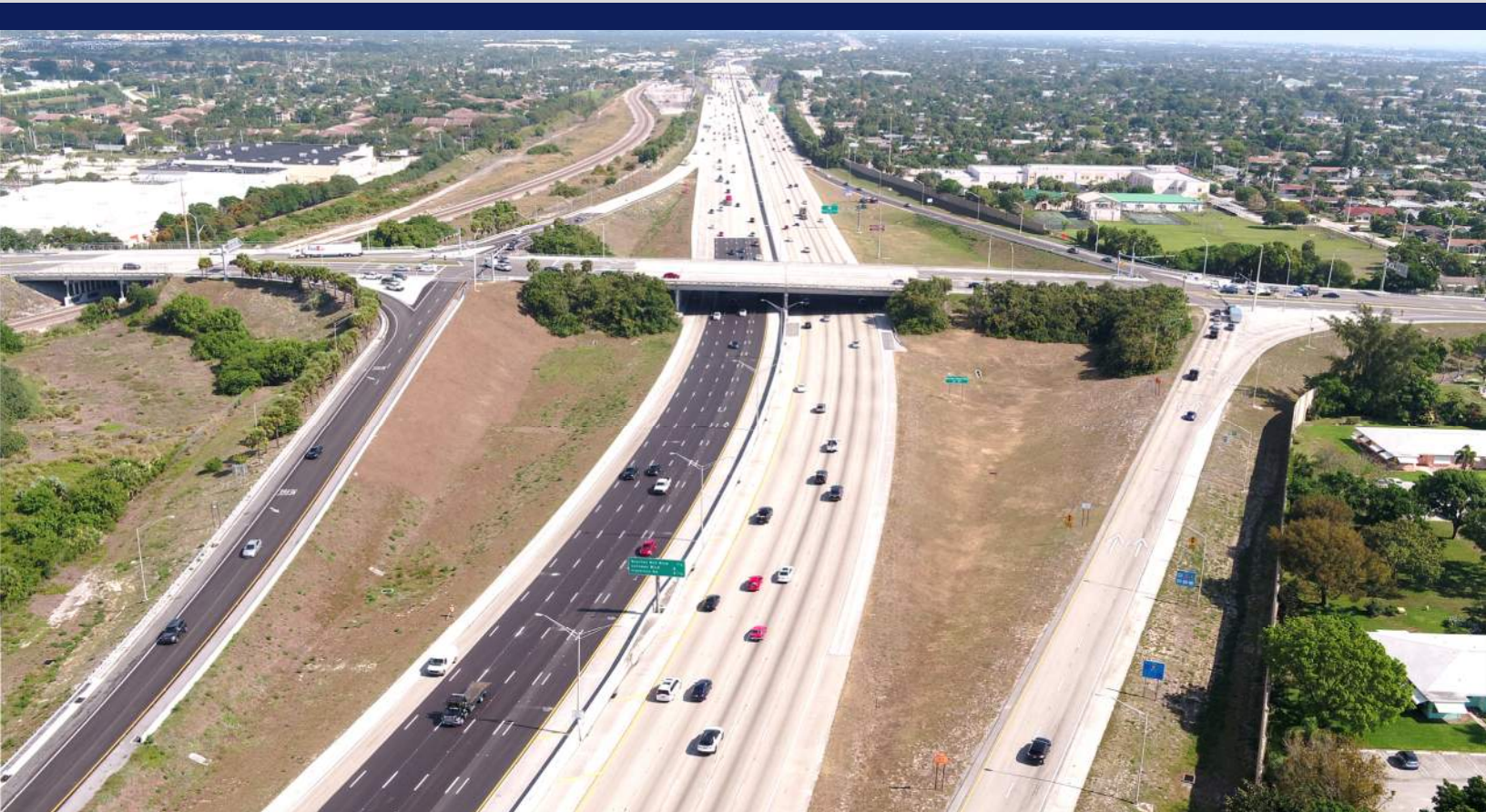




**SR 9/I-95 Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study
from S. of Woolbright Road to N. of Woolbright Road
Palm Beach County, Florida**

FPID No.: 437279-1-22-02 | ETDM No.: 14341



**SOCIOCULTURAL EFFECTS
EVALUATION**

December 2020

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable Federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by FDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. § 327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 14, 2016 and executed by FHWA and FDOT.

SOCIOCULTURAL EFFECTS EVALUATION

SR 9/I-95 Project Development and Environment Study
From South of Woolbright Road to North of Woolbright Road
Boynton Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida
(From Mile Post 13.560 to Mile Post 13.995)

FPID: 437279-1-22-02
ETDM #: 14341

Prepared for:



Florida Department of Transportation
District Four
3400 West Commercial Boulevard
Fort Lauderdale, Florida 33309

Prepared by:
E Sciences, Incorporated
and
Hanson Professional Services, Inc.

December 2020

Table of Contents

1. SUMMARY OF PROJECT.....	1
1.1 Project Description.....	1
1.2 Background	4
1.3 Purpose and Need.....	4
2. PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES	7
3. COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS INVENTORY	12
3.1 Community Facilities.....	14
3.2 Demographics	14
4. EVALUATION OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS.....	17
4.1 Social	18
4.1.1 Demographics	18
4.1.2 Community Cohesion	20
4.1.3 Safety/Emergency Response.....	20
4.1.4 Community Goals/Quality of Life.....	21
4.1.5 Special Community Designations.....	21
4.2 Economic	21
4.2.1 Business and Employment	22
4.2.2 Tax Base.....	22
4.2.3 Traffic Patterns.....	22
4.2.4 Business Access	22
4.2.5 Special Needs Patrons	23
4.3 Land Use Changes	23
4.3.1 Land Use – Urban Form.....	24
4.3.2 Plan Consistency.....	26
4.3.3 Growth Trends and Issues.....	26
4.3.4 Focal Points	27
4.4 Mobility	27
4.4.1 Modal Choices.....	27
4.4.2 Accessibility/Transportation Disadvantaged	28
4.4.3 Connectivity	28
4.4.4 Traffic Circulation	29

4.4.5 Public Parking 29

4.5 Aesthetic Effects 29

4.5.1 Noise/Vibration 30

4.5.2 Viewshed 30

4.5.3 Compatibility 30

4.6 Relocation Potential 31

4.6.1 Residential 32

4.6.2 Non-Residential 33

4.6.3 Public Facilities/Signs 33

5. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT 34

5.1 Advance Notification 34

5.2 Public Involvement Plan 34

5.2.1 Identification of Agencies, Elected and Appointed Officials and Concerned Public 34

5.2.2 Public Notification 35

5.3 Public Meetings 35

5.3.1 Public Kickoff Meeting 35

5.3.2 Alternatives Public Workshop 36

5.3.3 Public Hearing 36

5.4 Public Involvement Summary 36

6. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, CIVIL RIGHTS AND RELATED ISSUES 37

6.1 Protected Populations in the Study Area 38

6.2 Coordination and Participation 38

6.3 Summary of Project Effects 38

6.4 Findings Regarding Disproportionate Adverse Effects 39

7. RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMITMENTS 40

7.1 Recommendations for Resolving Issues 40

7.2 Project Commitments 40

List of Figures

Figure 1- 1. Project Location Map	2
Figure 2- 1. Alternative 1: TDI	9
Figure 2- 2:. Alternative 2: DDI.....	10
Figure 2- 3:. Alternative 3: SPUI	11
Figure 3- 1. SCE Study Area Map.....	13
Figure 4- 1:. FLUCFCS Land Use Map.....	25

List of Tables

Table 3- 1. Existing Land Use	13
Table 3- 2. Community Facilities	14
Table 3-3. Age Group Comparison	15
Table 3- 4. Race and Ethnicity Comparison.....	15
Table 3- 5. SCE Study Area by Language	16
Table 3- 6. Income Comparison	16
Table 4- 1. Evaluation Criteria	17
Table 4- 2. ETDM #14341 Degrees of Effect	18
Table 4- 3. Vulnerable Populations in the Study Area and the Legal Authority for Protection from Discrimination	19
Table 6- 1. Summary Degree of Effect for Each SCE Issue	38

Appendix

- Appendix A – Preliminary Right of Way Impacts Maps
- Appendix B – Public Meeting Summaries

1. SUMMARY OF PROJECT

1.1 Project Description

This report contains information regarding the SR 9/I-95 (I-95) from South of Woolbright Road to North of Woolbright Road Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study (Mile Post 13.560 to Mile Post 13.995). This project has been developed in compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other related federal and state nondiscrimination authorities. Neither the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) nor this project will deny the benefits of, exclude from participation in, or subject to discrimination anyone on the basis of race, color, national origin, age, sex, disability, or family status.

The FDOT, District Four is conducting a PD&E Study to identify long-term needs of I-95 and develop design concepts to address traffic spillback onto I-95, reduce congestion at the I-95 and Woolbright Road interchange, improve interchange operations, and improve safety at the study interchange through the 2045 design year horizon. This study will also consider Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) connector improvements needed within the project area and is consistent with plans for the I-95 mainline, including the potential extension of I-95 Managed Lanes through Palm Beach County. This study is investigating alternatives to improve the overall operating conditions and enhance safety within the interchange.

The improvements to the I-95 Interchange at Woolbright Road will provide additional capacity for vehicles travelling east-west as well as operational improvements north-south through the interchange. Local and network connectivity for the City of Boynton Beach will be improved.

The Interchange of I-95 at Woolbright Road is located in Palm Beach County in the City of Boynton Beach. The project limits along I-95 extend from just south of Woolbright Road at SW 23rd Avenue to just north of Woolbright Road about 2,000 feet north of the interchange. The project limits along Woolbright Road extend from SW 18th Street on the west to just east of I-95 at SW 2nd Street. The project area includes the signalized intersections at SW 8th Street, and the I-95 southbound and northbound ramps. The South Florida Rail Corridor (SFRC)/CSX Railroad is adjacent to the project corridor and runs parallel along the west side of I-95. Tri-Rail operates along this rail corridor, with the nearest station; Boynton Beach Tri-Rail Station located 2.68 miles to the north of Woolbright Road, just north of the Gateway Boulevard interchange. (**Figure 1 – Project Location Map**).

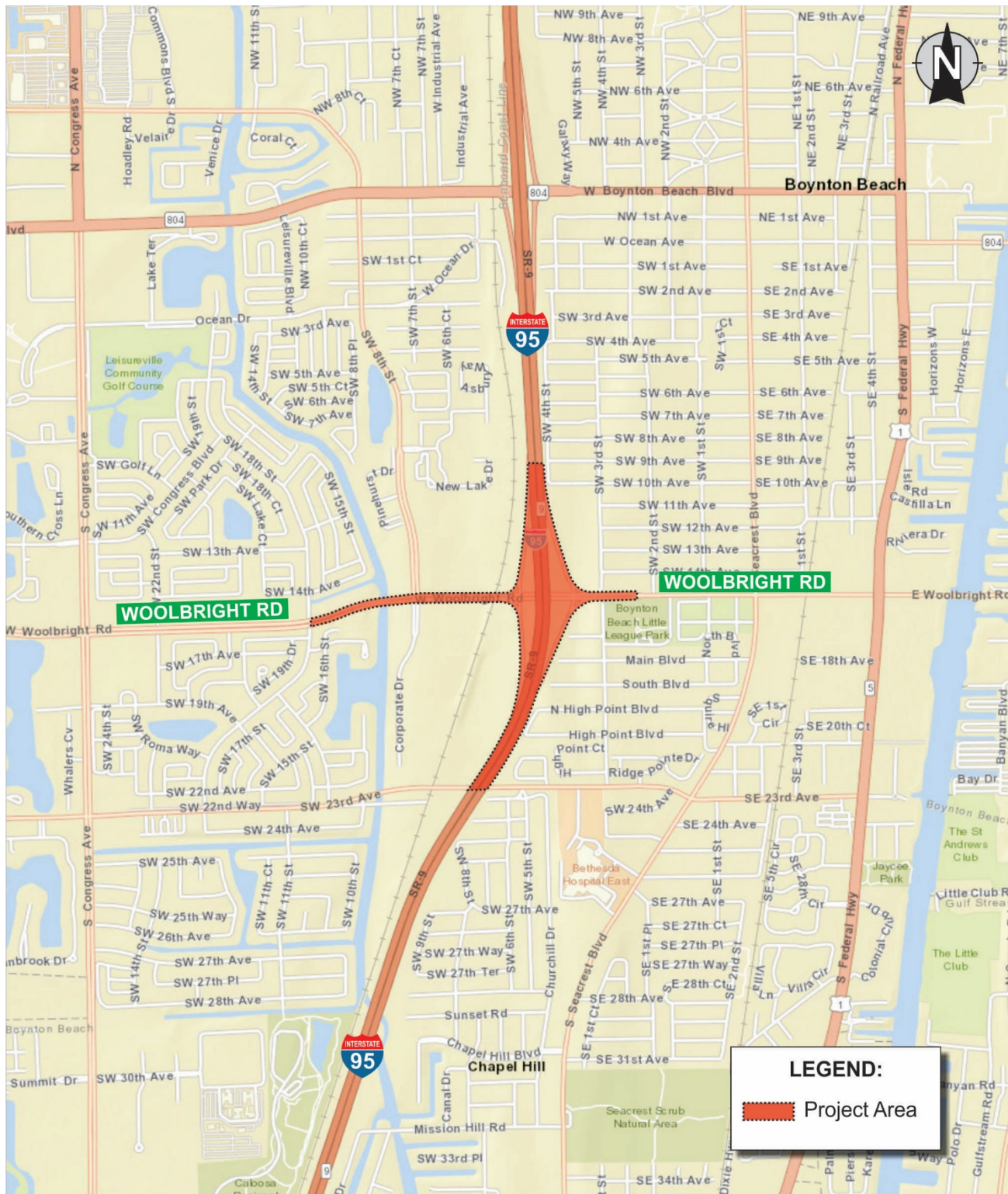


Figure 1-1. Project Location Map

Within the project limits, I-95 is a ten-lane divided interstate freeway providing four general purpose lanes and one high occupancy vehicle (HOV) lane in each direction. The project will be designed to complement the I-95 interim interchange design-build project recently completed, which constructed one additional left-turn lane onto I-95 in both the eastbound and westbound directions; a free-flow right-turn lane from the southbound off-ramp; and designated bicycle lanes along Woolbright Road within the limits of the interchange.

Woolbright Road is currently a six-lane urban divided minor arterial to the west of I-95 and a four-lane urban divided minor arterial to the east of I-95. There is a raised median from SW 18th Street west of I-95 to just west of SW 2nd Street east of I-95. At SW 2nd Street, Woolbright Road transitions to a five-lane roadway section with a two-way left-turn lane in the middle. There are sidewalks on both sides of Woolbright Road throughout the project area and designated bicycle lanes within the limits of the interchange.

The land use adjacent to the interchange is zoned as Public Usage, Single Family, Duplex, Neighborhood Commercial, and Light Industrial. The area southeast of the interchange is zoned Recreation, Multi Family, Public Usage, and Planned Unit Development. Zoning northwest of the interchange consists of Planned Commercial Development, Planned Unit Development, Light Industrial, Office Professional, Neighborhood Commercial, and Single Family, and southwest of the interchange is zoned Community Commercial, Office Professional, Planned Industrial Development, and Single Family.

Improvement to the I-95 interchange at Woolbright Road is consistent with the Cost Feasible Plan of the Palm Beach Transportation Planning Agency (TPA) 2045 Long Range Transportation Plan (LRTP). “The purpose is to improve interchange operations and reduce congestion, reduce potential for traffic spillback onto I-95, and increase safety. The improvements are needed to ensure that the I-95 interchange will meet FDOT Level-of-Service standards through year 2045.”

This project has been screened through the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process. The Advance Notification (AN) was distributed during the programming screening event, which occurred on October 23, 2017. The Programming Screen Summary Report was re-published on May 3, 2018 and can be viewed under the ETDM # 14341.

1.2 Background

The FDOT made improvements to the I-95 mainline in Palm Beach County in the 1990s and 2000s, adding High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes and auxiliary lanes from south of Linton Boulevard to north of PGA Boulevard. Minor interchange improvements were also made to eight of the existing 18 interchanges along this section of the corridor. At the time of the project, FDOT committed to re-examine the need for long-term improvements at those interchanges that were not improved during the I-95 mainline project. FDOT District Four also identified the need to re-examine the 2003 I-95 Master Plan Study for Palm Beach County to develop new improvements to interchanges based on changes in traffic volumes and updated design standards since the Master Plan was developed.

A Concept Development Report (CDR) was prepared by the FDOT District Four Office of Planning and Environmental Management in August of 2014. The following are the recommendations identified for short-term improvements that have been recently completed as part of the Design-Build project:

- One additional left-turn lane onto I-95 in both the eastbound and westbound directions;
- A free-flow right-turn lane from the southbound off-ramp; and
- Designated bicycle lanes along Woolbright Road within the limits of the interchange.

1.3 Purpose and Need

The purpose of this study is to identify long-term needs of I-95 and develop concepts to address traffic spillback onto I-95, reduce congestion on I-95 and Woolbright Road, improve interchange operations, and improve safety at the I-95 and Woolbright Road interchange through the 2045 design year horizon. This project will also consider SIS connector improvements needed within the project area and will be consistent with plans for the I-95 mainline, including the potential extension of I-95 Express lanes through Palm Beach County.

Additional considerations for the purpose and need for this project are further described in the following sections that include System Linkage, Capacity, Transportation Demand, Social Demands/Economic Development, Modal Interrelationships, and Safety.

System Linkage: I-95 is a part of the state's Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) and the National Highway System (NHS). A need exists to ensure that I-95 continues to meet the minimum requirements as a component of those two systems. The project is not proposing to change system linkage; however, the interchange modifications would improve movements within the existing systems. The proposed project at I-95 and Woolbright Road will

help improve connectivity and capacity within the roadway network by addressing traffic spillback onto I-95 and improving interchange connections.

Capacity: Using field review data collected in 2018, A.M. and P.M. peak conditions were observed at all intersections in the study area. At the Corporate Drive/SW 8th Street intersection, during the P.M. peak hour, all approaches experienced minimal queues, except for the westbound and eastbound directions. The westbound left-turn queue experienced spillback into the through lanes and the eastbound direction experienced long queues. During the P.M. peak hour on the I-95 southbound ramp intersection, the eastbound approach experienced long queues, but all queues cleared the intersection during each signal cycle. The southbound approach experienced significant queues, with the queue not clearing during one signal cycle. During the P.M. peak hour at the I-95 northbound ramps intersection, the eastbound approach experienced minimal queue buildup and the northbound and westbound approaches experienced long queues; however, all queues cleared the intersection in one signal cycle for all approaches.

Transportation Demand: Interchange improvements to I-95 at Woolbright Road is included in the Palm Beach County TPA's 2045 LRTP under projects funded with SIS revenues, which includes federal funds. The project is consistent with the plans for the I-95 mainline, including the extension of express lanes into Palm Beach County.

Social Demands/Economic Development: Social and economic demands on the I-95 corridor will continue to increase as population and employment increase. The Palm Beach County TPA 2040 LRTP states that the population would grow 27 percent from 1.32 million in 2010 to 1.68 million in 2040. The employment was also forecasted to grow from 571,000 to 820,000 employees in the same 30 year period for an increase of nearly 44 percent. The predicted increase in population and employment will increase congestion in the study area.

Modal Interrelationships: Currently, sidewalks and crosswalks are provided on both sides of Woolbright Road. Palm Tran Route 70 services Seacrest Boulevard both north and south of Woolbright Road east of the interchange, as well as the Boynton Beach Tri-Rail station 2.68 miles north of Woolbright Road. The project proposes to provide undesignated bicycle lanes on both sides of Woolbright Road. Capacity improvements at the interchange will enhance the mobility of people and goods by alleviating current and future congestion at the interchange and the surrounding freight and transit networks. Reduced congestion will serve to maintain and improve viable access to the major transportation facilities and businesses in the area.

Safety: The crash data for the latest available five-year period (2012 to 2016) along Woolbright Road (93220000) from SW 8 Street to S. Seacrest Boulevard was retrieved from FDOT's Crash Analysis Reporting System (CARS) on-line database and from Signal 4 Analytics database. The study corridor encompasses the I-95 Interchange. The crash data from both databases were summarized separately for the entire corridor and for the I-95 interchange.

Overall, there was a total of 680 crashes during the 5-year period. Based on crash severity, of the 680 crashes reported, 240 (35.5%) were injury type crashes, 437 (64.3%) were property damage only crashes, and three fatal crashes were reported. Two of the fatal crashes occurred in 2012 and were classified as overturn and collision with parked vehicle type and the third fatal crash occurred in 2016 and it was classified as angle collision. There were 150 wet pavement crashes (22.1%) reported. The frequency of wet pavement crashes was constant through the 5-year analysis period. This may indicate a crash pattern of wet pavement crashes. There were 171 nighttime/dusk/dawn/dark crashes (25.1%) reported. The leading crash type was rear-end with a total of 338 crashes (49.7%) followed by sideswipe with a total of 94 crashes (13.8%). Careless driving or negligent manner was the most predominate contributing causes of these crashes. Most of the crashes (178) occurred during the morning hours (6 AM to 9 AM), which correspond to the typical morning rush period.

2. PROPOSED ALTERNATIVES

The following describes the alternatives considered for this project.

No Action Alternative

- This alternative would keep the existing interchange roadway network into the future without improvements.
- The No Action Alternative has a number of positive aspects, since it would not require expenditure of public funds for design, right-of-way acquisition, construction, or utility relocation. Traffic would not be disrupted due to construction, therefore, avoiding inconveniences to local residents and businesses. Also, there would be no direct or secondary impacts to the environment, the socio-economic characteristics, or community cohesion of the area.
- The No Action Alternative fails to fulfill the purpose and need of the project. Operational and safety conditions within the interchange area will become progressively worse as traffic volumes continue to increase, thereby increasing the number of crashes and deteriorating access of this interchange.

Alternative 1 – Tight Diamond Interchange (TDI)– Recommended Alternative

- Modify the existing Diamond Interchange by widening the existing Woolbright Road bridge over I-95 and the bridge over the South Florida Rail Corridor to accommodate one additional through lane in each direction through the interchange
- Add one additional left-turn lane (triple lefts) at the northbound and southbound I-95 off-ramp intersections
- Add one additional westbound through lane at the Corporate Drive/SW 8th Street intersection
- Add one additional left-turn lane in the eastbound and westbound direction at the Corporate Drive/SW 8th Street intersection
- Widen the existing bridge over the E-4 Canal to accommodate the additional westbound through lane and bicycle lanes
- Extend the bicycle lanes from the interchange to SW 18th Street
- Refer to [Figure 2-1](#).

Alternative 2 – Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI)

- Reconstruct the existing Diamond Interchange to a Diverging Diamond Interchange (DDI) configuration, which provides three continuous through lanes through the interchange with two free flow left-turn lanes into the I-95 on-ramps
- Add one additional westbound through lane at the Corporate Drive/SW 8th Street intersection

- Add one additional left-turn lane in the eastbound and westbound direction at the Corporate Drive/SW 8th Street intersection
- Widen the existing bridge over the E-4 Canal to accommodate the additional westbound through lane and bicycle lanes
- Extend the bicycle lanes from the interchange to SW 18th Street
- Refer to [Figure 2-2](#).

Alternative 3 – Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI)

- Reconstruct the existing Diamond Interchange to a Single Point Urban Interchange (SPUI) configuration, which provides two continuous through lanes through the interchange
- Add one additional left-turn lane (triple lefts) at the southbound I-95 off-ramp intersection
- Add one additional westbound through lane at the Corporate Drive/SW 8th Street intersection
- Add one additional left-turn lane in the eastbound and westbound direction at the Corporate Drive/SW 8th Street intersection
- Widen the existing bridge over the E-4 Canal to accommodate the additional westbound through lane and bicycle lanes
- Extend the bicycle lanes from the interchange to SW 18th Street
- Refer to [Figure 2-3](#).

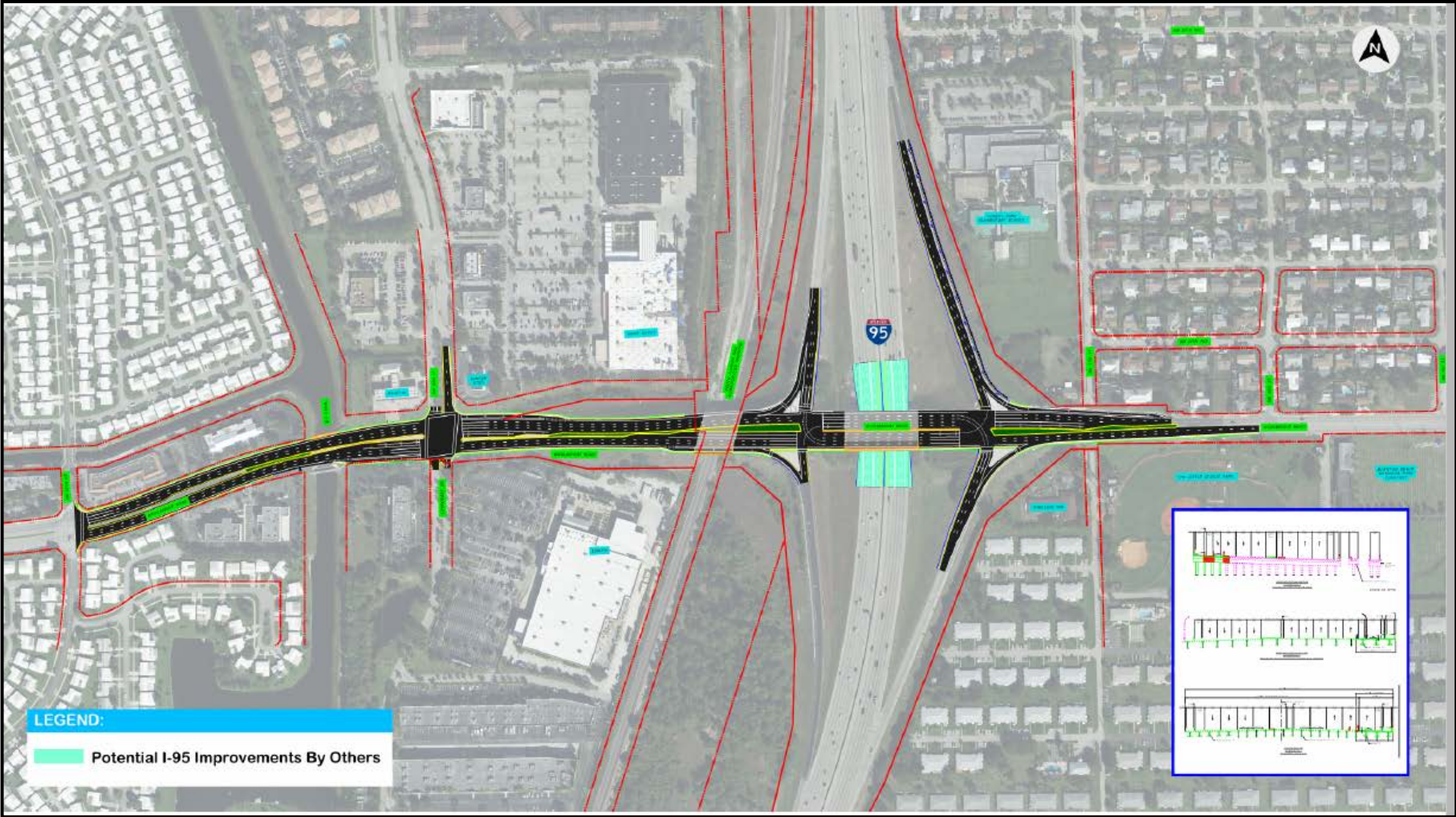


Figure 1-1. Alternative 1: TDI

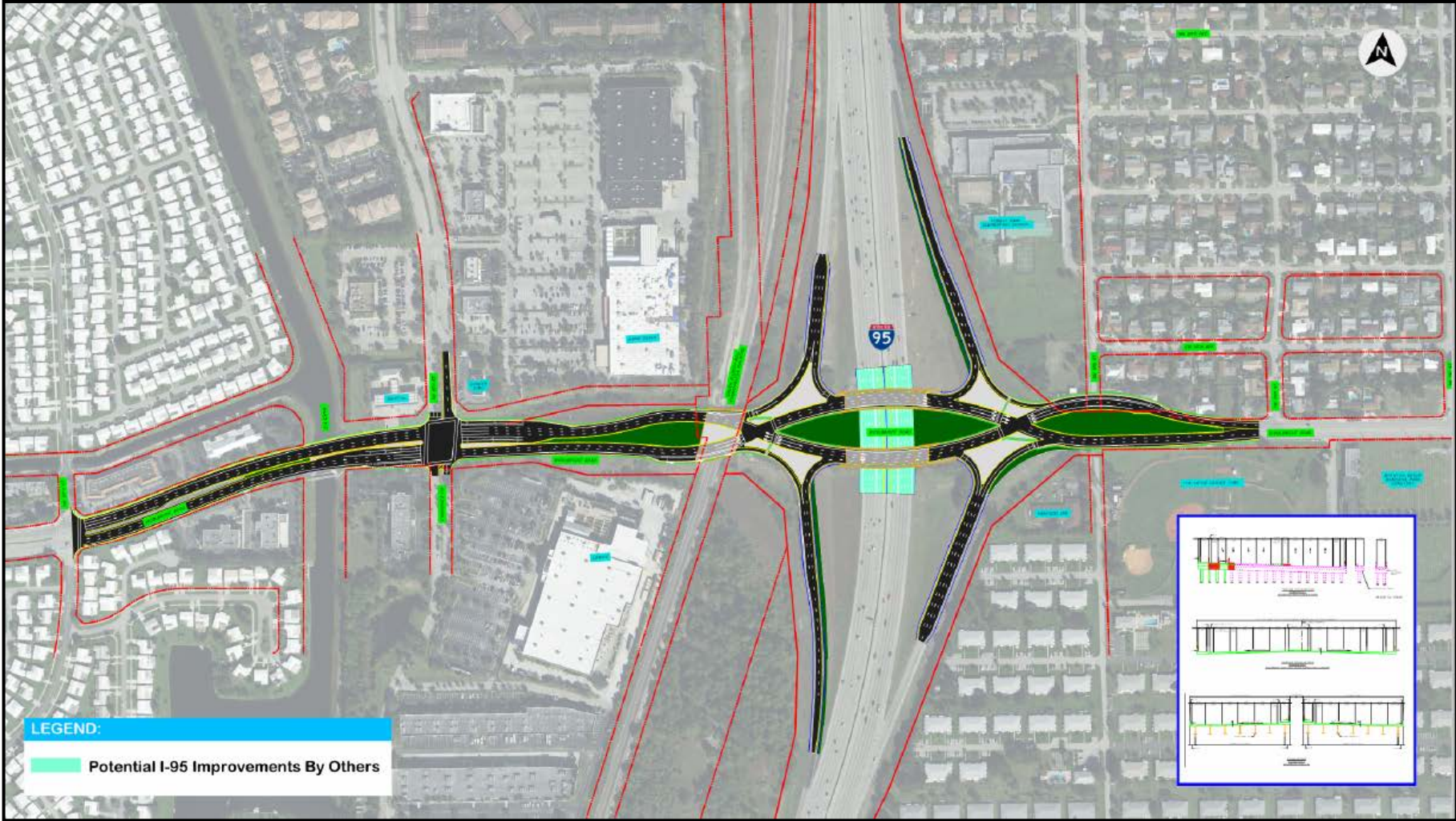


Figure 2-2:. Alternative 2: DDI

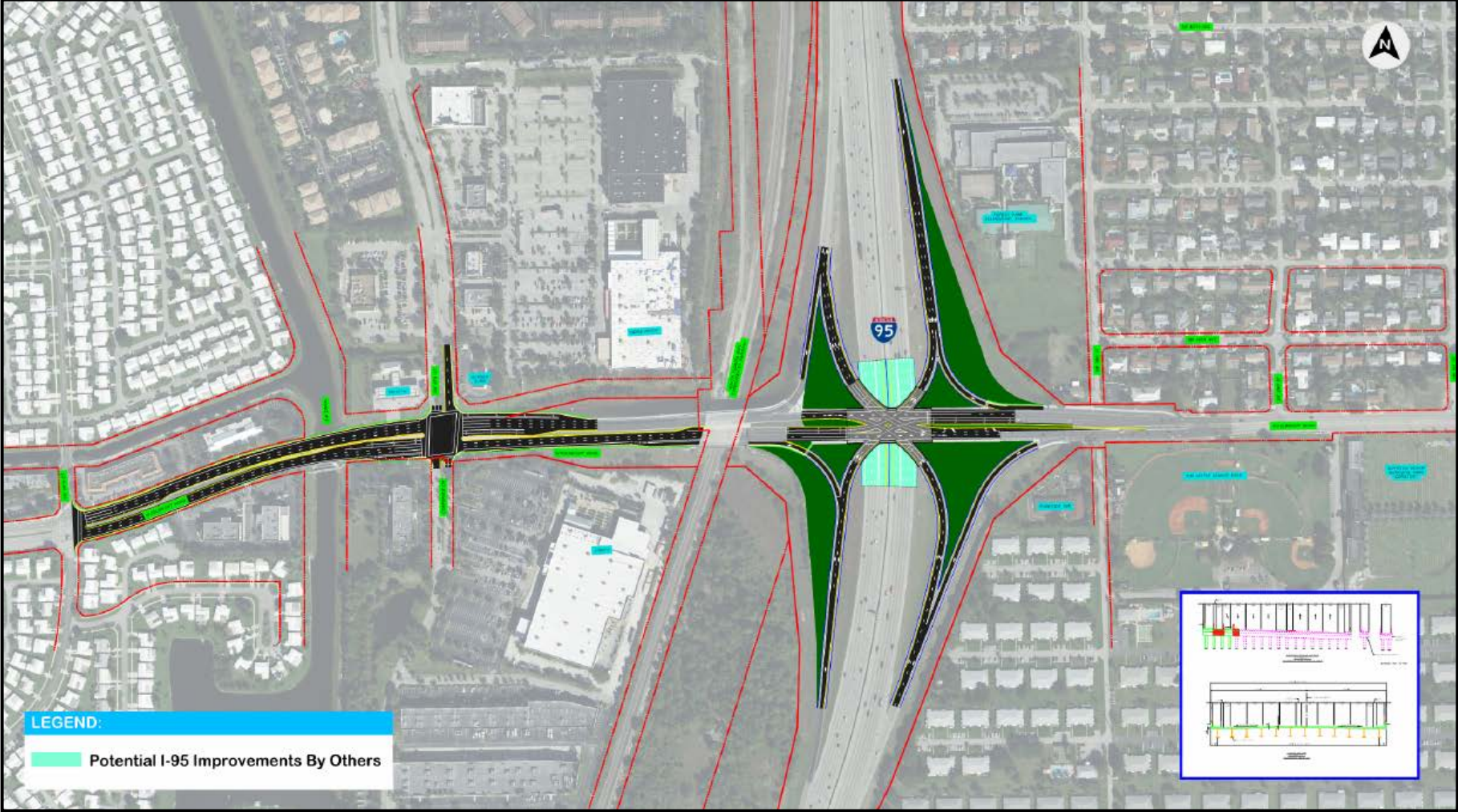


Figure 3-3:. Alternative 3: SPUI

3. COMMUNITY CHARACTERISTICS INVENTORY

The Community Characteristic Inventory (CCI) is a comprehensive summary of the quantitative and qualitative data for each defined community within the study area. The CCI is used to help support the decisions made during the Sociocultural Evaluation (SCE) process. The CCI assists the community analyst in acquiring a better understanding of the affected community and potential issues considered when evaluating the effect of a transportation action on the community. A comprehensive CCI is valuable to the identification and later resolution of issues.

The study area is defined as the geographic area that includes all communities with the potential to be affected by a transportation action. The study area typically includes communities immediately surrounding the project; however, it may extend beyond the typical project corridor to include analysis for specific communities affected by the project. The SCE Study Area extends 0.25 miles from the centerlines of the project corridor as shown in **Figure 3-1**. The Sociocultural Data Report (SDR) from the ETDM Environmental Screening Tool (EST) was reviewed for this SCE Study Area.

The SCE Study Area is wholly within the City of Boynton Beach, Palm Beach County, Florida. Boynton Beach is primarily a residential city with opportunities for outdoor recreation, shopping and dining. The population was 68,217 in the 2010 U.S. Census and estimated at 78,050 in 2018. Boynton Beach is the third largest city in Palm Beach County with a projected population of 81,000 in 2025. The total land area of the City of Boynton Beach is approximately 16 square miles. The land area for the SCE Study Area is less than one square mile.

In the SCE Study area (0.25 miles from the project corridor), residential land uses are the highest percentage at more than 40%. The Generalized Land Uses, as characterized in the SDR, are presented in **Table 3-1**. [Note that the acreage for the land uses is 414 acres, while the study area encompasses approximately 571 acres (0.893 square miles). The land use information indicates acreages and percentages for the generalized land use types used to group parcel-specific, existing land use assigned by the County property appraiser's office according to the Florida Department of Revenue Land Use Codes. Therefore, it is presumed that certain land use types are not represented in the land use data. Note that only land use types with a number that is not zero are presented in this table.

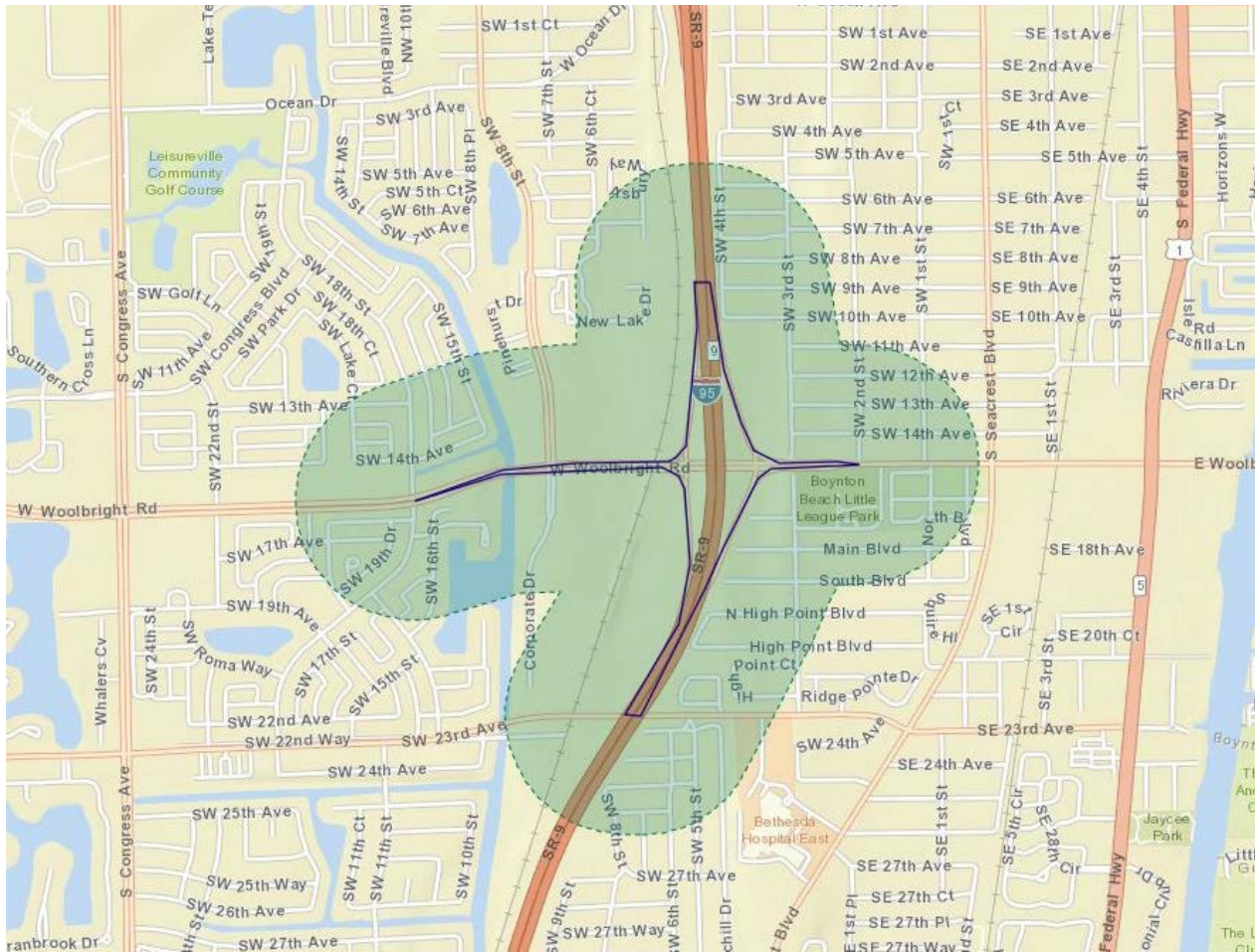


Figure 3- 1. SCE Study Area Map

Table 3- 1. Existing Land Use		
Land Use Type	Acres	Percentage
Residential	230	40.23
Vacant Residential	1	0.17
Retail/Office	56	9.79
Public/Semi-Public	52	9.09
Industrial	19	3.32
Parcels with No Values	15	2.62
Institutional	13	2.27
Recreation	12	2.10
Right of Way	10	1.75
Water	5	0.87
Vacant Nonresidential	1	0.17

3.1 Community Facilities

Community facilities provide information on the types of population groups present in the study area and facility staff and leaders can be sources of community information. Community resources need to be evaluated for potential sociocultural effects such as accessibility and relocation potential. **Table 3-2** identifies community facilities by type in the SCE Study Area.

Table 3- 2. Community Facilities		
Name	Address	Type
Forest Park Elementary School	1201 SW 3 rd Street	Public and Private Schools/ Group Care Facilities
Little League Park	SW 15 th Avenue and SW 3 rd Street	Florida Parks and Recreational Facilities
Parkside Inn	1613 SW 3 rd Street	Group Care Facilities

3.2 Demographics

Demographic data from the SDR was generated to assist in defining the community surrounding the project area, including population size, gender, age composition, race and ethnicity, income, disability, educational attainment, housing and language trends of the affected community. This demographic data assists with structuring the Public Involvement Plan (PIP) to reach the various populations present in the community. This information can be used to determine the percentage of individuals with Limited English Proficiency (LEP) within a community and the need to develop outreach materials in languages other than English. This information can also be used to determine the types of outreach techniques that may work better for the affected community. Data presented below is from the American Community Survey (ACS) 2014-2018 five-year estimates from the SDR. Following are comparisons between the demographics in the SCE Study Area and in Palm Beach County.

The total population in the SCE Study Area is 3,418 persons, 1,526 of whom are males (44.65%) and 1,892 female (55.35%). There are also more females than males in Boynton Beach and Palm Beach County, although the percentage of females is not as high, 52.8% in Boynton Beach and 51.5% in Palm Beach County. The total population of Palm Beach County was estimated at 1,446,277 in 2018. The median age in Palm Beach County is 44.6 years whereas, in the SCE Study Area, it is 63 years. The distribution of age groups in the SCE Study Area is shown in **Table 3-3**. Note that percentage of people over the age of 65 is higher in the SCE Study Area than in Palm Beach County.

Age Group	SCE Study Area (%)	Palm Beach County (%)
Under Age 5	4.68	5.13
Ages 5 -17	10.59	14.23
Ages 18-21	5.32	4.46
Ages 22-29	9.92	9.32
Ages 30-39	11.23	11.54
Ages 40-49	13.46	12.21
Ages 50-64	17.61	19.81
Age 65 and Over	27.03	23.29

In comparing race and ethnicity trends in **Table 3-4**, the SCE Study Area has a higher percentage of people that identify as Black or African American Alone than Palm Beach County, but the total Minority population is slightly lower than that of Palm Beach County. Minority in the SDR report is defined as people who are multi-racial, people who are any single race other than White, and Hispanic or Latino of Any Race. The SCE Study Area has a lower percentage of Hispanics or Latinos of Any Race and a higher percentage of ethnicities that are Not Hispanic or Latino than Palm Beach County. The percentage of people in the SCE Study Area that identify as White Alone is 69.02% as compared to 74.02% in Palm Beach County.

Race or Ethnicity	SCE Study Area (#)	SCE Study Area (%)	Palm Beach County (%)
White Alone	2,359	69.02	74.02
Black or African American Alone	872	25.51	18.56
Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander	0	0.00	0.04
Asian Alone	59	1.73	2.69
American Indian or Alaska Native	0	0.00	0.17
Some Other Race Alone	29	0.85	2.43
Claimed 2 or More Races	97	2.84	2.09
Hispanic or Latino of Any Race	507	14.83	21.85
Not Hispanic or Latino	2,911	85.17	78.15
Minority	1,466	42.89	44.70

The language trends of people in the SCE Study Area that are not native English speakers are presented in **Table 3-5**. It is estimated that 14.25% of the total population in the SCE Study Area are not native English speakers. Of the total population, an estimated 7.77% speak English not well or not at all. This highlights the need for developing communication materials in languages other than English. Other languages spoken in the project area include Spanish, Indo-European languages and Asian and Pacific Island languages.

Table 3- 5. SCE Study Area by Language		
Description	Number	Percentage
Speaks English Well	211	6.48%
Speaks English Not Well	193	5.92%
Speaks English Not At All	60	1.84%
Speaks English Not Well or Not At All	253	7.77%

The SCE Study Area has lower median household and median family incomes than in Palm Beach County and a higher percentage of the population is below the poverty level, as shown in **Table 3-6**. More than twice the percentage of households in the SCE Study Area receive public assistance income than in Palm Beach County.

Table 3- 6. Income Comparison		
Description	SCE Study Area	Palm Beach County
Median Household Income	\$39,702	\$59,943
Median Family Income	\$59,680	\$74,536
Population Below Poverty Level	14.39%	12.82%
Households Below Poverty Level	11.64%	11.77%
Households with Public Assistance Income	5.04%	2.16%

Based on the SDR 2018 data, there are 1,674 housing units in the SCE Study Area, or 4.34 units per acre. Of these, 1,081 are single-family units, 590 are multi-family units and three are mobile home units. There are 950 owner-occupied units, 398 renter-occupied units and 326 vacant units. In addition, the SDR data indicates that 191 persons, or 10.07%, of the population ages 20 to 64 have a disability. Information on persons over 65 with a disability is not provided.

4. EVALUATION OF POTENTIAL EFFECTS

Transportation projects may have various types of effects on the surrounding environment. The FDOT Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Manual, Part 2, Chapter 4 (effective January 14, 2019) defines three types of effects: direct effects, indirect effects and cumulative effects. Direct effects are caused by the action and occur at the same time and place. They are changes in the community that principally occur as a result of implementing the transportation project (e.g., acquisition of right-of-way and business displacement). Indirect effects occur later in time or are farther removed in distance but still reasonably foreseeable. Indirect effects include growth-inducing impacts such as changes in land use pattern or population density/growth rate. Cumulative effects result from the incremental impact of the action when added to other past, present and reasonably foreseeable actions. An example of a cumulative effect would be if a project improves access to a relatively undeveloped area and the improved access stimulates development, thus increasing population and overcrowding.

The degree of effect was determined using the guidance provided in the FDOT PD&E Manual. The evaluation criteria are summarized in **Table 4-1**.

Table 4- 1. Evaluation Criteria	
DEGREE OF EFFECT	SOCIOCULTURAL RESOURCES
Not Applicable/No Involvement	There is no presence of the issue in relation to the project, or the issue is irrelevant in relation to the proposed transportation action.
Enhanced	Project has a positive effect on community. Affected community supports the proposed project.
None	Project has no adverse effect on the affected community
Minimal	Project has minimum adverse effect on elements of affected community. Minimum community resistance to the planned project. Little or no mitigation is needed.
Moderate	Project has adverse effect on some elements of the affected community. There is moderate community resistance to the planned project. Public involvement is needed to seek alternatives more acceptable to the community. Moderate community involvement is required during project development. Some avoidance, minimization or mitigation is needed to gain support from the community.

Table 4- 1. Evaluation Criteria	
DEGREE OF EFFECT	SOCIOCULTURAL RESOURCES
Substantial	Project has substantial adverse effects on the affected community and faces substantial community resistance. Intensive community interaction with focused public involvement is required during project development to address community concerns. Project will need substantial mitigation to gain public acceptance
Potential Dispute (Coordination Required)	Project is not in compliance with approved local government comprehensive plans, and/or affects Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 compliance. Dispute resolution may be required.

The proposed project has been subjected to preliminary agency coordination and review through the Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) screening process. The project was screened by FDOT District 4 and an ETDM Summary Report was published on May 3, 2018. **Table 4-2** summarizes the degrees of effect assigned by FDOT District 4 (D4), Florida Department of Economic Opportunity (FDEO), and US Environmental Protection Agency (USEPA) regarding the sociocultural aspects of the project.

Table 4- 2. ETDM #14341 Degrees of Effect						
Agency	Social	Economic	Land Use Changes	Mobility	Aesthetic Effects	Relocation Potential
FDOT D4	Minimal	Enhanced	Minimal	Enhanced	Minimal	Moderate
FDEO		None	None			
USEPA	Substantial					

4.1 Social

Transportation improvement projects can affect the function of the existing communities within the project study area. The project can have an impact on the demographics, community cohesion, safety/emergency response times, compatibly with community goals and quality of life.

4.1.1 Demographics

The existing community demographics are presented in the CCI in Chapter 3 of this report. The proposed project is not anticipated to influence a change in the demographic character of the community. However, there are potentially underrepresented or vulnerable populations within the SCE Study Area, including minority, children, elderly, low-income and Limited English Proficiency populations, which is why the USEPA assigned a Substantial Degree of Effect for this issue. Following is a table of relevant statistics for underrepresented populations in the

SCE Study Area and the laws and authorities that were designed to protect vulnerable populations from discrimination. Development of the PIP must comply with these laws and authorities and ensure that vulnerable populations are not disproportionately affected by the project.

Table 4- 3. Vulnerable Populations in the Study Area and the Legal Authority for Protection from Discrimination		
Demographic	Percentage in SCE Study Area	Legal Authority
Race, Color or National Origin	42.89% Minority	Title VI of the Civil Rights Act
Minority, Low Income	14.39% Below Poverty Level	EO 12898 (Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations)
Under Age 17	15.27%	EO 13045 (Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks)
Over Age 65	27.03%	42 US Code 1601-1607 Age Discrimination Act
Gender	55.35% Female	23 US Code 324 Prohibition on discrimination on the basis of sex
Disability	10.07%	Americans with Disabilities Act and Rehabilitation
Limited English Proficiency	7.77%	EO 13166 Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency
Handicap, Age, Race, Color, Sex, National Origin		23 CFR Part 771 Environmental Impact and Related Procedures

FDOT District 4 has committed to coordinate with the Palm Beach Transportation Planning Agency and the City of Boynton Beach to conduct public outreach and obtain feedback to ensure that the social and transportation needs of the community are addressed. In April 2020, FDOT District 4 approved a PIP for the PD&E study that considers the demographic and socioeconomic conditions of the study area, and developed appropriate methods of outreach based on this information, including providing translated materials and translation services during public meetings, if required. FDOT will inform the community of its construction schedule and disruptions to access services through signage, websites, and/or other means, as appropriate. Based on a meaningful PIP that enables transportation professionals to develop systems, services, and solutions that meet the needs of the

community and the vulnerable populations that may be affected by the project, and that this project will not induce demographic changes, it is anticipated that this project will have a minimal effect on demographics.

4.1.2 Community Cohesion

Community cohesion is the degree to which residents have a sense of belonging to their neighborhood or community, including commitment to the community or level of attachment to neighbors, institutions in the community, or particular subgroups. Community Cohesion includes the degree of social networking in a community, including the degree to which residents cooperate and interact.

Woolbright Road and the ramps to and from I-95 are existing and the project is proposing improvements to Woolbright Road and the ramps, which will improve interconnectivity and accessibility between neighborhoods and not change traffic patterns. It will also improve accessibility to commercial/retail areas and community activity centers. The extension of the bicycle lanes west of I-95 will also improve interconnectivity. The proposed improvements will reduce congestion, enhance local and regional mobility and not change the relationship of the existing well-established communities.

4.1.3 Safety/Emergency Response

A broad definition of safety is used when evaluating transportation projects. Safety considerations range from whether or not residents feel safe in their neighborhood to emergency services to bicycle and pedestrian safety.

The project will not affect the response times for emergency services providers, such as fire, police or ambulance to the residential neighborhoods east of I-95. It may allow for faster response times in the Leisureville neighborhoods west of I-95 due to the additional westbound through lane at SW 8th Street/Corporate Drive and widening of the bridge over the E-4 Canal. The additional left-turn lanes in the eastbound and westbound directions at SW 8th Street/Corporate Drive will also improve access to this commercial area and residences on this street north of Woolbright Road.

I-95 is classified as an emergency evacuation route by the Florida Division of Emergency Management. It is the primary hurricane evacuation route in eastern Florida. The proposed project will improve access to I-95 and, therefore, enhance safety.

4.1.4 Community Goals/Quality of Life

The State of Florida requires all local governments to prepare and maintain a long-range comprehensive plan that will guide future growth and development of the community. A Comprehensive Plan consists of goals for future land use, transportation, housing, recreation and capital improvements. In addition to the Comprehensive Plan, many communities have more specific small area plans, neighborhood plans, corridor plans, or vision statements that include issues and goals for a smaller segment of the community.

The residential areas within the SCE Study Area are well-established as are the existing community features including the Forest Park Elementary School, Little League Park and the Boynton Beach Memorial Cemetery. Commercial businesses are present between I-95 and SW 8th Street/Corporate Center Drive adjacent to the Seaboard Air Line Railroad, currently known as the South Florida Rail Corridor (SFRC) or the CSX Railroad. This project is compatible with the City of Boynton Beach Comprehensive Plan (2008) and the 2026 Future Land Use Map (2019) in the study area. The project is perceived to have a positive effect on the community and is consistent with the community vision.

4.1.5 Special Community Designations

There are no special community designations within the project area.

4.2 Economic

Economic and employment conditions describe a community's economic history, current economic well-being, and future potential. This information takes into account employment levels, types of jobs, per capita income, poverty, unemployment rates, the range of incomes in the community, and trends in employment opportunities.

Through the ETDM process, the Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect assigned to the Economic issue was Enhanced. The summary comments are provided below:

The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity has assigned a degree of effect of None for this topic. The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity noted that the project provides a small probability for attracting new development. However, Florida Department of Economic Opportunity also stated that there is potential for short-term, construction-related employment that would be generated during the construction phase. Although access to adjacent businesses could be temporarily affected during construction, improvements to mobility and traffic flow will be improved when the project is complete.

A review of the potential impacts to commerce and tax base issues was conducted as presented in the sections below.

4.2.1 Business and Employment

Transportation is the engine of economic development because it ensures the movement of products from the production place to the market or distribution centers and the movement of people for specific purpose trips. Improved traffic patterns will serve to maintain and improve viable access to businesses and destinations within the area. The project will enhance the area as it will improve access to the commercial and industrial area, therefore generating jobs and increasing employment within the area. Although the percentage of retail/office and industrial land uses in the project area is low, as well as employment opportunities, this project is anticipated to improve access to the region and, therefore, enhance business and employment.

4.2.2 Tax Base

The effect of a project on the tax base of a community may range from negligible to very significant. When considering effects on the tax base, many variables are reviewed. These variables include property values, the millage rate of a community, total ad valorem revenue collected by the community, the percentage of the budget of the community that is funded by ad valorem revenue, the percentage of the total ad valorem revenue collected in the study area, and the effect of the project on property values in the study area. An important point to consider is that the tax base is derived from property values of an entire county and/or city.

This project is not anticipated to have adverse effects on the tax base of Boynton Beach or Palm Beach County. The area is primarily residential and the project is not anticipated to affect property values.

4.2.3 Traffic Patterns

Improvements to the configuration of the I-95 at Woolbright Road interchange will improve traffic flow in the area. However, the existing traffic patterns for access to businesses in the project area will not be altered or eliminated. Traffic is also not expected to significantly increase or decrease because these are well-established neighborhoods.

4.2.4 Business Access

FDOT District 4 is committed to maintaining access to businesses and community facilities during construction. As stated above, the completed project will not alter or bypass access to businesses and services in the project area.

4.2.5 Special Needs Patrons

Approximately 10% of the population within the SCE Study Area ages 20 to 64 have a disability. Also, approximately 27% of the population is over 65 and it is unknown what percentage of this age group has a disability. However, this project is not anticipated to impact access to transportation modes or services that serve special needs patrons.

4.3 Land Use Changes

Land use planning provides order and regulates use of land to best meet the needs of the people in a community. Information about land use planning describes who owns and manages the land (e.g., private land owners, state or federal agencies) as well as who is responsible for land use planning within the community (e.g., the city or county planning agency). This information might also indicate how long landowners and managers have controlled use of the land; what types of developments occupy tracts of land; and whether tenants rent, lease, or own the property. This information describes a community's sense of place and empowerment in terms of ownership and control over current and future land use planning decisions.

During the ETDM process, the FDOT District 4 Coordinator assigned a Summary Degree of Effect of **Minimal** to the Land Use Changes issue, and made the following summary statements:

"The City of Boynton Beach Future Land Use Map plans for land uses to remain the same. The Florida Department of Economic Opportunity has assigned a degree of effect of None for this topic.

Interchange improvements to I-95 at Woolbright Road are included in the Palm Beach County MPO's 2040 LRTP under projects funded with Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) funds. The project is consistent with the plans for the I-95 mainline, including the extension of express lanes into Palm Beach County.

The project will be constructed mostly within existing right-of-way with the potential only for minor impacts to commercial properties, which would be unlikely to result in changes to existing land use. Right-of-way impacts will be minimized to the extent practicable.

During the Project Development phase, FDOT District Four, in coordination with the Palm Beach Transportation Planning Agency and the City of Boynton Beach, will further evaluate the need for right-of-way acquisition and solicit input from residents and local businesses that may be impacted by the interchange improvements.

This project is not anticipated to affect the land use patterns in the project corridor or the expected levels of development activity therein. Therefore, a Summary Degree of Effect of Minimal has been assigned to Land Use Changes.”

During the PD&E study, a review of the potential impacts to land use patterns, local plan consistency, growth trends and community focal points was conducted as presented in the sections below.

4.3.1 Land Use – Urban Form

As discussed in the section regarding Social issues, the land use pattern in the project area is well-established and expected to remain relatively unchanged. The character and aesthetics of the landscape will not change except for reconfiguration of the I-95 interchange. Little League Park and the Boynton Beach Memorial Cemetery, both located south of Woolbright Road east of I-95, will be unaffected by the project. In addition, the E-4 Canal is listed as an Office of Greenways Trails (OGT): Paddling Trails Opportunities as part of the Chain of Lakes Blueway. The FDOT South Florida Regional Transportation Authority (SFRTA) Rail Corridor is listed as an OGT: Multiuse Trails Opportunities. Access to these recreational facilities will also remain unchanged.

A land use map within 500 feet of the project limits according to the Florida Land Use, Cover and Forms Classification System (FLUFCS) (FDOT, 1999), as characterized by the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) in 2015, is provided in **Figure 4-1**. This map is more refined than the land uses presented in the SDR because the land use codes using FLUCFCS are more accurate than generalized land use types used in the SDR.

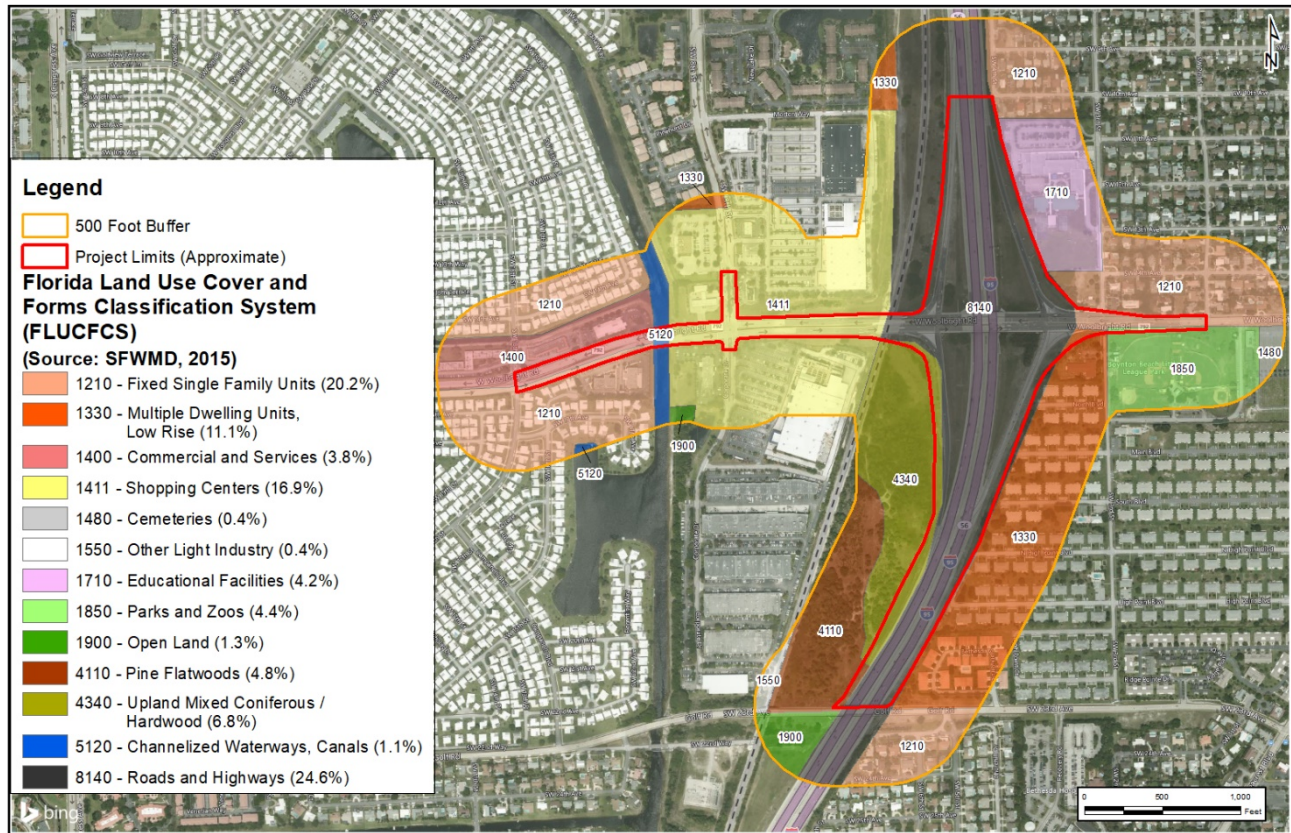


Figure 4- 1: FLUCFCS Land Use Map

Within the quarter mile buffer around the project limits, the following 13 FLUCFCS Codes were identified, in order of decreasing percentage of area:

- 8140 - Roads and Highways (24.6%) – SR 9/I-95 Interchange
- 1210 - Fixed Single Family Units (20.2%)
- 1411 - Shopping Centers (16.9%)
- 1330 - Multiple Dwelling Units (11.1%)
- 4340 – Upland Mixed Coniferous/Hardwood (6.8%)
- 4110 – Pine Flatwoods (4.8%)
- 1850 – Parks and Zoos (4.4%)
- 1710 – Educational Facilities (4.2%)
- 1400 - Commercial and Services (3.8%)
- 1900 – Open Land (1.3%)
- 5120 – Channelized Waterways (1.1%)

- 1480 – Cemeteries (0.4%)
- 1550 – Other Light Industry (0.4%)

It is noted that the FLUCFCS system of classification classifies the entire right-of-way as roads and highways, rather than just the paved areas as in the SDR. Roads and highways then become the dominant land use, which may be appropriate for a transportation project. This system also classifies natural areas, such as the mixed coniferous/hardwood and pine flatwoods. In addition, the categories are more descriptive of the nature of the land use. For instance, residential land uses are further defined as either fixed single family units or multiple dwelling units and public is specified as an educational facility.

It is noted as a correction to the ETDM summary that Alternative 2 would require a take of The Learning Place Preschool and three residential properties, one vacant. Therefore, this project would not only affect commercial properties, but also residential properties and an early childhood development center. The land use would change to roads and highways/right-of-way. All three alternatives involve partial take of a commercial property south of Woolbright Road west of Corporate Drive. Take of non-business portions of this property (drainage swale, landscaping, signs) is not anticipated to result in a change in land use of this property or the surrounding commercial area. In terms of the larger project area, reconfiguration of the existing I-95/Woolbright Road interchange is not anticipated to negatively affect the land use trends in the area.

4.3.2 Plan Consistency

Interchange improvements to I-95 at Woolbright Road is included in the Palm Beach County TPA's 2045 LRTP under projects funded with SIS revenues, which includes federal funds. The project is also compatible with the Boynton Beach Comprehensive Plan. The FDEO stated that some of the City's development efforts, strategically, depend on its connectivity to I-95. Increased connectivity to I-95 will support existing and future land uses in and outside the project area.

4.3.3 Growth Trends and Issues

Based on the SDR, the population in the SCE Study Area was 3,132 and 3,169 in the years 1990 and 2000, increased to 3,498 in the 2010 census and was estimated at 3,418 in 2018, which indicates a levelling off of population growth. The ethnic character of the community has changed since 1990 from 96.04% White Alone to 69.02% White Alone in 2018. The Minority population was estimated at 5.94% in 1990, 28.78% in 2000, 44.23% in 2010 and 42.89% in 2018. Race and ethnicity trends show that populations of Black or African

American Alone, Asian Alone, Claimed Two or More Races, and Hispanic or Latino of Any Race each increased over time. It is anticipated that the project will not substantially change growth trends in the project area.

4.3.4 Focal Points

Little League Park, the Boynton Beach Memorial Cemetery as well as Forest Park Elementary School are identified as focal points that contribute to the identity and aesthetics of the community. As mentioned above, the project will not impact these community features.

4.4 Mobility

Mobility is defined as the ability of residents to move freely about their community. This incorporates all modes of transportation and emphasizes the ability of non-driving populations (disabled, low-income, elderly and children) to move freely about the neighborhood and carry out normal daily activities. It is determined by the degree of accessibility of various areas and land uses within a neighborhood.

The Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect for the Mobility issue is Enhanced, as summarized below.

“The project anticipates improving capacity, safety, and flow of traffic at the I-95 and Woolbright Road interchange, which will address the spillback onto I-95. Bicycle and pedestrian mobility on Woolbright Road will be improved by provision of undesignated bicycle lanes in both directions, improvements to sidewalks, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) ramps, signs, guide signs, and pavement markings.

It is anticipated that mobility may be temporarily impacted during construction; however, the proposed project will improve mobility to and from I-95 along Woolbright Road and on I-95 between Boynton Beach Boulevard and Atlantic Avenue. “

A review of the potential impacts to mobility, accessibility, connectivity, traffic circulation and public parking was conducted as shown in the following sections. The Degree of Effect assigned to the Mobility issue remains **Enhanced**.

4.4.1 Modal Choices

According to the SDR, 5.26% of the occupied housing units in the SCE Study Area do not have a vehicle. Sidewalks are present on both the north and south sides of Woolbright Road for the length of the project limits. No improvements to pedestrian facilities are deemed necessary by the proposed project. Designated bicycle lanes

are present east of the I-95 interchange on Woolbright Road. This project includes extending the bicycles lanes from the I-95 interchange west to SW 18th Street.

The CSX Railroad Mainline is adjacent to the west side of I-95. Tri-Rail operates along this rail corridor, with the nearest station; Boynton Beach Tri-Rail Station, located 2.68 miles to the north of Woolbright Road, just north of the Gateway Boulevard interchange.

4.4.2 Accessibility/Transportation Disadvantaged

I-95 is the most important limited access facility along the east coast of Florida, providing for the regional movement of goods and people within the twelve coastal counties. The proposed project will improve access to and from I-95 via Woolbright Road. The project is expected to enhance access between communities and improve access to the major transportation facilities, businesses, and regional destinations of the area. Additionally, the proposed project is anticipated to enhance operational capacity and relieve congestion at the existing I-95 and Woolbright Road interchange.

Construction will be planned to minimize accessibility issues and disruptions to travel patterns. Access to businesses, employment centers and community facilities will be maintained during construction. FDOT will inform the traveling public of its construction schedule and access disruptions through signage, websites, and/or other means, as appropriate.

The Palm Tran Connection is a Transportation Disadvantaged Service Provider in the project area. This project is anticipated to not have an adverse effect on transportation disadvantaged populations.

4.4.3 Connectivity

This project will enhance the connectivity between the surrounding areas and I-95 and improve the flow of traffic entering and exiting I-95 as well as on the I-95 mainline. I-95 is a major interstate highway connecting municipalities along the east coast of Florida. It is an SIS facility, providing access to regional transit hubs along its corridor. Lastly, it is a hurricane evacuation route. The proposed project is anticipated to enhance emergency evacuation and response times by improving connectivity and accessibility to I-95 and other major arterials designated on the state evacuation route network. In addition, the project will increase the number of residents that can be evacuated during an emergency event through expanded operational capacity.

4.4.4 Traffic Circulation

The project will improve traffic circulation in the immediate vicinity of the I-95/Woolbright Road interchange by improving traffic flow at and through the interchange. The project is consistent with improvements planned for the I-95 mainline and will improve mobility on the I-95 mainline between Atlantic Avenue and Boynton Beach Boulevard. This project is consistent with the Cost Feasible Plan of the Palm Beach County MPO's 2045 LRTP.

4.4.5 Public Parking

There are no public parking facilities within the project corridor.

4.5 Aesthetic Effects

Aesthetic issues in transportation planning incorporate how the community is affected by a project in regard to visual and sensory impacts. Aesthetic issues are subjective and are best defined by the collective community vision of what constitutes a pleasing environment. It includes actual or perceived impacts from noise and vibration, to viewsheds, and the compatibility of the project with the surrounding area. The placement and design of a transportation facility can diminish the aesthetic character of the surrounding area due to contrasts between natural landforms or existing structures. Roadway elements, blocked views, or a facility with a scale that is out of proportion to the surrounding landscape elements are other factors that can interfere with the aesthetic character of an area.

The Coordinator Summary Degree of Effect assigned to the aesthetic effects issue was Minimal. The following comments were provided:

"The project construction may cause temporary disturbance of the existing visual quality and character of the surrounding environment; however, the disturbance is temporary and should not pose a long-term visual impact for local areas where construction would occur. The project area is urban in nature and the improvements are being located on existing highways.

During the Project Development phase, FDOT District Four, in coordination with the Palm Beach Transportation Planning Agency and the City of Boynton Beach, will solicit input from residents and local businesses to obtain feedback regarding preferences for the project related to Aesthetics."

A review of the potential effects from the project was conducted as presented in the sections below. The degree of effect assigned to Aesthetic Effects is **Minimal**.

4.5.1 Noise/Vibration

Existing noise walls are present next to residential areas on the east side of I-95 within the project limits. Residential areas are not directly adjacent to I-95 on the west side of the corridor. Therefore, no new noise walls are proposed as part of this project.

Businesses and residents within the immediate vicinity of construction may be temporarily affected by noise and vibration. In addition, the Parkside Inn, located southeast of the northbound to eastbound I-95 ramp to Woolbright Road, is an Alzheimer's Assisted Living facility. Therefore, this facility is a sensitive receptor for noise and vibration during construction. The existing noise wall ends at the beginning of this property.

Coordination with the Parkside Inn and the general public will be conducted during future phases of the project, including Design and Construction. The Contractor will adhere to the measures outlined in the latest edition of the FDOT *Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction*. The removal of structures and debris will be in accordance with local and state regulatory agency requirements.

4.5.2 Viewshed

Impacts to the existing viewshed are not anticipated to change substantially for the surrounding area as the work will occur along the existing roadway network. Landscaping and existing trees within the interchange may be affected; however, the natural wooded areas that are outside the existing right-of-way will not be affected.

The project will involve partial take along the northern side of the property located at 1501 Corporate Drive. Impacts include removal of landscaping and, therefore, the views to and from this office building will be affected by the project. However, this is considered a minimal impact to this property.

4.5.3 Compatibility

The project involves improvements to the existing I-95 facility. The view adjacent to I-95 generally includes residential and commercial uses on either side. The project area includes transportation facilities, I-95 and Woolbright Road, that traverse through a developed urban area, with very few notable aesthetic characteristics. No unique or historic architectural features exist along the corridors in the area of the proposed project. Little League Park is located south of Woolbright Road east of I-95 and the Boynton Beach Memorial Cemetery is located east of the Park. This project is not anticipated to cause any adverse impacts to the visual/aesthetic quality or characteristics of the project corridor.

4.6 Relocation Potential

Relocation and displacement in the context of SCE evaluation refers to the action of being removed from an existing location and being reestablished in a new place. This action involves modifying the complex spatial relationships between residents, businesses, and community facilities, and can involve financial as well as social and psychological considerations.

In order to minimize the unavoidable effects of right-of-way acquisition and displacement of people, the FDOT will carry out a Right of Way and Relocation Assistance Program in accordance with Florida Statute 339.09 and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-646 as amended by Public Law 100-17). The Program will be conducted in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title VIII of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Fair Housing Act).

The FDOT provides advance notification of impending right-of-way acquisition. Before acquiring right-of-way, properties are appraised on the basis of comparable sales and land use values in the area. Owners of property to be acquired will be offered and paid fair market value for their property rights.

No person lawfully occupying real property will be required to move without at least 90 days written notice of the intended vacation date, and no occupant of a residential property will be required to move until decent, safe and sanitary replacement housing is “made available.” “Made available” means that the affected person has either, by himself obtained and had the right of possession of replacement housing, or that the FDOT has offered the relocatee decent, safe and sanitary housing which is within his/her financial means and is available for immediate occupancy.

At least one Relocation Agent will be assigned to each highway project to carry out the Relocation Assistance and Payments Program. A Relocation Agent will contact each person to be relocated to determine individual needs and desires, and to provide information, answer questions, and find help in locating replacement property. Relocation services and payments are provided without regard to race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

Residential or business tenants and owner-occupants will receive an explanation regarding all options available to them, such as (1) varying methods of claiming reimbursement for moving expenses; (2) rental replacement housing, either private or publicly subsidized; (3) purchase of replacement housing; and (4) moving owner-occupied housing to another location.

Financial assistance is available to the eligible relocatee to:

- Reimburse the relocatee for the actual reasonable costs of moving from homes, businesses, and farm operations acquired for a highway project.
- Compensate for the difference, if any, between the amount paid for the acquired dwelling and the cost of a comparable decent, safe and sanitary dwelling available on the private market, as determined by the department.
- Provide reimbursement of expenses, incidental to the purchase of a replacement dwelling.
- Make payment for eligible increased interest cost resulting from having to get another mortgage at a higher interest rate.
- A displaced tenant is eligible to receive a payment to rent a replacement dwelling or room, or to use as down payment, including closing costs, on the purchase of a replacement dwelling.

The brochures that describe in detail FDOT's Right of Way Acquisition and Relocation Assistance Program are "Residential Relocation Under the Florida Relocation Assistance Program", "Relocation Assistance Business, Farms and Non-profit Organizations", "Sign Relocation Under the Florida Relocation Assistance Program", "Mobile Home Relocation Assistance", and "Relocation Assistance Program Personal Property Moves". All of these brochures are distributed at all public hearings and made available upon request to any interested persons.

No relocations are anticipated for the recommended Alternative 1. Two maps showing preliminary right-of-way impacts for each alternative considered during this study are provided in **Appendix A**.

4.6.1 Residential

The recommended Alternative 1, traditional Diamond Interchange, and Alternative 3, Single Point Urban Interchange, would not require any residential takes. Only Alternative 2, the Diverging Diamond Interchange, would result in full or partial acquisition of residential properties. Three properties contain a residential structure and one property is vacant land within a residential area. The three occupied properties are located at 1401 SW 3rd Street, 313 West Woolbright Road and 1515 SW 2nd Street. The diverging diamond interchange would directly impact the residence at 1401 SW 3rd Street, resulting in a full take of this property. Partial takes along Woolbright Road would be proposed for the other three properties.

4.6.2 Non-Residential

All three build alternatives, including the recommended Alternative 1, would require partial take of a commercial property to accommodate a turning movement from eastbound Woolbright Road to southbound Corporate Drive. The property is located at 1501 Corporate Drive and contains an office building. Acquisition would include a sliver of land north of the parking area and south of Woolbright Road. The parking lot and office building would not be affected. The area contains a drainage swale, landscaping and signs for the building and the commerce center.

The Diverging Diamond Interchange would also require full take of a business located east of I-95 at 1400 SW 3rd Street, The Learning Place Preschool. This facility operates as a day care and early childhood education center. Although classified as a business, it is located in a residential area near Forest Park Elementary School and serves the community. Acquisition of this business would affect the residential population in the area.

4.6.3 Public Facilities/Signs

Aside from the potential relocations discussed above, there are no other relocations proposed by the project. There are no outdoor advertising signs within a quarter mile of the project corridor.

5. SUMMARY OF PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

5.1 Advance Notification

This project is a federal aid action. This project was screened through the FDOT ETDM and an Advance Notification (AN) package was distributed during the Programming Screening event on October 23, 2017. The Programming Screen Summary Report was re-published on May 3, 2018. and can be viewed under the ETDM # 14341.

5.2 Public Involvement Plan

FDOT has initiated a comprehensive PIP during the PD&E Study phase. The program is in compliance with the FDOT's, Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Manual, Part I, Chapter 11, Section 339.155, Florida Statutes, Executive Orders 11990 & 11988, Council on Environmental Quality Regulation for implementing the procedural provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and 23 Code of Federal Regulation Part 771. FDOT is dedicated to implementing a Public Involvement Plan that will successfully obtain community input and at the same time is flexible to change during the PD&E process if warranted by the community's changing needs.

This coordination allows the public to provide input in transportation decisions resulting in the development of transportation systems that meet community needs and desires. Through public involvement, FDOT can gain insight into an affected community and use this knowledge to evaluate the sociocultural effects of the project alternatives. Another important objective of this outreach is to engage other agencies, concerned citizens, private and public entities to facilitate identifying, evaluating, and addressing the potential project effects on the surrounding community. Public involvement plays an essential role in the assessment of the social, economic, environmental, and relocation effects of transportation projects. The overall goal for this plan is to help ensure that the project reflects the values and needs of the communities it is designed to benefit.

5.2.1 Identification of Agencies, Elected and Appointed Officials and Concerned Public

FDOT has identified federal, state, regional and local agencies having a concern in this project due to jurisdictional review or expressed interest. These agencies were contacted directly by FDOT through the Advance Notification (AN) process during the Programming Screening event of the ETDM process in accordance with the PD&E Manual, Part 1, Chapter 3, Preliminary Environmental Discussion and Advanced Notification. A

contact list was developed including the Environmental Technical Advisory Team (ETAT) Members and federally recognized Native American Tribes.

Contact lists were also generated of city and county appointed officials; local, state, and national elected officials; homeowners associations and public interest organizations; business owners and stakeholders having a direct or expressed interest in the project.

5.2.2 Public Notification

In addition, public notification techniques were identified and included:

- Invitational letters to those identified above and property owners within 300 feet of the project alternatives,
- Newspapers to carry public notices, news releases, news items, and interviews,
- Project Fact Sheet/Newletter distribution locations,
- Project Website - www.fdot.gov/project/95atWoolbright.com, and
- Other Methods, such as participation at local events, a Press Kit and local, free publications.

The first draft of the PIP was prepared in March 2019 and finalized in April 2020.

5.3 Public Meetings

5.3.1 Public Kickoff Meeting

A public Kickoff Meeting was held on May 15, 2019 at 5:30pm at The Inn at Boynton Beach (480 W Boynton Beach Boulevard, Boynton Beach).

A total of 39 participants were accounted for during the meeting: 19 residents, 3 business owners, 1 attorney, 2 City of Boynton Beach staff members, one representative on behalf of Senator Lori Berman, 2 sign language interpreters and 11 project team members including FDOT and consultants. No media attended the meeting.

The meeting provided an opportunity for residents and business owners to ask questions and voice concerns. Two comment forms were submitted: 1) comment form related to the need for noise walls along the west side of I-95; and 2) comment in favor of the project. A meeting summary is provided in **Appendix B**.

5.3.2 Alternatives Public Workshop

An online Alternative Public Workshop was held on July 22, 2020 at 5:00pm to 6:30pm. The meeting was held via a virtual open house format through the FDOT meeting portal.

A total of 20 attendees in addition to the project team members were present. The workshop provided a Questions & Answers session. A meeting summary is provided in **Appendix B**.

5.3.3 Public Hearing

- To be included in final report

5.4 Public Involvement Summary

A public involvement summary will be produced at the conclusion of the study, containing, at a minimum, all documentation regarding public participation performed throughout the study period. This summary will include all comments and responses received from the public, as well as Advance Notification, coordination with local officials and agencies, and public meetings; the verbatim transcript from the public hearing; proof of advertisements, sign-in sheets, public hearing certification by the Project Manager, and all public correspondence. The Public Involvement Summary will be kept on file at District Four.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL JUSTICE, CIVIL RIGHTS AND RELATED ISSUES

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin in programs and activities receiving Federal financial assistance. More specifically, Title VI provides that “no person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance (42 U.S.C. Section 2000d).

Executive Order 12898, Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations, signed by the president on February 11, 1994, directs federal agencies to take appropriate and necessary steps to identify and address disproportionately high and adverse effects of federal projects on the health or environment of minority and low-income populations to the greatest extent practicable and permitted by law.

On August 11, 2000, the President signed Executive Order 13166, "Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency." Executive Order 13166 requires Federal agencies to examine the services they provide, identify any need for services to those with Limited English Proficiency (LEP), and develop and implement a system to provide those services so LEP persons can have meaningful access to them. It is expected that agency plans will provide for such meaningful access consistent with, and without unduly burdening, the fundamental mission of the agency. Executive Order 13166 also requires that the Federal agencies work to ensure that recipients of Federal financial assistance provide meaningful access to their LEP applicants and beneficiaries.

In addition, there is an elementary school and a preschool directly adjacent to the proposed project. The US Environmental Protection Agency in their ETDM Programming Screen comments, recommended the project evaluate the potential environmental and human health effects, such as air, noise, environmental feature changes, and changes to other community resources, on children. Federal projects should act in accordance with Executive Order 13045, Protection of Children from Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks. This Executive Order was issued to direct federal agencies to minimize environmental health and safety risks to children, and to prioritize the identification and assessment of environmental health and safety risks that may have a disproportionate impact on children.

6.1 Protected Populations in the Study Area

Protected populations in the study area are detailed in **Table 4-3. Vulnerable Populations in the Study Area and the Legal Authority for Protection from Discrimination**. To summarize, within the quarter-mile SCE Study Area, over 40% of the population is minority, over 14% of the population is below the poverty level, 27% are over age 65 and 15% are under age 17. LEP population is estimated at 7.7% of the population. Therefore, protected populations are present in the project area.

6.2 Coordination and Participation

In order to ensure that no minority, disadvantaged, low-mobility or low-income population is underrepresented, and to ensure that no specific population is disproportionately affected by the project, a comprehensive PIP was initiated as described in Chapter 5. The PIP was instituted to comply with Title VI/Nondiscrimination and the above-referenced Executive Orders as per Part 1, Chapter 11 of the PD&E Manual to ensure meaningful opportunities for public participation.

6.3 Summary of Project Effects

The following table summarizes the Degree of Effect assigned in this SCE Evaluation for each subcategory of the issues.

Table 6- 1. Summary Degree of Effect for Each SCE Issue											
Social		Economic		Land Use Changes		Mobility		Aesthetics		Relocation	
Demographics	Minimal	Business/ Employment	Enhanced	Land Use – Urban Form	Minimal	Modal Choices	Enhanced	Noise/ Vibration	Minimal	Residential*	Moderate
Community Cohesion	None	Tax Base	None	Plan Consistency	None	Accessibility	Enhanced	Viewshed	Minimal	Non- Residential	Moderate
Safety/ Emergency Response	Enhanced	Traffic Patterns	None	Growth Trends and Issues	None	Connectivity	Enhanced	Compatibility	None	Public Facilities	None

Table 6- 1. Summary Degree of Effect for Each SCE Issue											
Social		Economic		Land Use Changes		Mobility		Aesthetics		Relocation	
Compatibility with Community Goals/Quality of Life		Business Access		Focal Points		Traffic Circulation					
<i>Enhanced</i>		<i>Enhanced</i>		<i>None</i>		<i>Enhanced</i>					
Special Community Designations		Special Needs Patrons				Public Parking					
<i>N/A</i>		<i>Enhanced</i>				<i>N/A</i>					
<i>Enhanced</i>		<i>Enhanced</i>		<i>Minimal</i>		<i>Enhanced</i>		<i>Minimal</i>		<i>Moderate</i>	

*Note: The Relocation issue is only Moderate for Residential and Non-Residential for Alternative 2. The Degree of Effect for Residential would be None and for Non-Residential would be Minimal for the recommended Alternative 1 as well as for Alternative 3.

6.4 Findings Regarding Disproportionate Adverse Effects

A review of the potential impacts to social, economic, land use changes, mobility, aesthetics and relocation issues was conducted. Impacts are anticipated to be either minimal or enhance the social characteristics of the community under the recommended Alternative 1. Therefore, the project is not anticipated to cause disproportionately high and adverse effects on any minority or low-income populations in the study area.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS AND COMMITMENTS

7.1 Recommendations for Resolving Issues

Four strategies have emerged to resolve adverse sociocultural effects of a transportation project: avoidance, minimization, mitigation and enhancement. Avoidance solutions should be considered first, moving sequentially to other approaches if initial solutions appear unviable (e.g., creates other impacts or is inconsistent with the project purpose and need, community preferences, or FDOT standards and requirements). Some of the solutions address short-term effects (during construction) and others are implemented to address long-term effects. Additionally, solutions to resolve one effect might create another adverse effect.

For this project, the primary avoidance technique would be not select the Diverging Diamond Interchange, Alternative 2. This would avoid impacts to residential properties and a commercial property that serves the community as a preschool. Review and consideration of the other potential sociocultural effects that could result from construction of the proposed improvements indicate that the project will have only minimal adverse effect on the communities within the project area. Minimal impacts are anticipated due to noise/vibration from construction. Noise barriers are already present along I-95 in areas with adjacent residential communities. The community and the City of Boynton Beach will benefit from the anticipated improvements by increasing capacity and traffic flow, thereby enhancing mobility and economic potential within and adjacent to the project corridor.

7.2 Project Commitments

No commitment associated with sociocultural resources have been issued for this project.

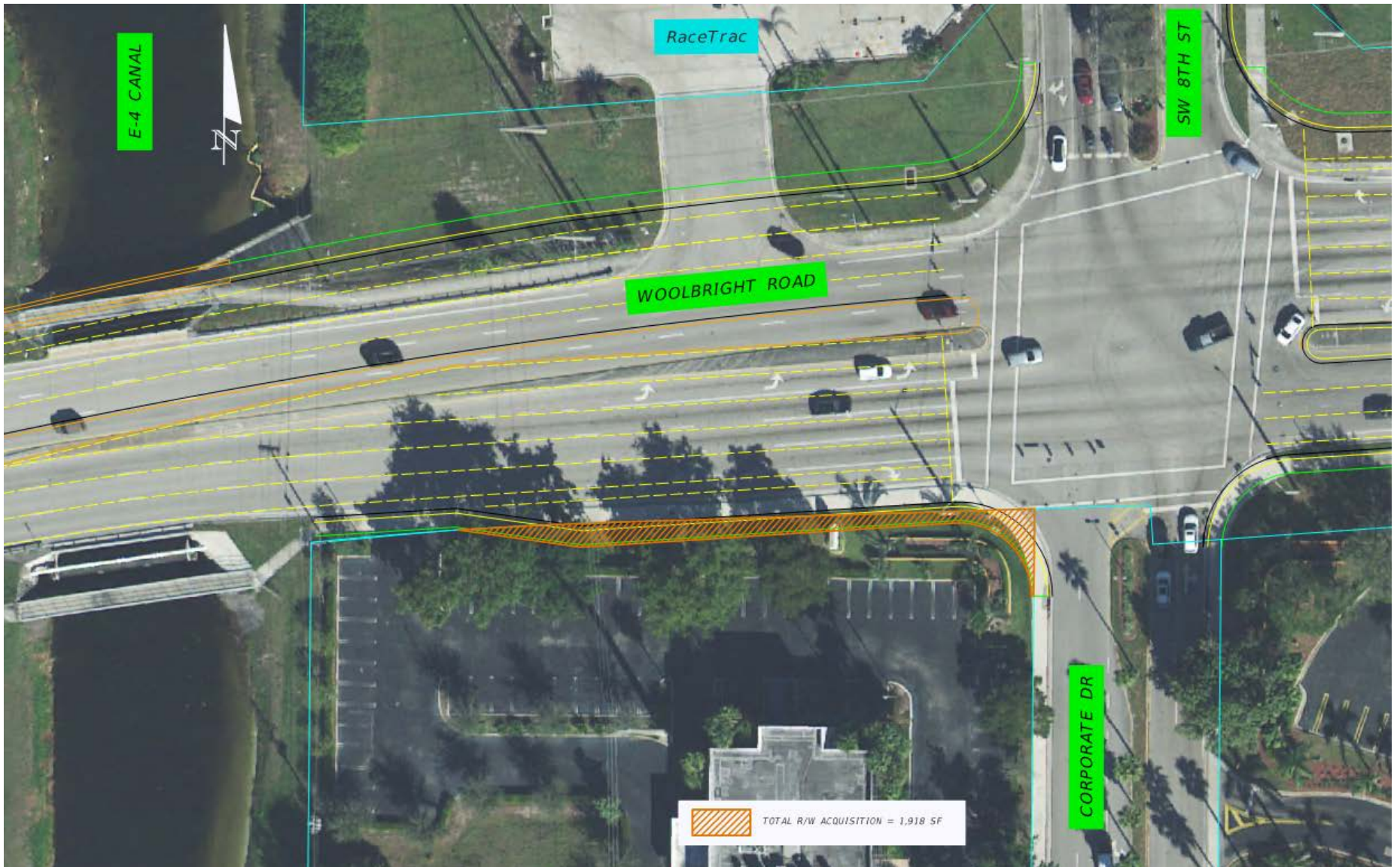
APPENDIX A

PRELIMINARY RIGHT OF WAY IMPACTS MAPS



Right-of-Way

- Preliminary Right-of-Way Impacts (All Alternatives)



Right-of-Way

- Preliminary Right-of-Way Impacts (Alternative 2)



APPENDIX B

PUBLIC KICK-OFF MEETING SUMMARY ALTERNATIVE WORKSHOP MEETING SUMMARY



MEETING SUMMARY

Subject:	Agency/Public Kick-Off Meeting
Project Name:	I-95 from S. of Woolbright Road to N. of Woolbright Road PD&E Study
Project Location:	Palm Beach County, Florida
Project Number:	FPID: 437279-1-22-02
Meeting Date:	May 16, 2019
Meeting Time:	Agency Meeting: 2:30pm – 4:30pm Public Meeting: 5:30pm – 7:30pm
Meeting Location:	The Inn at Boynton Beach 480 W. Boynton Beach Boulevard Boynton Beach, FL 33435

Attendance

Agency Meeting: 2 Palm Beach County
2 Attorneys
10 Team Members (5 Consultants & 5 FDOT)
14 Participants

Public Meeting: 19 Residents
3 Business Owners
1 Attorney
2 City of Boynton Beach Staff
1 Evelyn DuPlecy (FL Senator Lori Berman’s Assistant) – Did not attend presentation
2 Sign Language Interpreters
11 Team Members (5 Consultants & 6 FDOT)
39 Participants

Meeting Summary

- Two Comment forms were received during the Public Kick-off Meeting
 1. Comment related to the need for noise walls along the west side of I-95
 2. Comment in favor of the project. Requesting the need for change at the interchange
- Two attendees with hearing/speech impediment requested sign language services for the meeting
- No media attended the event, although the meeting was posted at the Palm Beach Post
- Palm Beach County mentioned that the county has planned improvements at the intersection of Woolbright Road and Seacrest Boulevard.
- The meeting provided an opportunity for residents and business owners to ask questions and voice concerns. Overall, residents are supportive of the project. FDOT staff and project teams were available to answer question during the open house and after the presentation.

MEETING SUMMARY

MEETING INFORMATION:

Meeting: **Online Alternatives Public Workshop**

Date: 7/22/2020

Time: 5:00pm to 6:30pm

Location: Virtual Meeting

Virtual Open House available on the project website from July 20, 2020 through July 31, 2020. <https://www.fdot.gov/projects/95atwoolbright/>

MEETING NOTES:

- The presentation started live at 5:00pm.
 - The Project Manager, Humberto Arrieta, welcomed attendees and announced the meeting would start at 5:05pm to allow a few minutes for attendees to log on.
 - The meeting started at 5:05pm.
 - Audio for the first portion of the presentation was low and some participants could not hear. To assess the problem, the slides with the low volume issue were read at the end of the presentation.
 - The Q&A session started at 5:40pm. Two questions were submitted through the Live event and summarized in the Comments section of this meeting summary.
 - Since no additional question were submitted, time allowed to run the full presentation one more time with the corrected audio that was low on the first run.
 - A second run of the presentation started at 5:48pm.
 - No additional questions were submitted after the second run of the presentation.
 - 15 minutes were allowed for additional comments to be submitted.
 - Since no additional comments were submitted the meeting concluded at 6:34pm.
 - A Virtual Open House with the project boards and copy of the corrected presentation will be available on the project website from July 20, 2020 through July 31, 2020.
-

PUBLIC COMMENTS:

Question 1: How will this project effect the road noise level in the High Point Section 3 Condos?

Response: As part of the project we are doing a comprehensive noise analysis for each build alternative. If noise abatement is necessary, it will be recommended. Any increase in traffic noise



MEETING SUMMARY

will be evaluated and recommendations will be made. If any of the alternatives raise the noise levels above the acceptable noise levels, abatement measures will be implemented.

Question 2: How will the improved traffic flow effect cars coming out of High Point on Little League Road, making a left onto Woolbright. It's very difficult now and more traffic is expected. Is there any plan for a traffic light there?

Response: The purpose and need for this project is to improve traffic operations and safety within the interchange. No improvements were developed for Woolbright Road east of I-95. Since Woolbright Road is a Palm Beach County maintained facility, we will forward this request to the Palm Beach County Traffic Engineering Division.

ATTENDEES:

Team Members:

Humberto Arrieta – FDOT
 Guillermo Canedo – FDOT
 Grace Ducanis – FDOT
 Gaspar Padron – FDOT
 Anson Sonnett – FDOT

Molly Winn – FDOT
 Cesar Martinez – FDOT
 Ann Broadwell – FDOT
 Julieta Manso – Hanson
 Jeff Easley – Hanson

Other attendees:

Attendees	Full Name	Participant Id	Role
1	Gary Dunmyer	dunmyerG@bbfl.us	Attendee
2	Alex Boyer	Alex.Boyer@wginc.com	Attendee
3	Amber Randall	arandall@sbgvtv.com	Attendee
4	Andrew Nunes	anunes@acp-fl.com	Attendee
5	Anonymous	N/A	Attendee
6	Anonymous	N/A	Attendee
7	Aby Koita	akoita@hanson-inc.com	Attendee
8	Anonymous	N/A	Attendee
9	Scott Edgar	edgars@erdmananthony.com	Attendee
10	Gabriel Gonzalez	ggonzalez@hanson-inc.com	Attendee
11	Marcia Locke	Marcia.Locke@dot.state.fl.us	Attendee
12	Anonymous	N/A	Attendee
13	Scott Edgar	edgars@erdmananthony.com	Attendee



MEETING SUMMARY

14	Matthew Carlock	Matthew.Carlock@dot.state.fl.us	Attendee
15	Anonymous	N/A	Attendee
16	Laila Haddad	lhaddad@mrgmiami.com	Attendee
17	Anonymous	N/A	Attendee
18	Geysa Sosa	Geysa.Sosa@dot.state.fl.us	Attendee
19	Anthony LoFurno	anthony.lofurno@glhomes.com	Attendee
20	Anonymous	N/A	Attendee