

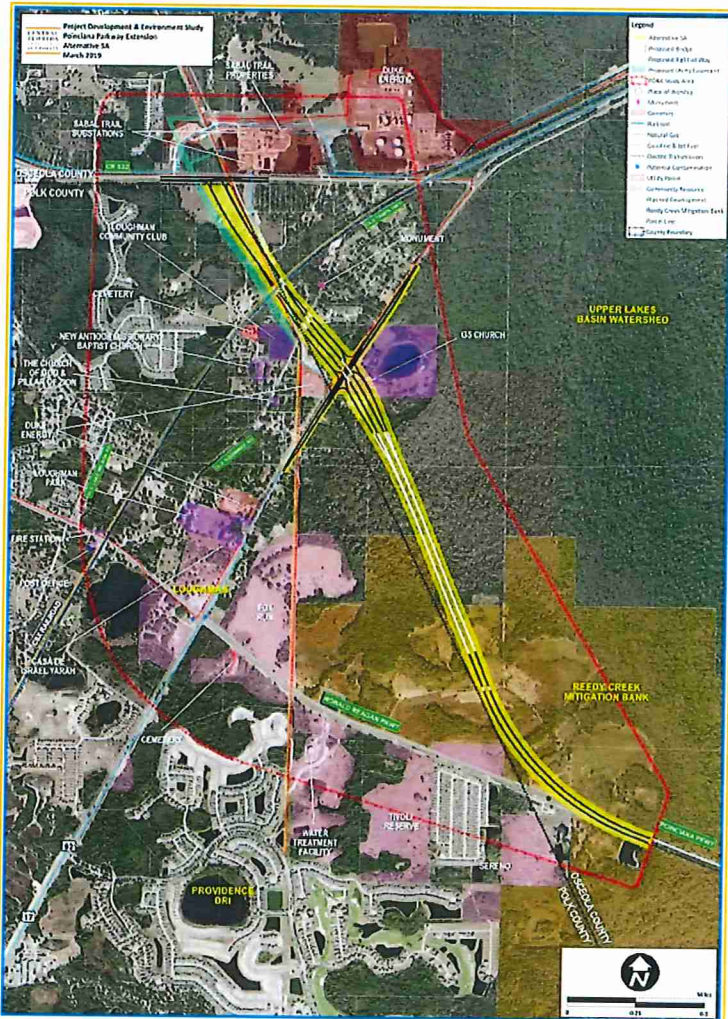


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OSCEOLA COUNTY DEVELOPMENTS NEWS

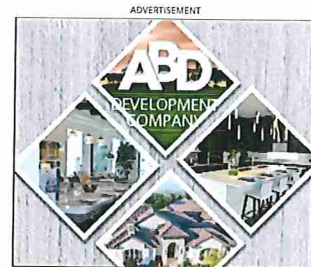
CFX narrows choice for \$275M Poinciana Parkway toll road extension

By LAURA KINSLER | GROWTHSPOTTER | JUN 04, 2019 | 2:45 PM



The Poinciana Parkway Extension would continue from Ronald Reagan Parkway to C.R. 532 about three miles east of the I-4 ChampionsGate Interchange. It would include a full interchange with U.S. 17-92. (CFX)

With endorsements from both Polk and Osceola county commissioners, consultants for the Central Florida Expressway Authority will present their recommended route for the Poinciana Parkway Extension/I-4 Connector to the CFX board on June 13.



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The regional toll road agency has scheduled a public hearing on Aug. 29. at Poinciana High School, and its governing board is scheduled to vote on Oct. 10 on whether accept the recommendation and move the project to the design phase.

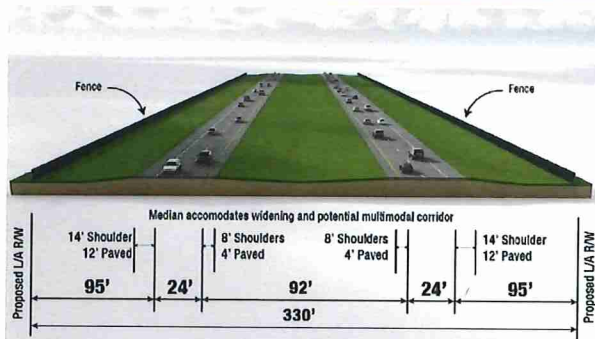
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Consulting engineer Clif Tate, senior vice president at **Kimley-Horn**, said the team initially considered five options for the 3 mile route that would link the existing toll road, which **opened in 2016**, to the interstate via Osceola-Polk Line Road (C.R. 532.) Two routes were eliminated fairly early in the study because of environmental and social impacts.

The ChampionsGate/Reunion area is one of the region's fastest-growing submarkets, with thousands of **new luxury apartment units** along the 532 corridor and in the pipeline, as well as new commercial space and a **future hospital at Reunion Village**.

Each of the routes considered during the Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study would include a full interchange at S. Orange Blossom Trail/U.S. 17-92 and bridges over Old Tampa Highway.

Poinciana Parkway Extension Typical Section



The proposed toll road extension would have 330 feet of right-of-way: enough to construct two lanes in each direction, with room for a multimodal corridor in the future. (CFX)

That left the engineers and stakeholders with the option of designing the roadway through portions of the Reedy Creek Mitigation Bank or shifting it west of U.S. 17-92. While the environmental impact was lower, the number of affected property owners would have jumped from 60 to nearly 150.

The study found that the western alignment was \$20 million more expensive and would have generated 38-percent less traffic volume, resulting in less toll revenue.

They settled on the route through the mitigation bank, connecting with U.S. 17-92 with a full interchange and merging with C.R. 532 about a 3 miles east of the interstate. Tate said the \$275 million cost estimate would include widening CR 532 to four lanes for a 1 mile span, while Osceola County would pay the widening costs for the remaining mile to get to the existing 4-lane section at Lake Wilson Road.

Project spokeswoman Mary Brooks said the PD&E only covers the first phase of the extension. The ultimate connection to I-4, whether it's along C.R. 532 or at S.R. 429, will be determined by the Florida Department of Transportation and Federal Highway Administration.

The FDOT's I-4 Beyond the Ultimate calls for converting the ChampionsGate interchange to a diverging diamond and expanding S.R. 429 to a full interchange.

"The interchange could cost up to \$1 billion," Commissioner Fred Hawkins said. "At CFX, we'd be ready to move forward on this, and you could probably see things in two years, but we have to get help from the feds because of the interchange."

Tate said Osceola County and FDOT are currently working on an Interchange Modification Report, which must be approved by the FHWA.

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The Poinciana Parkway Extension is one of two Osceola County toll road projects that are **wrapping up the PD&E studies**. The other, Osceola Parkway Extension, would serve the county's Northeast District and future Sunbridge community. Two additional toll roads have not advanced beyond the Concept Feasibility stage.

EDITOR'S NOTE: This story has been corrected to note that the CFX Board will receive an update at its June 13 meeting, but is not expected to take any action. An earlier version of the story also stated that the study eliminated the possible I-4 connection at S.R. 429. That decision will be determined during Phase II of the study.

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Laura Kinsler

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Laura Kinsler is the editor of GrowthSpotter. She joined the company in 2015 as Osceola County reporter after a 15-year career at the Tampa Tribune. A proud graduate of the University of Georgia's Grady College of Journalism & Mass Communication, Laura follows the Georgia Bulldogs religiously.

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