



# SR 826/PALMETTO EXPRESSWAY EXPRESS LANES PD&E STUDY

From US 1/SR 5/Dixie Highway to SR 836/Dolphin Expressway  
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Newsletter 4 - November 2019

Incluye versión en español

**NEWSLETTER** This is the fourth in a series of newsletters about the SR 826 PD&E Study. Through these newsletters, FDOT will notify the public about upcoming meetings and provide periodic updates on study activities.

## ABOUT THE STUDY

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District Six, is performing a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study for State Road (SR) 826/Palmetto Expressway from US 1/SR 5/Dixie Highway to SR 836/Dolphin Expressway, a distance of approximately seven miles (see *Project Location Map*). The PD&E Study is proposing corridor improvements that will add highway and interchange capacity with the implementation of an express lanes system and interchange improvements. The project is located in Miami-Dade County, Florida and is contained within unincorporated Miami-Dade. The PD&E Study evaluated the implementation of express lanes and potential modification of existing entrance and exit ramps serving the interchanges within the project limits. Intersection improvements were evaluated along the cross streets to facilitate the ramp modifications and improve the access and operation of the interchanges. The study evaluated the social, economic, physical and environmental impacts associated with the potential improvements.

SR 826, from US 1 to SR 836, is the final segment of a larger express lanes project for the SR 826 corridor. The northern segment, which extends from SR 836 to I-75, is already under construction. When complete, this regional system will greatly improve capacity, safety, connectivity and peak-hour travel times.

## WHAT IS A PD&E STUDY?

A PD&E Study is the formal process that FDOT uses to ensure that consideration is given to environmental impacts, social impacts, public input, engineering design, and project costs when evaluating improvements. A PD&E Study is required to satisfy the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process. The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by the FDOT pursuant to 23 U.S.C. §327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 14, 2016 and executed by the Federal Highway Administration and FDOT.

The PD&E process requires the combined efforts of professional engineers, planners and scientists who collect and analyze project-related information to develop the best solution for a community's transportation needs while minimizing impacts. The process is an integrated work effort involving engineering analysis and environmental evaluation, all accomplished within the context of a public participation program. The following are the key components of the process:

- Data Collection
- Traffic Forecasts
- Alternatives Analysis and Development (including a No-Build Alternative)
- Engineering Analysis
- Environmental Analysis
- Documentation
- Public and Agency Involvement

The final phase of the PD&E process involves the preparation of preliminary engineering and environmental documentation.

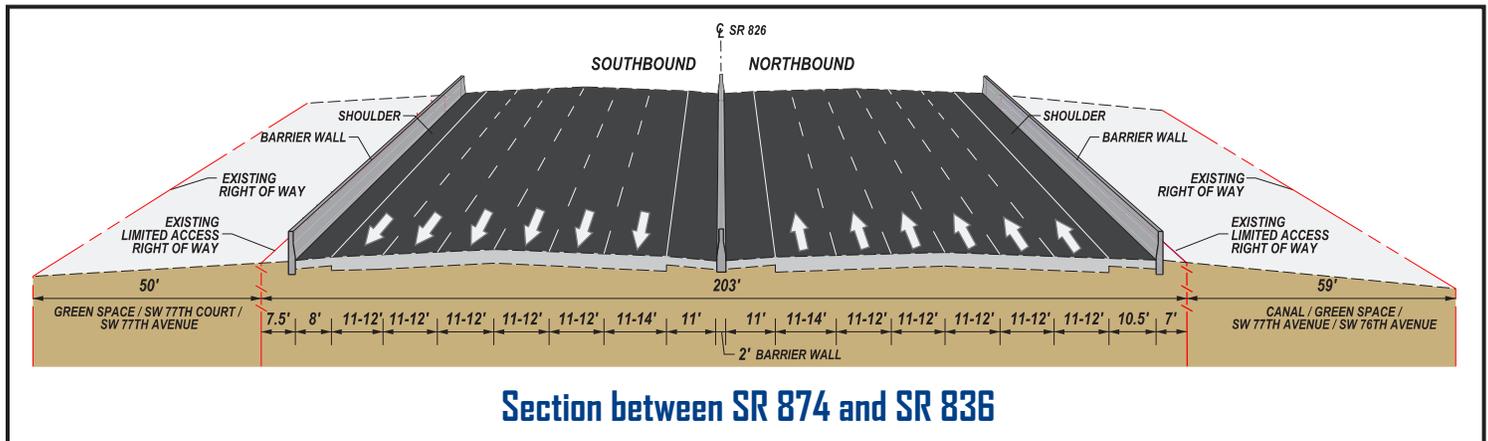
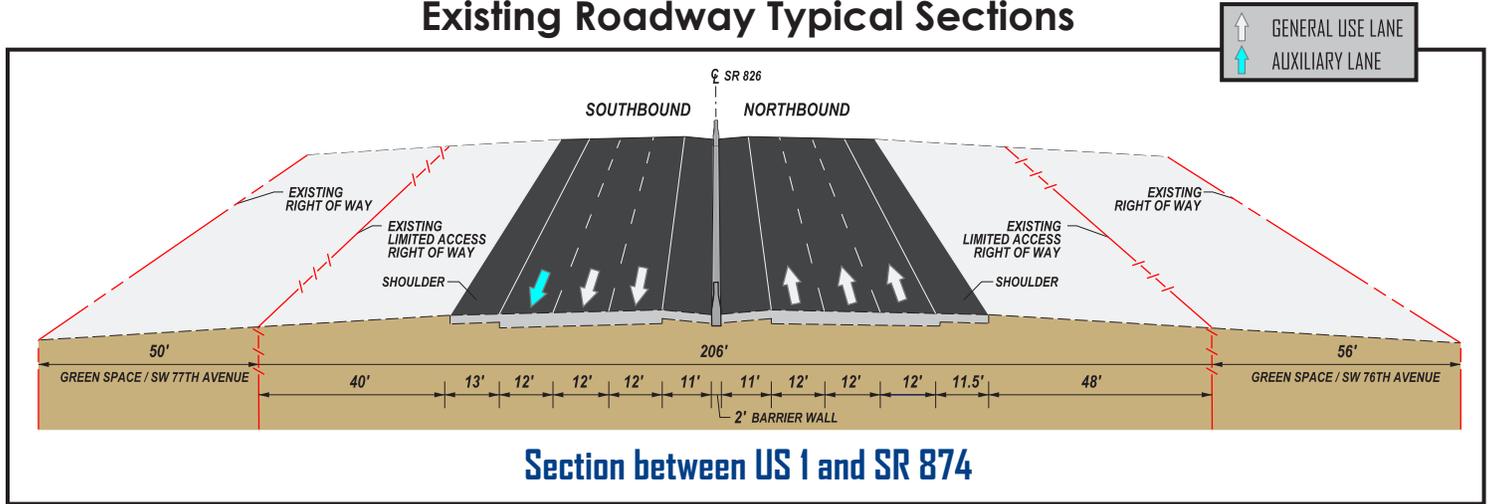


Project Location Map

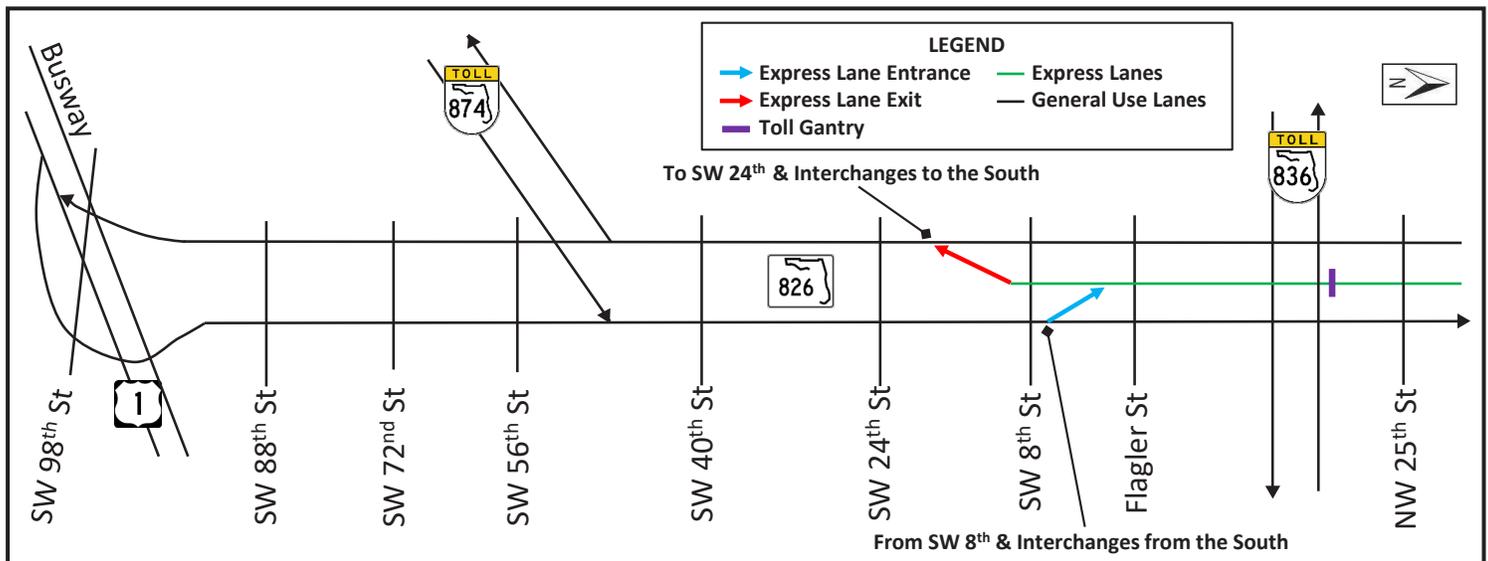
# ALTERNATIVE ANALYSIS

The objective of this PD&E Study is to evaluate alternatives that will address existing and projected operating deficiencies along this section of SR 826. To keep up with the growing traffic demand within the study area, multiple alternatives were considered, including a No-Build Alternative that maintains the existing roadway configuration and any other planned improvements along the corridor.

## Existing Roadway Typical Sections



## Existing Express Lanes Line Diagram

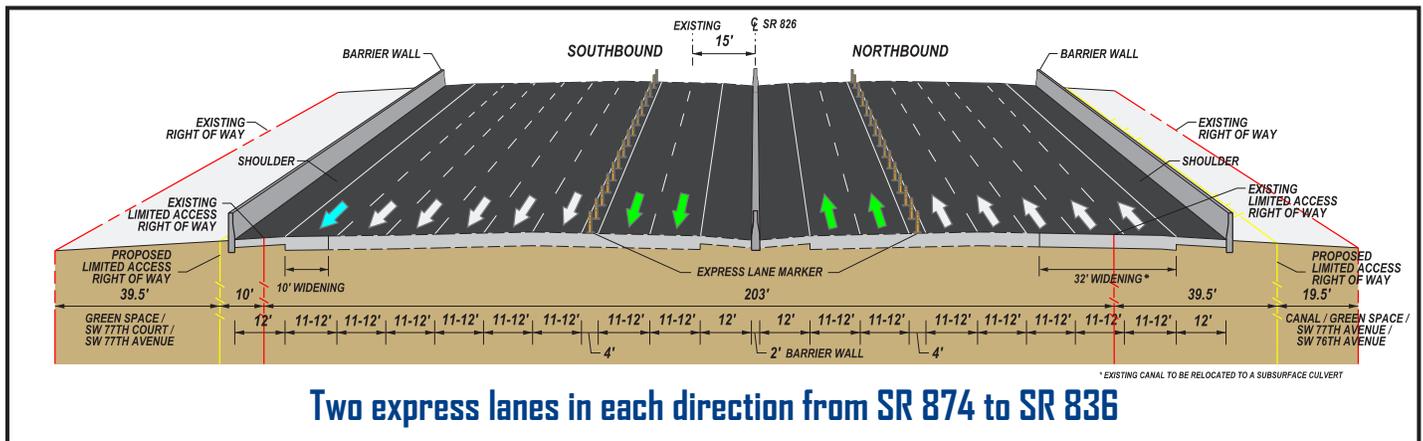
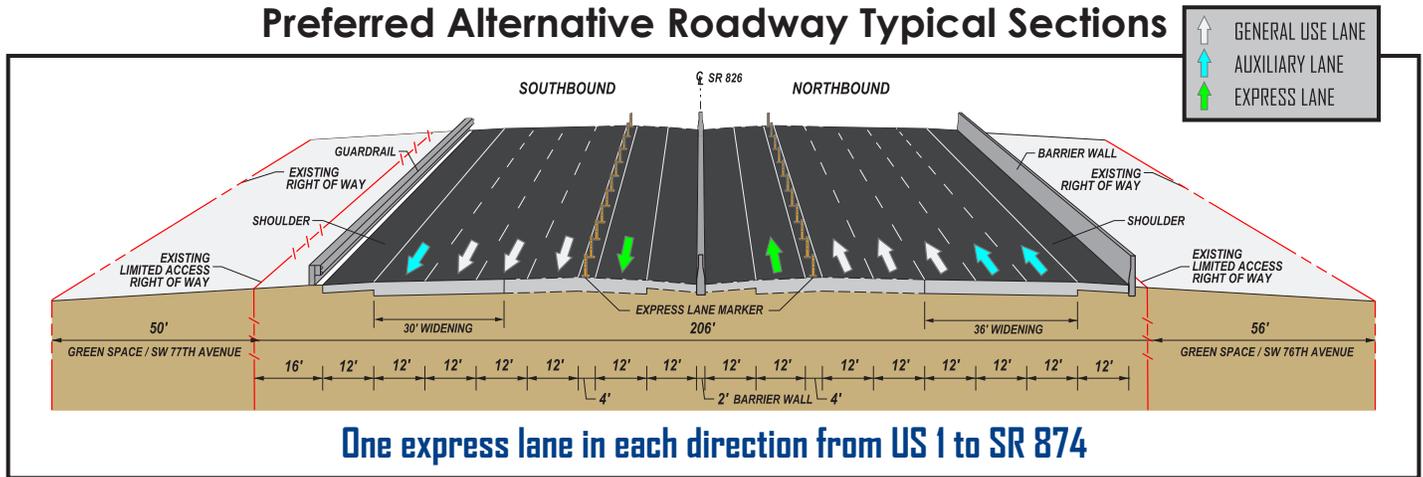


Three build alternatives were evaluated in this PD&E Study. All the alternatives proposed adding express lanes along this segment of SR 826 with access points at selected locations to enter and exit the express lanes system.

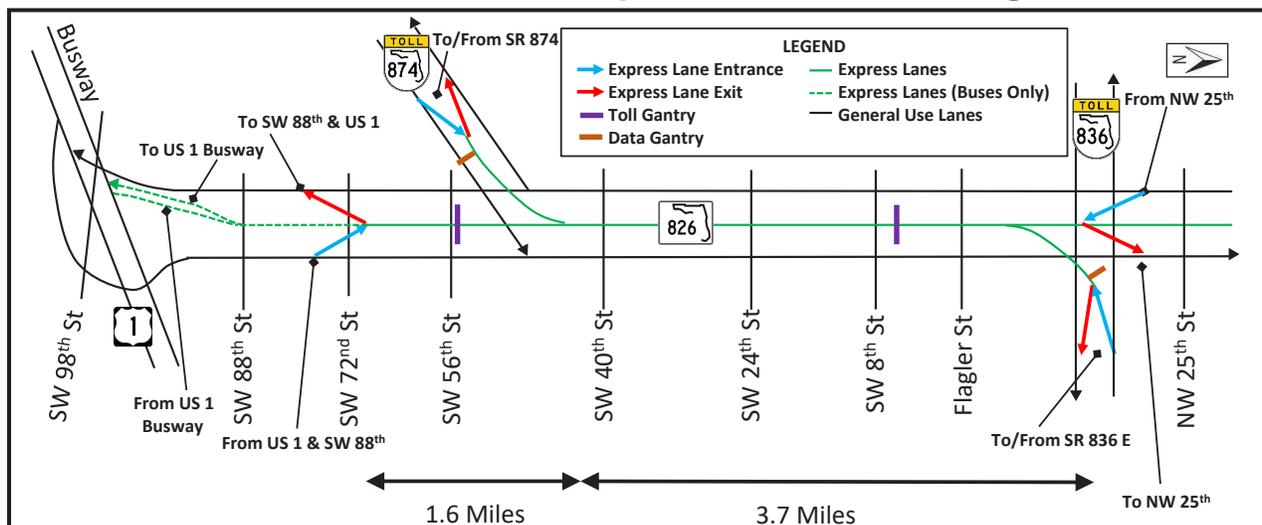
# PREFERRED ALTERNATIVE

The preferred alternative proposes to add express lanes along this segment of SR 826 with access points at selected locations to enter and exit the express lanes system. The express lanes will be buffer separated from the general use lanes with express lane markers. The PD&E Study is proposing one express lane in each direction between US 1 and SR 874 and two express lanes between SR 874 and SR 836. The express lanes will be constructed along SR 826 with major widening to the outside, approximately 10-36 feet, with a new set of bridge overpasses crossing over SR 874. The alternative proposes four express lane access points, which includes a SR 836 ramp flyover system-to-system connecting SR 826 northbound to SR 836 eastbound and SR 836 westbound to SR 826 southbound median-to-median. The preferred alternative also proposes interchange improvements to all ten interchanges. The improvements vary from minor to major capacity enhancements. The estimated costs of the project are \$500 million for construction and \$78.6 million for right of way acquisition (impacts 53 parcel properties).

## Preferred Alternative Roadway Typical Sections



## Preferred Alternative Express Lanes Line Diagram



## NOISE

The PD&E Study included the evaluation of potential noise impacts that resulted from the proposed improvements. Noise specialists used the approved federal and state procedure for evaluating whether the existing noise barriers need to be modified or if new barriers would benefit property owners. The analysis identifies qualifying noise barrier locations and preliminary heights. The findings are documented in the Noise Study Report.

## PUBLIC HEARING PROCESS

The purpose of this public hearing is to present the preferred alternative and afford all interested persons the opportunity to express their views concerning the location, conceptual design, social, economic, and environmental effects of the proposed corridor improvements. The public hearing is held following the completion of the draft environmental and engineering reports. Letters of invitation are mailed to property owners along the corridor and to local government officials to notify them of the upcoming public hearing.

The format for the public hearing includes an informal period followed by a formal presentation and a public comment period. Conceptual engineering displays, graphics, and handouts are available to supplement the public hearing presentation. A verbatim transcript of the public hearing

will be developed, which will include comments received at the hearing, as well as written comments received within ten days after the hearing. All comments received will be documented as part of the public hearing in the engineering and environmental documents.

Project draft documents are available for review 21 days prior to the public hearing. The information stemming from the public hearing will be documented, summarized and presented on the project website. Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability or family status.

## COMMUNITY COORDINATION AND PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

FDOT encourages the public to get involved by providing comments, questions and suggestions to the study team. Project-related information will be provided to interested people, property owners, tenants and leaseholders within at least 500 feet of the project limits, including state and local officials, government organizations and other groups. Project information is available through a newsletter, website, and public inquiries. Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability or family status. All comments or suggestions may be mailed or emailed to the FDOT Project Manager at the address noted below.

## PD&E STUDY SCHEDULE

STUDY MILESTONES	2017		2018				2019				2020	
	Jul Aug Sep	Oct Nov Dec	Jan Feb Mar	Apr May Jun	Jul Aug Sep	Oct Nov Dec	Jan Feb Mar	Apr May Jun	Jul Aug Sep	Oct Nov Dec	Jan Feb Mar	
Begin Study	◆											
Data Collection	■											
Project Kick-off Meeting		◆										
Engineering and Environmental Analyses		■										
Alternatives Public Workshop							◆					
Draft Documentation							■					
Public Hearing										◆		
Final Documentation											■	
Location and Design Concept Acceptance (Study Completed)												◆
Public Involvement	■											

Schedule Subject to Change

## PROJECT CONTACT

If you would like to obtain additional project information, be added to the mailing list or arrange a meeting, please visit our website at [www.fdotmiamidade.com/826expressouth](http://www.fdotmiamidade.com/826expressouth) or contact:

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