded, but the state and Metropolitan Planning Organization are working on that.

As for Gillo, the improvements will put the graves of her parents just



The southbound U.S. 19 frontage road would be relocated to make room for the flyover ramp.

A flyover ramp would provide a direct path for motorists from southbound U.S. 19 to eastbound 118th Avenue.

Future proposed U.S. 19 interchange at 118th Avenue

Overpass structures above 49th and 43rd streets.

Continuous frontage roads on each side of 118th Avenue would provide access to adjacent businesses.

Future proposed Roosevelt connector.

Source: Florida State Department of Transportation, ESRI, TeleAtlas

Times map — STEVE MADDEN

steps from the edge of the road.

"It'll make me not want to go out to my parents' graves," Gillo said. "That's sad."

Gillo and her brother, Joe, say they know their plight will not stop the project. A DOT official at the hearing told them the state will not pay to relocate the graves or build a high wall around the edge of the cemetery to provide privacy for those who wish to visit departed loved ones.

The project, called the 118th Avenue connector, includes several components.

It would be an elevated roadway that would begin at the intersection of 118th and U.S. 19 and it would run eastward to 34th Street N, just east of the planned Roosevelt connector, which is another project.

Also planned as part of the improvements would be access roads on both sides of the elevated road and intersection changes.

At U.S. 19, the proposal is to build a flyover ramp to route southbound traffic from U.S. 19 to the connector. That would require the relocation of the southbound U.S. 19 frontage road

to make room for the flyover.

The flyover would pass over an overpass to be built in 2006 as part of a separate project.

The overpass will allow traffic on 118th to pass over vehicles on U.S. 19. When all the work is complete, there would be a three-tier roadway at that intersection.

Another overpass would be built to allow traffic on 118th to pass over traffic on 49th Street N. The express lanes on 118th would pass over cars on 43rd Street N.