

D.O.T. 66

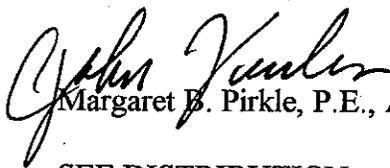
DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE OF GEORGIA

INTERDEPARTMENT CORRESPONDENCE

FILE EDS-441(49) Clinch County
P. I. No. 422410

OFFICE Preconstruction

DATE October 25, 2002

FROM  Margaret B. Pirkle, P.E., Assistant Director of Preconstruction

TO SEE DISTRIBUTION

SUBJECT PROJECT CONCEPT REPORT APPROVAL

Attached for your files is the approval for subject project.

MBP/cj

Attachment

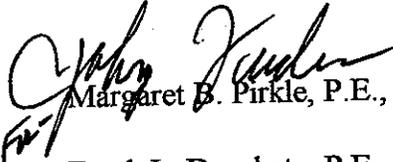
DISTRIBUTION:

David Mulling
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David Crim
BOARD MEMBER

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE OF GEORGIA

INTERDEPARTMENT CORRESPONDENCE

FILE: EDS-441(49) Clinch County **OFFICE** Preconstruction
P.I. No. 422410 **DATE** October 4, 2002

FROM  Margaret B. Pirkle, P.E., Assistant Director of Preconstruction

TO Frank L. Danchetz, P.E., Chief Engineer

SUBJECT PROJECT CONCEPT REPORT

This project is the widening and reconstruction of US 441 from CR 40/Tower Road and CR 204/Antioch Church Road, where it ties into project EDS-441(48), to Wheeler Street in Homerville, Georgia. The total project length is 8.45 miles. The existing roadway consists of two, 12' lanes with 10' rural shoulders from the beginning of the project to Shirley Road in Homerville. From there the typical section consists of two, 12' lanes with a 14' flush median, curb and gutter, and sidewalk on the west side. There are no major structures within the project limits. US 441 is a primary north-south corridor and is part of the Governor's Road Improvement Program (GRIP). As part of this program, the existing US 441/SR 89 is to be multilaned. The base year traffic (2007) is 5,860 VPD and the design year traffic (2027) is 9,400 VPD. The proposed design speeds will be 45 MPH inside Homerville city limits and 65 MPH outside Homerville city limits.

The proposed construction will provide a four lane roadway with a 44' depressed grassed median from the beginning of the project to CR 194/Bypass Road, where it tapers down to a five lane section with a 14' flush median to the end of the project. Widening of the existing roadway changes sides occasionally throughout the project to minimize the impacts to adjacent wetlands, historical resources and to minimize displacements. Traffic will be maintained utilizing stage construction.

Environmental concerns include requiring an Environmental Assessment be prepared; a public hearing will be held; time saving procedures are not appropriate.

The estimated costs for this project are:

	<u>PROPOSED</u>	<u>APPROVED</u>	<u>PROG DATE</u>	<u>LET DATE</u>
Construction (includes E&C and inflation)	\$18,412,000	\$11,098,000	2008	FY-08
Right-of-Way	\$ 4,045,000	\$ 920,000		
Utilities	\$ 28,000	----		

Frank L. Danchetz

Page 2

EDS-441(49) Clinch

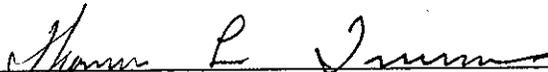
October 4, 2002

This project is part of the Governor's Road Improvement Program (GRIP). I recommend this project concept be approved.

MBP:JDQ/cj

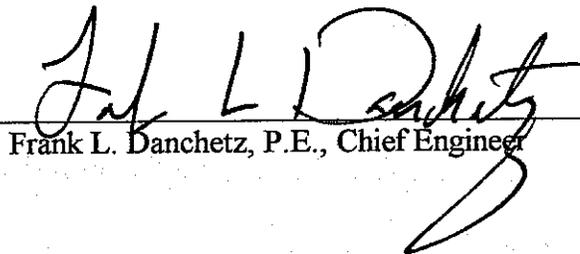
Attachment

CONCUR



Thomas L. Turner, P.E., Director of Preconstruction

APPROVE



Frank L. Danchetz, P.E., Chief Engineer

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE OF GEORGIA

INTERDEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

FILE: EDS-441(49) Clinch
P.I. Number 422410

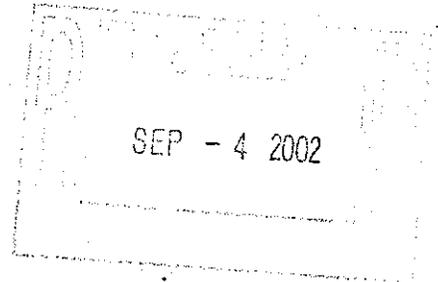
OFFICE: Engineering Services

DATE: August 30, 2002

FROM: David Mulling, Project Review Engineer *RLW*

TO: Meg Pirkle, Assistant Director of Preconstruction

SUBJECT: CONCEPT REPORT



We have reviewed the concept report submitted August 20, 2002 by the letter from Ben Buchan dated August 20, 2002, and have the following comment.

- The earthwork quantity appears to be in error. This is an 8-mile long widening and reconstruction project and there is only 14,718 CY of earthwork shown.

The costs for the project are:

Construction	\$4,126,222	13,114,000
Inflation	\$825,244*	3,624,000
E&C	\$495,147**	1,674,000
Reimbursable Utilities	\$27,500	28,000
Right of Way	\$4,044,359	4,045,000

REVISED
9/26/20

* Inflation limited to 20% of Construction Costs

** E&C limited to 10% of Construction Costs plus 20% inflation

DTM

c: Ben Buchan, Attn: Mike Haithcock

SCORING RESULTS AS PER MOG 2440-2

Project Number: EDS-441(49)		County: Clinch		PI No.: 422410	
Report Date: August 20, 2002		Concept By: DOT Office: Consultant Design			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Concept Stage		Consultant: Earth Tech			
Project Type: Choose One From Each Column		<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Major <input type="checkbox"/> Minor	<input type="checkbox"/> Urban <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Rural	<input type="checkbox"/> ATMS <input type="checkbox"/> Bridge Replacement <input type="checkbox"/> Building <input type="checkbox"/> Interchange Reconstruction <input type="checkbox"/> Intersection Improvement <input type="checkbox"/> Interstate <input type="checkbox"/> New Location <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Widening & Reconstruction <input type="checkbox"/> Miscellaneous	
FOCUS AREAS		SCORE		RESULTS	
Presentation		90		Appears to be a discrepancy in the earthwork quantity shown.	
Judgement		100			
Environmental		100			
Right of Way		100			
Utility		100			
Constructability		100			
Schedule		100			

**DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE OF GEORGIA**

INTERDEPARTMENTAL CORRESPONDENCE

FILE EDS-441(49)
422410

OFFICE OF CONSULTANT DESIGN

DATE: AUGUST 20, 2002

FROM: Wayne Mote, Office of Consultant Design
TO: Meg Pirkle, Assistant Director of Preconstruction
SUBJECT: Project Concept Report

Attached is the original copy of the Concept Report for your further handling for approval in accordance with the Plan Development Process (PDP).

cc: Marta Rosen, State Transportation Planning Administrator
Herman Griffin, Office of Financial Management Administrator
Harvey Keepler, State Environmental/Location Engineer
Phillip Allen, State Traffic Safety and Design Administrator
David Crim, District Engineer – District 4 (Tifton)
David Mulling, Project Review Engineer
Paul Liles, State Bridge Design Engineer



DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE OF GEORGIA
OFFICE OF CONSULTANT DESIGN

PROJECT CONCEPT REPORT

Project Number: EDS-441(49)

County: CLINCH

P.I. Number: 422410

Federal Route Number: 441

State Route Number: 89



Recommendation for approval:

DATE 8-22-02

Wayne S. Upate Jr.
Project Manager

DATE 8-22-02

James B. Bell
State Consultant Design Engineer

The concept as presented herein and submitted for approval is consistent with that which is included in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

DATE _____

State Transportation Planning Administrator

DATE _____

Office of Financial Management Administrator

DATE _____

State Environmental / Location Engineer

DATE _____

State Traffic Safety and Design Engineer

DATE _____

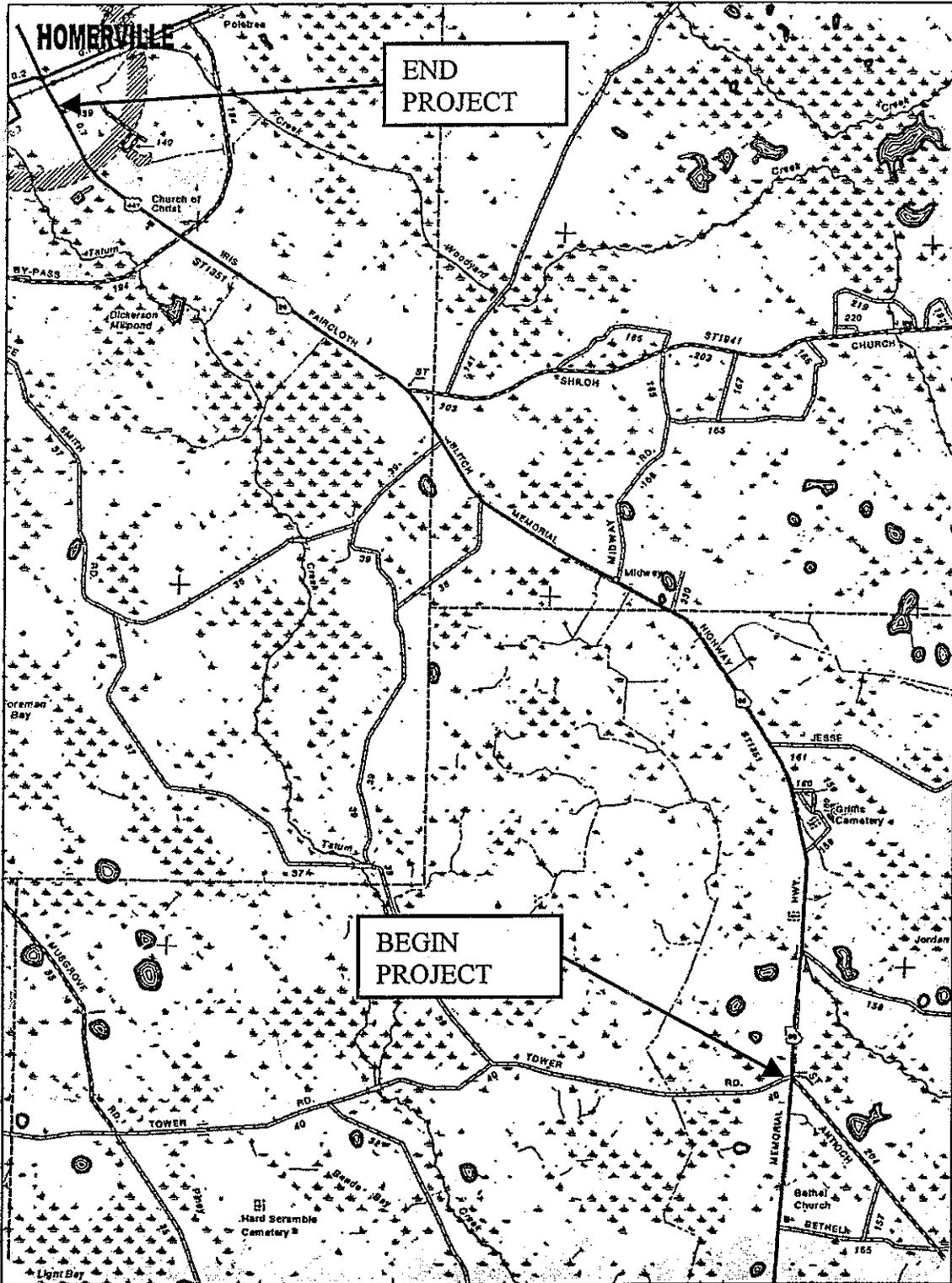
District Engineer

DATE _____

Project Review Engineer

DATE _____

State Bridge & Structural Design Engineer



Location Map

Project: EDS-441(49) Clinch County PI No.: 422410
Description: US 441 from CR 204/Antioch Church Road & CR 40/Tower Road to Wheeler Street

Project Concept Report Page 3
Project Number: EDS-441(49)
P.I. Number: 422410
County: CLINCH

Need and Purpose:

This project is identified as a part of the Governor's Road Improvement Program (GRIP). As part of this program, the existing two-lane US 441/SR 89 is to be multilaned. GRIP was initiated in the 1980's to address the importance of stimulating economic growth via an improved transportation network.

The GRIP has identified a system of economic development highways that consists of approximately 2,627 miles of existing primary routes, and an additional 113 miles of truck connector routes. The system would place 98 percent of the State's population within 20 miles of a multilane highway. It would provide access for oversized trucks to cities having populations of 5,000 or more, and to most cities having populations between 2,000 and 5,000. Among the many benefits of such a system is that areas lagging in growth would be provided greater opportunities to attract industry, business, and jobs. Commodity and raw material movements would also be enhanced. In addition, tourism industries would benefit and accessibility to recreation and historic sites would be improved.

Description of the proposed project:

EDS-441(49) in Clinch County is proposed to improve US 441 from CR 40/Tower Road & CR 204/Antioch Church Road, where it ties to Project EDS-441(48), to Wheeler Street in Homerville, Georgia. Improvements consists of widening the existing two-lane US 441/SR 89 to a four-lane roadway with a 44 ft. depressed grassed median. Just south of the intersection of US 441 and CR 194/Bypass Road, the typical section tapers down to a 5-lane section with a 14 ft. flush median to minimize impacts to residential properties within the Homerville city limits as well as to adjacent wetlands. This section would continue to Wheeler Street in Homerville where it will tie to the proposed 5-lane section of Project EDS-84(20). Widening of the existing roadway changes sides occasionally, throughout the project, in order to minimize the impacts to adjacent wetlands, historical resources and to minimize displacements.

Is the project located in a Non-attainment area? ___ Yes ___ **X** No

PDP Classification: Major **X** Minor _____

PDP Designation: Full Oversight (), Exempt (**X**), State Funded (), or Other ()

Functional Classification: *Rural Principal Arterial*

U.S. Route Number(s): 441

State Route Number(s): 89

Traffic (AADT):

Current Year: (2007) 5860

Design Year: (2027) 9400

Existing design features:

- Typical Sections:
 - *Begin Project to Shirley Road, Homerville:*
2 – 12 ft. Lanes with 2 ft. paved shoulders and 8 ft. grassed shoulders.
 - *Homerville:*
Urban Section consisting of 2 – 12 ft. lanes with a 14 ft. flush median, curb & gutter, and sidewalk on the west side.
- Posted Speed: 55 mph outside Homerville Maximum degree of curvature: 3°50'00"
35 mph inside Homerville Maximum degree of curvature: 3°00'00"
- Maximum grade: FLAT Mainline FLAT Driveways
- Width of right of way: 100 ft.
- Major structures: *None*
- Major interchanges or intersections along the project: *None*
- Existing length of roadway segment: 8.52 miles
Beginning mile log for county segment: approx. mile log 23.59

Proposed Design Features:

- Proposed typical section(s):
 - *Rural Section consisting of 4 – 12 ft. lanes with a 44 ft. depressed grassed median.*
 - *Rural 5-Lane Section consisting of 4 – 12 ft. lanes with a 14 ft. flush center two-way left-turn lane.*
 - *Urban 5-Lane Section consisting of 4 – 12 ft. lanes with a 14 ft. flush center two-way left-turn lane, curb & gutter, and sidewalks.*
- Proposed Design Speeds:
 - *US 441*
 - *65 mph outside Homerville city limits*
 - *45 mph inside Homerville city limits*
 - *County Roads and City Streets – 30 mph*
- Proposed Minimum grade Mainline & State Rte: 0% on rural Maximum grade allowable: 3 %
0.5% on urban and on bridges
- Proposed Minimum grade Side Streets: 0% on rural Maximum grade allowable: 7 %
0.5% on urban and on bridges
- Proposed Minimum grade driveway: 0% Maximum grade allowable: 10 %

- Proposed Max degree of curve: 2°51'53" (R=2000') Max degree allowable: 3°50'00" (65 mph)
1°54'35" (R=3000') 8°10'00" (45 mph)

- Right of Way

- Width: Varies 100 ft. -250 ft.
- Easements: Temporary(), Permanent(X), Utility(), Other().
- Type of access control: Full(), Partial(), By Permit(X), Other().
- Number of parcels: 113 Number of displacements:
 - Business: 0
 - Residences: 6
 - Mobile Homes: 2
 - Other: 1

- Structures:

- Bridges: *None*
- Retaining Walls: *None*

- Major intersections and interchanges: *None*
- Traffic control during construction: *No detours are anticipated.*
- Design Exceptions to controlling criteria anticipated:

	<u>UNDETERMINED</u>	<u>YES</u>	<u>NO</u>
HORIZ ALIGNMENT:	()	()	(X)
ROADWAY WIDTH:	()	()	(X)
SHOULDER WIDTH:	()	()	(X)
VERTICAL GRADES	()	()	(X)
CROSS SLOPES:	()	()	(X)
STOPPING SIGHT DISTANCE:	()	()	(X)
SUPERELEVATION RATES:	()	()	(X)
HORIZONTAL CLEARANCE:	()	()	(X)
SPEED DESIGN:	()	()	(X)
VERTICAL CLEARANCE:	()	()	(X)
BRIDGE WIDTH:	()	()	(X)
BRIDGE STRUCTURAL CAPACITY:	()	()	(X)

- Design Variances: *None*

- Environmental Concerns:

- Involvement with waters of the US (404 permit)*
- No historical or archaeological concerns are anticipated*
- No UST's were located*

- Level of Environmental Analysis:
 - Are Time Saving Procedures Appropriate? Yes (), No (X)
 - Categorical Exclusion Anticipated? Yes (), No (X)
 - Environmental Assessment/Finding of No Significant Impact: Yes (X), No ()
 - Environmental Impact Statement (EIS): Yes (), No (X)
- Utility Involvements:
 - Telephone: *Alltel of Georgia*
 - Power: *Slash Pine EMC/ Georgia Power Distribution*
 - Gas: *None*
 - Cable TV: *Com Cast Cable*
 - Water: *City of Homerville*

Project Responsibilities:

- Design: *Earth Tech*
- Right of way acquisition: *Georgia Department of Transportation*
- Relocation of utilities: *No LGPA has been signed*
- Letting to contract: *Georgia Department of Transportation*
- Supervision of construction: *Georgia Department of Transportation*
- Providing material pits: *Contractor*
- Providing detours: *Georgia Department of Transportation -None anticipated*

Coordination:

- Pre-Concept Team Meeting (See attachment #3): *December 17, 2001*
- Concept Meeting date (See attachment #4): *August 6, 2002*
- P.A.R. meetings, dates, and results (See attachment #5): *May 22 & 23, 2002*
- FEMA, USCG and/or TVA: *None.*
- Public involvement (See attachment #6): *Public Information Meeting held March 18, 2002 in Fargo and Homerville as well as March 19, 2002 in Homerville and Pearson.*

-A comment from the PIM meetings requested that the improvements to US 441 near CR160/Buck Griffis Road be shifted from the west side to the east side of existing. This request was made to displace a willing owner to a property owner who preferred not to be displaced. The change did not affect any other element of consideration such as

cost, impacted wetlands, etc.

A public hearing will be held upon completion of the Environmental Assessment.

- Local government comments:
 - *Mayor of Fargo has expressed support for improvements to US 441.*
 - *Mayor of Pearson has expressed support for improvements to US 441.*
 - *Mayor of Douglas has expressed support for improvements to US 441.*
- Other projects in the area:
 - *EDS-441(47) P.I.No.: 422420*
 - *EDS-441(48) P.I.No.: 422400*
 - *EDS-441(46) P.I.No.: 422390*
 - *EDS-441(41) P.I.No.: 422380*
 - *EDS- 84(20) P.I.No.: 422030*
- Other coordination to date: *None*

Scheduling – Responsible Parties' Estimate

Time to complete the environmental process:	<u>13</u> Months
Time to complete preliminary construction plans:	<u>9</u> Months
Time to complete right of way plans:	<u>8</u> Months
Time to complete the section 404 permit:	<u>4</u> Months
Time to complete final construction plans:	<u>20</u> Months
Time to complete the purchase right-of-way:	<u>18</u> Months

Other major items that will affect project schedule: *Possible conflicts with scheduling due to additional Projects (EDS-441 (47, 48, 46, & 41)) being submitted at the same time*

Other alternates considered:

Alternate 1 – *Widening on the opposite side of US 441 from the chosen alternative. The proposed alignment widens existing to either the east or west. The side chosen was determined to avoid historic resources and minimize impacts to wetlands and displacements.*

Alternate 2 – *No Build – Does not meet the Need and Purpose of the project.*

Comments: *None*

Attachments:

1. Cost Estimates: \$ 9,864,703
 - a. Construction including E&C \$ 5,792,843
 - b. Right of Way \$ 4,044,359
 - c. Utilities
 - Reimbursable \$ 27,500
 - Non-reimbursable \$ 674,830
2. Typical sections
3. Pre-Concept Team Meeting Minutes
4. Concept Meeting Minutes
5. PAR Meeting Minutes
6. PIM Summary of comments
7. Meeting Minutes in support or objection to the concept
 - a. *Meeting with FHWA on January 14, 2002*
 - b. *Monthly Status Meeting #6 on June 5, 2002*
8. Location and Design Notice-*to be added later*
9. Accident Summaries
10. Traffic Counts
11. Capacity Analysis

PRELIMINARY COST ESTIMATE

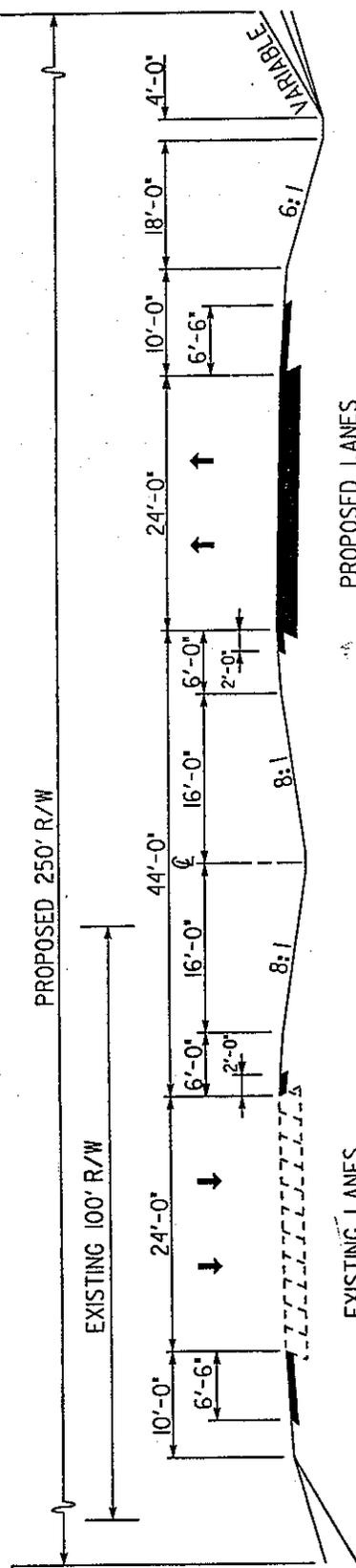
PROJECT NUMBER: EDS-441(49) COUNTY: CLINCH
 DATE: May 1, 2002 ESTIMATED LETTING DATE:
 PREPARED BY: EARTH TECH PROJECT LENGTH: 8.45 miles
 () PROGRAMMING PROCESS (X) CONCEPT DEVELOPMENT () DURING PROJECT DEV.

PROJECT COST			
A. RIGHT-OF-WAY:			
1. PROPERTY (LAND & EASEMENT) COM: 8.56 AC RES: 21.64 AC AG: 112.44 AC		\$	365,850
2. IMPROVEMENTS		\$	145,000
3. DISPLACEMENTS; RES: 6, BUS: 0, M.H.: 2, OTHER: 1		\$	594,000
4. DAMAGE		\$	60,000
5. OTHER COST (SCHEDULE-0.55,ADM./COST-0.6, INFLATION-0.4)		\$	2,879,509
SUBTOTAL: A			\$ 4,044,359
B. REIMBURSABLE UTILITIES:			
SUBTOTAL: B			\$ 27,500
C. CONSTRUCTION:			
1. MAJOR STRUCTURES			
a. BRIDGES			
SUBTOTAL: C-1.a			\$ -
b. OTHER			
SUBTOTAL: C-1b			\$ -
SUBTOTAL: C-1			\$ -
2. GRADING AND DRAINAGE			
a. EARTHWORK			
Borrow/Excavation	246192.3942 CY @ \$7.5	\$	1,846,443
Excavation	CY @ \$7.5	\$	-
SUBTOTAL: C-2a			\$ 1,846,443
b. DRAINAGE			
1) Side Drain Pipe	1,352 LF @ \$21	\$	28,392
2) Storm drain pipe	7571.2 LF @ \$44	\$	333,133
3) Longitudinal System (incl. catch basins)	4400 LF @ \$77	\$	338,800
SUBTOTAL: C-2.b			\$ 700,325
SUBTOTAL: C-2			\$ 2,546,768
3. BASE AND PAVING:			
a. AGGREGATE BASE			
	150329.8874 TN @ \$24	\$	3,607,917
b. ASPHALT PAVING (Mainline & Cross-Roads):			
9 mm Superpave	29748.29743 Tons @ \$46	\$	1,368,422
19 mm Superpave	39663.36632 Tons @ \$43	\$	1,705,525
25 mm Superpave	50,111 Tons @ \$37	\$	1,854,093
SUBTOTAL: C-3.b			\$ 4,928,039
d. OTHER (Leveling, Tack Coat, Milling)			
Tack Coat	24,039 Gallons @ \$1	\$	24,039
SUBTOTAL: C-3			\$ 8,559,995

4. EROSION CONTROL			
a. SILT FENCE	178,464 LF @ \$4	\$	713,856
b. DROP INLET SILT CONTROL	44.616 EACH @ \$500	\$	22,308
SUBTOTAL: C-4			\$ 736,164
5. LUMP ITEMS			
a. GRASSING	101.40 acre	\$	41,828
b. CLEARING AND GRUBBING	101.4 acre	\$	476,580
c. TRAFFIC CONTROL		\$	174,493
SUBTOTAL: C-5			\$ 692,900
6. MISCELLANEOUS:			
a. LIGHTING		\$	-
b. SIGNING - MARKING		\$	253,500
c. GUARDRAIL			
W Beam	LF @ \$12	\$	-
T Beam	LF @ \$40	\$	-
Anchors	TYPE 12 @ \$1600	\$	-
	TYPE 1 @ \$450	\$	-
SUBTOTAL: C-6.c			\$ -
d. SIDEWALK	4,340 LF of 5' sidewalk	\$	86,800
e. MEDIAN / SIDE BARRIER			\$
f. APPROACH SLABS	SY @ \$110	\$	-
g. REMOVAL			\$ -
h. CURB & GUTTER	4340 LF @ \$7.5	\$	32,550
I. OTHER			\$ -
Wetland Mitigation	146.63 credits	\$	205,282
SUBTOTAL: C-6			\$ 578,132
7. SPECIAL FEATURES			
SUBTOTAL: C-7			\$ -

SUMMARY	
A. RIGHT-OF-WAY	\$ 4,044,359
B. REIMBURSABLE UTILITIES	\$ 27,500
C. CONSTRUCTION	
1. MAJOR STRUCTURES	\$ -
2. GRADING AND DRAINAGE	\$ 2,546,768
3. BASE AND PAVING	\$ 8,559,995
4. EROSION CONTROL	\$ 736,164
5. LUMP ITEMS	\$ 692,900
6. MISCELLANEOUS	\$ 578,132
7. SPECIAL FEATURES	\$ -
SUBTOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST	\$ 13,113,959
INFLATION (5% PER YEAR)	\$ 3,623,145
NUMBER OF YEARS	5
E. & C. (10%)	\$ 1,673,710
TOTAL CONSTRUCTION COST	\$ 18,410,815
GRAND TOTAL PROJECT COST	\$ 22,482,674

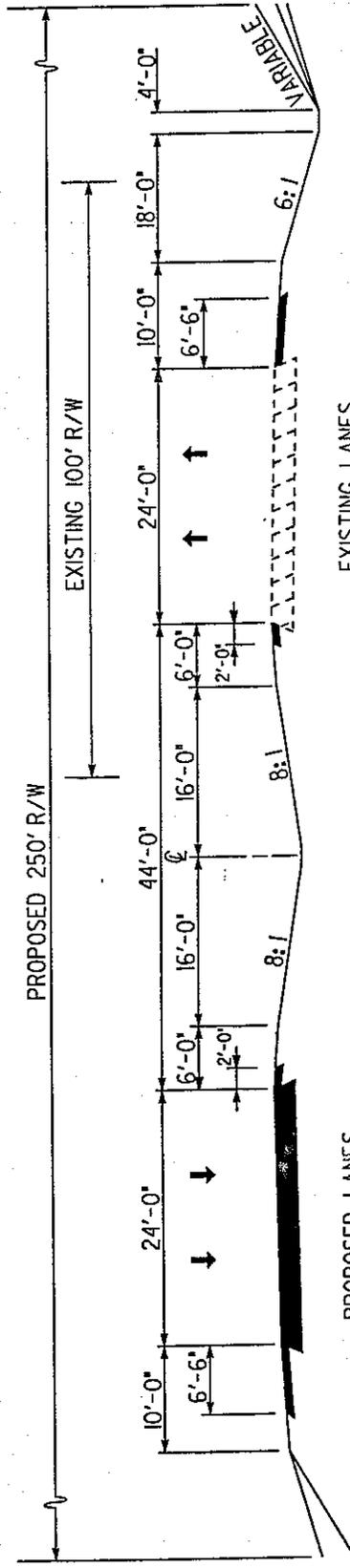
STATE PROJECT NUMBER
GA. EDS-441(49)



PROPOSED LANES

EXISTING LANES

44' DEPRESSED MEDIAN - WIDEN TO THE EAST



EXISTING LANES

PROPOSED LANES

44' DEPRESSED MEDIAN - WIDEN TO THE WEST

SHEET 1 OF 2

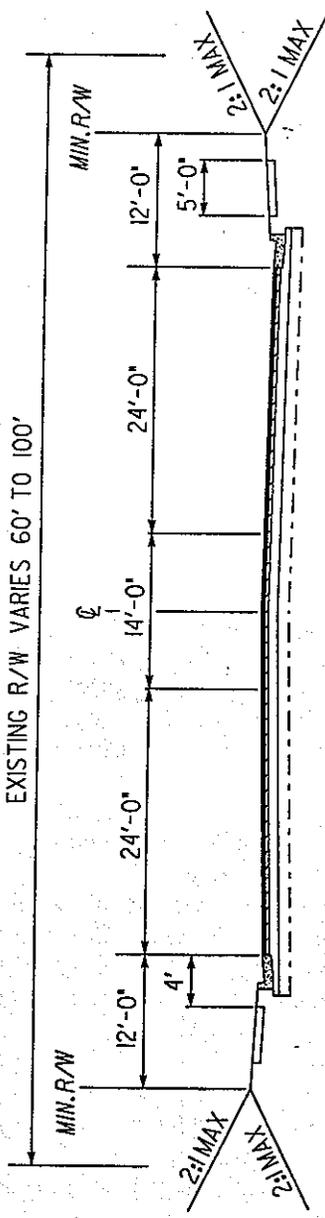
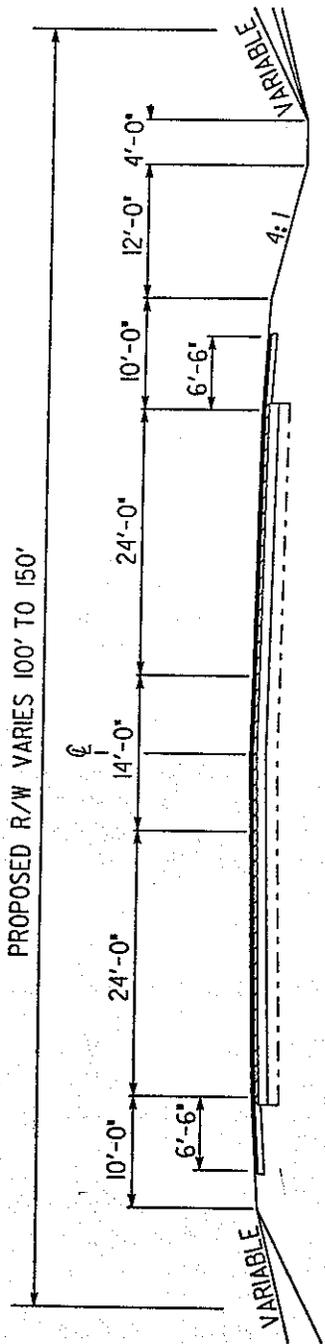
US441/SR89 GRIP CORRIDOR
CR40/CR204 TO WHEELER ST, HOMERVILLE
CLINCH COUNTY

EARTH TECH
1455 OLD ALABAMA ROAD, SUITE 110
ROSWELL, GEORGIA 30076
1770.990-1400

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

EDS-441(49)
TYPICAL SECTIONS

STATE PROJECT NUMBER
 GA. EDS-441(49)



SHEET 2 OF 2

US441/SR89 GRIP CORRIDOR
 CR40/CR204 TO WHEELER ST., HOMERVILLE
 CLINCH COUNTY

EARTH TECH
 1455 OLD ALABAMA ROAD, SUITE 170
 ROSWELL, GA 30076
 404.582.1400

GEORGIA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

EDS-441(49)
 TYPICAL SECTIONS

MEETING MINUTES

3

DATE: 1:30 pm December 17, 2001

ET Project No.: 52186

SUBJECT: Grip Program – US 441 from the Florida State Line to Pearson, GA
EDS-441(47), Echols County P.I. No. 422420
EDS-441(48), Clinch & Echols Counties P.I. No. 422400
EDS-441(49), Clinch County P.I. No. 422410
EDS-441(46), Clinch County P.I. No. 422390
EDS-441(41), Atkinson & Clinch Counties P.I. No. 422380
BRF-023-1(12), Atkinson County P.I. No. 421440
Pre-Concept Team Meeting

Location: GDOT District 4 Office (Tifton)

Attendees: See attachment

Introductions:

Neil Davis from Earth Tech introduced the project and the team. Everyone introduced themselves and their position.

Meeting Objective:

Scott Gero (Earth Tech) explained that the objective of this meeting was to: validate the Need & Purpose, gain a better understanding of the project corridor, understand the environmental scope, determine the anticipated public involvement, identify information that is available as well as define the information that is needed to develop the Concepts and the Environmental Documents, and review the project schedule. He indicated that this was to be a working meeting and that anyone with any input should feel free to speak up.

Need & Purpose Statements:

Laura Dawood read the preliminary Need and Purpose statements for the projects which included the traffic volumes and level of service data for the years 2007 and 2027. It was suggested that the traffic numbers be adjusted to the year 2005 and 2025, the year the project should be let. The general need and purpose is to provide a 4-lane highway with a 44' depressed grassed median with the possibility of providing a 5-lane section or one-way pair section through the city's of Fargo and Pearson.

Review Alternates to Date:

Scott Gero presented the current alignments as developed by GDOT and identified areas of interest/concern that will need further study and modification.

- One area that will be looked at in more detail will be in the vicinity of the proposed Fargo Visitor Center, northeast of the US 441/Suwannee River crossing. Scott suggested that the proposed alignment will possibly infringe upon the proposed Visitor's Center parking lot and that he will look into constructing the additional lanes to the west rather than to the east as shown in the current GDOT proposed alignment.
- Three options for Fargo were shown. A By-Pass option with the 4-lane and grassed median would pass to the west of Fargo. An option with the 4-lane tapering down to a 5-lane section centered about the existing alignment through town as well as an option where the 5-lane maintains the existing east edge of pavement and widens to the west through town. All options have historic property impacts. The current feeling is that a 5-lane option on the existing alignment through town is the most preferred.
- The proposed alignment shifted from widening to the east to widening to the west throughout the project based on minimizing impacts to wetlands or historical properties. Primarily the existing roadway would ultimately be utilized as either the northbound or southbound lanes.
- The 4-lane section will be tapered down to a 5-lane section on the north and south sides of Homerville where it will tie to Project EDS-84(20).
- An alternative will be looked at for a new alignment around the east side of the neighborhood on the east side of existing US441 just north of the Homerville airport. This alignment would

MEETING MINUTES

minimize impacts to this neighborhood as well as to a historic property to the north west of this neighborhood (at CR 113).

- Several options are being looked at in Pearson. Currently two By-Pass options to the west and two By-Pass options to the east of Pearson are being evaluated. Multiple options of One-Way Pairs are being evaluated through town. There is an existing 5-lane section beginning at the intersection of US 441 and SR 520 and continuing north to the end of the project. Scott explained that there are many issues which will need to be evaluated to determine the best option through Pearson.

Wayne Mote asked about the level of coordination needed with Florida. It was stated that the project should begin in Georgia. Joe Cowan suggested to create long tapers from the two lane to the proposed 4-lane grassed median section. Wayne questioned the level of coordination to place construction signs in Florida. The district responded that it should not be a problem.

Environmental Concerns:

GEPA vs. NEPA Documents

Current Limits:

- GEPA Document will suffice from the Florida line continuing north to CR8 in Fargo.
 - State funds applied
 - Historic Properties not as much of an issue with a GEPA document
- NEPA Documents
 - NEPA Document #1
 - Fargo to south of Homerville
 - Need to investigate logical termini
 - NEPA Document #2
 - North Homerville to north of Pearson
 - Many historical sites in Pearson

Laura explained that the team is currently looking at two NEPA documents, at the recommendation of Rich Williams (GDOT – Office of Environment Location), in case one section gets slowed down through the process, then the other section can continue. A question was raised as to whether CR 8 in Fargo could be considered a “logical termini”. Laura stated that the team will be looking in detail at the feasibility of the logical termini in this area. She suggested that other possibilities would be at the intersection with SR 94 to the west on the south side of Fargo as well as possibly the intersection with SR 94 & SR 177 to the south of the Suwannee River.

A question was raised as to whether the project limits need to be tied to the environmental documents? No.

Laura explained that the golf course at Fargo is probably not a 4(f) issue. The golf course is 9 holes. Attendees speculated that the course is private, but allows fee-based public play. The current proposed alignment avoids this golf course.

Cultural Resources:

Bryan Davis explained that documents had been prepared and received the Historic Preservation Division’s concurrence concerning the determinations of National Register of Historic Places eligibility for resources in the project corridor. At present, there are eight (8) identified historic districts, and forty-six (46) individual properties/resources along the project corridor. Furthermore, he will verify these properties as well as evaluating any additional resources that may need to be considered under new alternative alignments.

Wayne Mote suggested that Earth Tech look at properties that have crossed or will cross the “fifty-year” threshold for National Register of Historic Places eligibility over the duration of the project so as not to encounter potential problems in the late phases of the project. Bryan Davis confirmed that he is taking this into consideration.

MEETING MINUTES

A question was raised as to whether or not there is a DNR marker on Superior Pines land that denotes POW historical status at the site just north of Fargo? (Consultant looked for one on 12/18/01 and could not find any marker)

Ecology:

Laura mentioned that the wetland delineations were based on existing maps and that the wetlands would be evaluated and delineated by our team in the field. She mentioned that Earth Tech will be conducting the studies for determination of endangered species habitat.

Scott Gero mentioned that the location engineers at OEL, Dalton Stevens and Kevin Posey, said that for any sliding mile with a 0.5 mile of wetlands could have a reduced median of 44 to 32 ft. Scott said this would be looked at throughout the entire corridor.

Community Impacts:

Laura stated that the team would be looking at community impacts when evaluating the different alternatives.

Public Involvement:

Laura presented the idea of having public meetings in each of the three towns on three consecutive nights. The District suggested that public involvement meetings be held on two different nights. By having meetings in Homerville and Fargo for the areas south to the Florida border on night 1; and Homerville and Pearson for the areas north of Homerville to Pearson on night 2, it would allow for more public involvement as well as better accommodate personnel of GDOT and Earth Tech, instead of having 3 consecutive nights of public meetings.

DOT asked for 6-week notification before the Public Information Meeting so they can have time to arrange and notify via advertising.

It was brought up that perhaps GDOT can notify the public about the project in the form of a press release. Wayne will check with the communications office about whether to do this or not.

It was suggested to include the names of DOT Area engineers on survey letters and that survey letters be mailed prior to any survey work being conducted outside GDOT right-of-way.

It was stated that originally Pearson did not like the idea of a bypass around the town. The general community perspective was that the 5-lane was going to run directly through town. This poses problems with historical impacts if it were to be done and may not be able to be done in time to meet project timelines. Problems with feasible and prudent alternatives necessary for Section 4f impacts may delay the process of going through town. It was mentioned that in the late 1980's, maybe 1986-1987, the 5-lane section north of Pearson was built.

Land Use:

No one present knew of other development projects (malls, etc.) that may be in plans for the corridor. The meeting attendees suggested to get land-use maps, zoning maps, etc. to check into this further.

Phone lines and fiber optics were said to run along the road between Homerville and Pearson. These may be along the shoulder of the road and there may be gaps in some areas. Earth Tech stated that there is Subsurface Utility work on this project and all these issues will be picked up by that research.

UST's and Hazardous Waste Sites:

GDOT will be determining these.

Conceptual Stage Study (Relocations):

GDOT will be performing this function.

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Possible Permits Required:

Laura explained that an Army Corps 404 permit will be necessary and possibly a US Coast Guard permit.

Wayne is going to find out about the navigable waters issue at the Suwannee River bridge crossing in Fargo to determine if a US Coast Guard permit would be required.

Traffic:

The District suggested to double-check traffic data, particularly the EDS-441(48) figures, as well as accident data.

Scott asked if anyone was aware of how the trucks access the Cady bag factory in the north west side of Pearson. It was explained that trucks load up from the train yard on the east side of Pearson and truck the materials over to the Cady bag factory using SR 520 and not US 441.

Proposed Design Criteria:

Scott explained that the design speed would be 45 mph inside the city limits and 65 mph everywhere else.

A question was asked regarding making any by-pass option for Pearson a limited access roadway. It was agreed that it should be limited access other than to schools/factories.

Two intersections of concern were brought up, just south of Fargo at SR 94 and just south of Pearson at SR 31, as areas that need to be redesigned. These were pointed out to Scott Gero.

Wayne Mote asked if there is enough borrow in the corridor. The district did not have a definitive answer.

Scott mentioned that a rolling profile would have to be introduced in order to develop a median ditch that could be drained. Joe Sheffield (District 4 Pre-Construction Engineer) stated that creating a rolling terrain would probably not be necessary due to the porosity of the soils. He said that any water in the medians would most likely pass through the soil and pipes would not be necessary. It was decided that an assessment of the risks will need to be submitted and a judgment call will need to be made as to whether to make the profile rolling or not.

The question was raised to the District if it would be acceptable to utilize separate profiles for the northbound and southbound lanes. Joe Sheffield stated that yes it would be acceptable. Bryan Davis (Terracon - Architectural Historian) mentioned that if there was a grade change, there might be visual effects on historic resources and that the team would evaluate if that situation were to arise.

Homerville project (EDS-84(20)) was said to be a 5-lane project, with one-way pairs going east to west through town. Chauncey Elston from GDOT OEL brought the folder including the GEPA document and all correspondence about this project to the Earth Tech team.

Staging and Traffic Control:

Scott explained that there should not be any unique staging or traffic control problems. Most of the project will have the utilize the existing roadway while the new roadway is built adjacent to it and then traffic will be shifted to the new roadway and the remainder of the new roadway will be built.

Maintenance Problems:

There were no maintenance problems that anyone could think of.

Existing and Proposed R/W:

Scott stated that for the Concept Phase the R/W would be 250' utilizing one of the existing R/W lines (east or west) as much as possible. The R/W would then be reduced during the Preliminary Plans Phase when more detailed construction limits could be determined and the R/W reduced to the necessary amount.

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One person asked if ROW would affect the 65 mph speed limit. The project team responded that it would not affect design speed.

Coordination with Federal and State Agencies:

Laura stated that we would be debriefing FHWA on the minutes of this meeting as well as passing the minutes along to the other agencies involved.

Opportunities to accommodate other modes of transportation:

Scott stated that there did not appear to be any other modes of transportation planned along this corridor. The only bike route would be an east – west route passing through Homerville. No one had any comments about any anticipated additional modes of Transportation.

Coordination with other GDOT and Local Projects:

The 4-lane section will be tapered down to a 5-lane section on the north and south sides of Homerville where it will tie to Project EDS-84(20).

Schedule:

Scott went over the schedule and asked for comments.

Neil Davis raised a question over the scheduling of the Field Plan reviews. It was recommended that 1 Field Plan review be scheduled first to see how it goes, and then see about scheduling the other 4. The concern is the length and volume of work involved with performing Field Plan Reviews on 64 miles of roadway.

Meeting Adjourned

MEETING ATTENDEES

DATE: 1:30 pm December 17, 2001

ET Project No.: 52186

SUBJECT: Grip Program – US 441 from the Florida State Line to Pearson, GA
EDS-441(47), Echols County P.I. No. 422420
EDS-441(48), Clinch & Echols Counties P.I. No. 422400
EDS-441(49), Clinch County P.I. No. 422410
EDS-441(46), Clinch County P.I. No. 422390
EDS-441(41), Atkinson & Clinch Counties P.I. No. 422380
BRF-023-1(12), Atkinson County P.I. No. 421440
Pre-Concept Team Meeting

Location: GDOT District 4 Office (Tifton)

Attendees:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Phone #</u>
Neil R. Davis	Earth Tech, Inc. (Principle In Charge)	(678) 990-1500
Scott A. Gero	Earth Tech, Inc. (Technical Manager)	(678) 990-1511
Cheryl Dilworth	Earth Tech, Inc.	(678) 990-1512
Laura Dawood	KCA (Earth Tech Team)	(404) 607-1676
Dale Youngkin	KCA (Earth Tech Team)	(404) 607-1676
Bryan Davis	Terracon (Earth Tech Team)	(770) 623-0755
Wayne G. Mote, Jr.	GDOT – Office of Consultant Design	(404) 656-5404
Chauncey Elston	GDOT – Office of Environment Location	(404) 699-4435
Joe W. Sheffield	GDOT – District 4 Preconst. Engineer	(229) 386-3300
Don R. Gaskins	GDOT – District 4 Preconstruction	(229) 386-3045
Joe W. Burns	GDOT – District 4 Environmental	(229) 386-3046
Jeff Bridges	GDOT – District 4 Precon./Design	(229) 386-3293
Jerry A. Bruce	GDOT – District 4 Utilities Engineer	(229) 386-3288
Emory L. Giddons	GDOT – District 4 Asst. Utilities Eng.	(229) 386-3288
Danny P. Gay	GDOT – District 4 Traffic Ops.	(229) 386-3435
Joe Cowan	GDOT – District 4 Construction Eng.	(229) 386-3304
Zane Hutchinson	GDOT – District 4 Design Engineer	(229) 386-3300
Tim Warren	GDOT – District 4 Area 1	(229) 333-5287
Keith Carver	GDOT – District 4 Area 2	(912) 389-4201
Robert E Connell	GDOT – District 4 Area 2	(912) 389-4201

DATE: 9:00 pm August 7, 2002

ET Project No.: 52186

SUBJECT: Grip Program – US 441 from SR 94 to Pearson, GA
EDS-441(47), Clinch County P.I. No. 422420
EDS-441(48), Clinch County P.I. No. 422400
EDS-441(49), Clinch County P.I. No. 422410
EDS-441(46), Clinch County P.I. No. 422390
EDS-441(41), Atkinson & Clinch Counties P.I. No. 422380
BRF-023-1(12), Atkinson County P.I. No. 421440

Location: GDOT District 4 Office

Attendees: See attached list

Introductions:

At around 9:00 AM the meeting began with everyone introducing themselves. Neil Davis gave an overview of the project (length, how it breaks down). Neil then turned the meeting over to Scott. Scott then explained that he was going to be reading through each of the six (6) reports, and noted that this version had some slight changes from the previous submittal (a few minor changes to the report and the addition of some new attachments). Revised reports with attachments were provided.

Scott began reading through the Need and Purpose statement for the project (EDS-441(47)). He then noted that all the other reports' Need and Purpose statements were identical to this one.

Wayne Mote had a few comments that pertained to all the projects:

- All projects PDP should be listed as Exempt (as opposed to the current Full Oversight).
- That the symbol ' should be replaced with ft. This is necessary because as the documents are copied over and over, often the ' symbol becomes unreadable.
- Add street names in addition to the county or city road number whenever possible.
- It was noted in the cost estimate that the bridge widths are noted as 40 ft when they should be noted as 38 ft.
- Noted the design variance and wanted to see reference to the attachment detailing the reasons for it's need.
- He had an issue with the "Providing Detours" statement, but said he will look into it.
- He also wondered why there was any reference to the TVA in the report, as the project is a great distance from their authority; however, it was included as part of the standard line.
- He also did not think there was any reason for the local government comments to be included that did not specifically deal with this section of the project.
- The Purchase of Right-of-Way should be changed to 12 months, and then later was changed to 18 months.

- Also wanted to see an actual due date for these tasks, as the time frame for each isn't always dependant on each other task before it. Joe Sheffield disputed this because project programming changes and thus schedules change. Scott mentioned that he had a preliminary schedule for all the projects.
- He stated that Earth tech could add a statement about "subject to funding" if they so desired.
- The attachments should be numbered and referenced throughout the document.
- The UST attachments are unnecessary and can be removed.

EDS-441 (47):

- Wayne questioned the statement in the description "changes sides several times". He asked if there was a shift in Fargo, to which Scott replied that the roadway began as a widening to the west to avoid the historic district on the east and then the improvements shifted to a symmetrical widening to avoid impacts to individual historic resources.
- Questioned whether there is an approval process and guidelines for vegetation height, which Traffic Ops stated there is.
- Wanted the lines of support from the other Mayors removed.
- Joe Sheffield asked about speed limit along the 32' median section. Scott said it would be signed for 55 but designed for 65.
- Scott also explained the reasons for the 32 ft median (that if there are ½ mile of impacts to wetlands within any sliding mile, then a 32 ft median is used instead of a 44 ft median. Laura Dawood (KCA) explained that this is due to an agreement between GDOT and the US Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Scott then posed the question about the recent ADA regulations that are being discussed that include the desire for a 6 ft grass strip prior to the sidewalk. Traffic Ops had a problem with the 6 ft offset and suggested that 1 ½ to 2 ft be used instead due to sight distance problems when crossing those intersections in general. Scott wondered if perhaps we should only use the 6 ft strip on the side roads, and the smaller strip on the mainline. Wayne Mote stated that the sight problem would still be there for those on the side road.
- Wayne posed the question about whether a ½% or 0% would be used inside Fargo. Scott stated that 0% was adequate on the rural sections, but to use ½% on the urban sections (where there is curb and gutter) and bridges (this should be applied to all of the projects).
- Wayne noted that the number of displacements in the Concept Report do not match the numbers in the cost estimate. Scott explained that there had been an update in the aerial photography taken of the site, and as such the numbers in the Concept Report reflected a more accurate count since sites could be better identified. The cost estimate contained the estimates provided to Earth Tech by GDOT R/W estimating. Wayne instructed Earth Tech to call the Right-of-Way office and get displacement cost estimates and revise the cost estimate numbers.
- Scott wanted to know who needed to be contacted for the purpose of getting a few more locations surveyed for possible UST sites. The district will handle it. Earth Tech provided the district with a new plot on aerial photos of the realignment of SR 94 (West), which is where the additional survey needs to be performed.

- Emory Giddens (GDOT – District Utilities) wanted the non-reimbursable costs to be added to the concept report (and the cost estimate). This brought up a discussion on how much of the utilities are actually reimbursable (not all of them are).
- In addition, T-Cubed was not the cable company (there is none for Fargo) but rather is the fiber optics owner for Norfolk Southern Railroad.
- Wayne said no LGPA would be needed if all the Utilities are reimbursable.
- Scott told the group that during a recent meeting with the Mayor of Fargo, the mayor asked how her husband might go about getting his fill used as the fill for the project. The answer was that he would need to speak to the contractor that ends up being awarded the project. It was mentioned that negotiating it during R/W gets difficult and therefore is avoided if possible.
- A question was raised as to when landscaping typically gets put into the median. Joe Cowan (District Construction Engineer) stated that it occurs after the project is built and is handled by permit. There needs to be a note added about it as well.
- Wayne suggested that Earth Tech look into whether Fargo will want irrigation in the median so it can be designed for and built as part of the project. Wayne did not commit any GDOT dollars for the cost of the irrigation system.
- Scott referenced overall schedule and possible conflicts of schedule, but wanted to discuss it later.
- Scott informed everyone that more alternates had been looked at for the projects, but that for purposes of the report only those that were the most obvious (and therefore people might ask about) were included. As far as all of the other alternates studied and not shown, they are contained in the Concept Alternatives Report that is currently being prepared by Earth Tech.
- The comment was made that the erosion control values may be a bit low (in specific \$0.87 for the silt fence).
- Scott raised a question about bike lanes between Homerville and Fargo. Scott explained that the current typical section for the rural section provides 6.5' of paved shoulder, which is adequate to accommodate bicycles. Scott explained that there could be a problem with impacting historic resources in Fargo if bike lanes need to be added to the urban typical section. Joe Sheffield stated that with such low traffic counts, the bicycles can share a lane with traffic. It was stated that US 84 through Homerville is a designated bike route. As far as changing the typicals for the bike lanes, Wayne instructed Earth Tech to leave them as is. Wayne thinks that an agency has recently asked for designating this stretch as a bike route. He asked that Michelle Hart (FHWA) look into this.

After he had finished reading the report Scott went over to the displays to visually walk everyone through the project.

- Joe Cowan stated that he did not want the proposed slip lane ramp for Southbound US 441 at the intersection with SR 177 and SR 94(east), but instead have a turn lane at the intersection itself. This is for the safety of the northbound vehicles on SR 94 turning left onto US 441 south.
- There were a couple of questions about breaks in the median which Scott pointed out.

- Scott then mentioned to Joe that Fargo desires some kind of extra signal for their school zone, and Joe stated that they could have overhead flashers but not the road sign flashers.

EDS-441 (48):

Scott started by walking the group through the project on the display.

- Scott explained that the bypass around Colon was designed to avoid the need to take 4 out of the 12 residences in the area that would have been required if the existing road were widened to the east. He noted that there were comments from concerned citizens about the displacements shown at the PIM. Wayne directed Earth Tech to show the latest design to the residents of Colon, in particular the owner of the hotel property, so that if he has a problem it isn't identified late in the process. The hotel owner may have possible impact to his hunting grounds and quail farm in the rear of his property.
- A question was raised about exactly where all the median breaks would be. Scott stated that they would be determined during preliminary design. Most of the median breaks will be spaced at the maximum of 2 miles due to the remoteness of the area.
- Scott also noted on the display exactly where the 32 ft depressed median begins and ends.

Scott then began reading through the Concept Report for the project.

- In the scheduling area it was noted that all of these projects may be affected by each other project in the corridor, and that this should be taken into consideration.
- Wayne directed that Earth Tech's name be added to the Cost Estimate under the prepared by column.

There was a ten minute break as the displays were changed to represent the next two projects.

EDS-441 (49):

Scott began by reading the project's Concept Report.

- On the proposed typical sections change the wording from "dual" to "two-way".
- The proposed 5-lane typical section may change as per what Wayne finds out about the bike lanes.
- The utilities were confirmed as correct.
- Scott explained the change from widening to the west to widening to the east in the area of "Grandpa's House" (just south of intersection of CR 1607/Buck Griffis Road and US 441). The alignment was changed to take the grandfather's house as opposed to his son's house across the street. This change was at the request of the grandfather (Mr. Sam Strickland) at the Public Information Meeting. Mr. Strickland had stated he would rather have his home impacted than his son's home. Scott stated that this change did not have any adverse affect on any other aspect and so the change was made.

Scott explained that there will be two NEPA documents in the hopes that if one is held up, it will not hold up all the projects.

Scott began the walk through the displays.

- Questions were raised about the tie into Project EDS-84 (20) in Homerville. Scott explained that EDS-84(20) would have the footprint of a 4-lane with a 20 ft raised median but would be constructed as a flush median and striped for a 14 ft two-way turn lane with 3 ft striped out at each edge of pavement. Wayne directed Earth Tech to provide the same typical section for Projects EDS-441(49 & 46) as used on EDS-84(20).
- A comment was made that the Right-of-Way estimate and the number of parcels seems to be a bit high and to verify them.
- The typical section attachments need to have dashed lines to reflect the existing pavement. Wayne stated that the existing roadway should be shown as overlay and not full depth pavement if it is to remain.

EDS-441 (46):

Scott began by reading the Concept Report for the project.

- Scott explained the reason for the alignment around the Cowart Commissary (historic resource). He explained that the owner plans to move the commissary to the other side of US 441. If and when this happens, the site will be reevaluated for its historic value. If SHPPO declassifies it from being a historic resource, then the alignment will change to a widening to the west rather than a bypass. The owner is supposed to be moving it any day now. Wayne suggested moving the limits of Projects EDS-441(46 & 41) either north or south to where the existing is widened so that each project does not need to design a temporary tie from the new location to existing.
- Emory asked to change utility name from Georgia Power to Georgia Power/ Distribution and Georgia Power/ Transmission.
- There is sewer in this area, so it should be added to the utilities section.
- The mile log was questioned, but it was stated that the number was determined from the Department's county logs.
- A question was raised on how existing US 441 would be treated where the proposed alignment goes on new location (at the north end of the Homerville Airport). Scott stated that the existing road will be turned into a cul-de-sac and the other end tied into the proposed US 441. Any driveways that will not tie to existing US 441 will be extended to tie directly into the realigned US 441.

Scott then went through the project on the display.

- A question arose on whether there needs to be right turn lanes for the county side roads (yes, but the MOG needs to be checked). Scott explained that most of the tie-ins of the existing county roads would be worked out during preliminary design and most should be able to tie into US 441 at or near 90-degree angles.

EDS-441 (41):

Scott began by reading through the Concept Report.

- The biggest question was how would the BRF-023-1 (12) project be handled (as part of EDS-441(41) or as an independent project). The resulting conclusion was that the Bridge Project would be kept separate as a Concept Report. The project would consist of the replacement of the existing bridge only (no approach work but rather just bridge items). The project would be constructed with EDS-441(41). The construction plans should combine the two projects and the cover sheet should say Project EDS-441(41) and Project BRF-023-1(12). Also, Maintenance needs to be consulted about the life span that the current bridge has, it may be that it won't last long enough to wait for EDS-441(41) to be let to construction.
- A discussion rose about how to handle the pedestrian crossings in Pearson. It was noted that currently there seems to be a lot of foot traffic in the area where the new alignment of US 441 will be going through, so Earth Tech placed a raised grass median to provide for safer pedestrian crossing. However, there was concern expressed on whether that would simply allow people to use the median as another sidewalk area, or a place to "hang out". It was noted that the Mayor of Pearson did not want any grassed median through town as this would limit access to each side of the road and therefore be less attractive for future businesses to locate along this road. Danny Gay said you would want the pedestrians only crossing at one central location. Joe Sheffield stated that the traffic volume did not warrant a raised grassed median and therefore it should be a flush median. It was agreed to use a typical section which allowed for a 20 ft median but would be paved flush and striped out similar to that used in Homerville on EDS-84(20) until the public meeting. If there is a large public outcry for a raised median then it should be easy enough to add to the design if the footprint is already there.
- Joe Cowan asked how active the historic church is. Laura responded that it is very active.
- Scott explained how at his meeting, with the mayor of Pearson on Monday, a question arose from the mayor on whether the state would pay for the relocation of utilities. Scott said that he explained to the mayor that if the State goes onto new location or acquires R/W for an improvement to a road, the state will reimburse for the relocation of utilities that have prior rights. He also explained that if the State had prior rights to the property where a utility exists and the utility needs to be moved due to improvements to a road, then the utility has to pay for it's own relocation. Emory Giddens stated that a municipality would have to pay for relocations of any of their utilities regardless of who has prior rights. Wayne said this was the first he had heard of this and agreed with Scott's assessment. Wayne will check into this. Michelle said that the cost should be paid with federal money. Don said that normally Local Government Project Agreements (LGPA) request the local government to (a) Make all utility relocations, adjustments or betterments of publicly owned utilities that are in conflict with construction of the project; (b) Relocate or adjust all privately owned utilities to clear construction of the project, including adjustments at railroad crossings if required. Don also said that the LGPA's are usually handed out at the Concept Meeting but for some reason they have not been sent out yet.

Scott then went to the display and walked everyone through the project.

- Scott raised a question about the intersection of SR 31 with US 441 as to whether it needs to be designed for 55 mph through the curve even though it is approaching a STOP condition. He thought that it could be tied in closer to the existing tie-in with a lower design speed and thus not require the acquisition of as much land as currently shown. It was decided that the alignment shown should be kept as is.
- There will need to be more traffic intersection analyses as far as if any further intersections will need signals (in particular around the school). This will be done by the Department (District). Joe asked if the existing signal at the current intersection of US 441 and US 82 would be removed, but Scott stated that he thought the existing signal should be left to help draw attention to the fact that there are signals in town and to help slow down the traffic on US 82. It was agreed to keep the existing signal.
- It was also noted that the district strongly recommends against a signed Business Route, along the existing US 441 where proposed US 441 goes on new location, due to the maintenance issues it will create.
- Scott asked if there would be a problem with adding a sidewalk from the mobile home park on the south side of Pearson and connecting it to the existing sidewalks along existing US 441. It was agreed that would be a good idea.
- Danny requested a copy of the plots for his further review.

BRF-023-1 (12):

Scott began by reading the Concept Report.

- It was decided that the Culvert would remain as a part of EDS-441 (41). There is no need for this project to have any alternatives listed.
- Apparently this bridge project had been designed previously, and that there may be existing plans which Wayne will look into.
- The cost estimate for this bridge will need to be redone to only include bridge items.

Schedule:

Neil Davis (Earth Tech) went over the breakdown of the schedule of the Preliminary Field Plan Reviews:

- Emory stated that he wants full sized plans submitted to him and Danny wants ½ sized plans.
- It was agreed that the Preliminary Field Plan Reviews could be combined into two reviews; one for south of Homerville (EDS-441(47, 48, & 49)) and one for north of Homerville (EDS-441(46 & 41) & BRF-023-1(12)).

Miscellaneous:

- Laura asked about the status of the Conceptual Stage Study. Don stated that in the past a request for Conceptual Stage Study was always requested from the R/W section in the General Office in Atlanta. He also said that they are never given



MEETING MINUTES

out at the Concept Meeting. Earth Tech will follow up on the status of the Conceptual Stage Study.

- Don was given a plot for the additional UST study needed along realigned SR 94.
- A maintenance issue was brought to Scott's attention by the BP station in Fargo. Apparently, there is a drainage structure, which has been crushed by trucks. Scott stated that the widening would require the replacement of that structure.

To Do:

Wayne Mote

- Determine need for "Providing Detours" statement
- Check on Bike Route Designation status between Fargo and Homerville
- Check on status of any LGPA's and what is covered
- Consult maintenance on durability of existing bridge (BRF-023-1(12))
- Look for existing plans for the reconstruction of the BRF-023-1(12) project

Earth Tech

- Update R/W costs
- Verify Parcel Count and R/W cost for Unit 49
- Check with Fargo on desire for irrigation in median
- Revise costs of Erosion Control
- Revise urban typical sections to show existing roadway and overlay
- Consult maintenance on durability of existing bridge (BRF-023-1(12))
- Present the latest design in Colon to the residents of Colon
- Check on status of the Conceptual Stage Study

MEETING ATTENDEES

DATE: 9:00 am August 6, 2002

ET Project No.: 52186

SUBJECT: Grip Program – US 441 from SR 94 to Pearson, GA
EDS-441(47), Clinch County P.I. No. 422420
EDS-441(48), Clinch County P.I. No. 422400
EDS-441(49), Clinch County P.I. No. 422410
EDS-441(46), Clinch County P.I. No. 422390
EDS-441(41), Atkinson & Clinch Counties P.I. No. 422380
BRF-023-1(12), Atkinson County P.I. No. 421440
Pre-Concept Team Meeting

Location: GDOT District 4 Office (Tifton)

Attendees:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>	<u>Phone #</u>
Neil R. Davis	Earth Tech, Inc.	(770) 990-1500
Scott A. Gero	Earth Tech, Inc.	(770) 990-1511
Cindy Lee	Earth Tech, Inc.	(770) 990-1516
John McGuire	Earth Tech, Inc.	(770) 990-1503
Laura Dawood	KCA (Earth Tech Team)	(404) 607-1676
Wayne G. Mote, Jr.	GDOT-OCD	(404) 656-5404
Michele Hart	FHWA	(404) 562-3634
Joe W. Sheffield	GDOT – District 4 Preconst. Engineer	(229) 386-3300
Don R. Gaskins	GDOT – District 4 Preconstruction	(229) 386-3045
Jerry A. Bruce	GDOT – District 4 Utilities Engineer	(229) 386-3288
Emory L. Giddons	GDOT – District 4 Asst. Utilities Eng.	(229) 386-3288
Danny P. Gay	GDOT – District 4 Traffic Ops.	(229) 386-3435
Joe Cowan	GDOT – District 4 Construction Eng.	(229) 386-3304
Tim Warren	GDOT – District 4 Area 1	(229) 333-5287
Barbara Thomas	GDOT – Planning/Programming	(229) 386-3465
Jasper Stewart	Alltel	(912) 353-0991
Fred Cook	Alltel	(229) 890-4303
Jimmy Revell	Alltel	(229) 890-4319
Tim Register	Slash Pine EMC	(912) 487-5201
Albert Thornton	City of Homerville	(912) 487-2375

DATE: 9:00 am May 22 & 23, 2002

ET Project No.: 52186

SUBJECT: **Practical Alternatives Report (PAR) Meeting**
Grip Program – US 441 from the SR 94/SR 177 to Pearson, GA
EDS-441(47), Clinch County P.I. No. 422420
EDS-441(48), Clinch County P.I. No. 422400
EDS-441(49), Clinch County P.I. No. 422410
EDS-441(46), Clinch County P.I. No. 422390
EDS-441(41), Atkinson & Clinch Counties P.I. No. 422380
BRF-023-1(12), Atkinson County P.I. No. 421440

Location: Fargo United Methodist Church Social Hall

Attendees: Scott Gero, Earth Tech
Cindy Lee, Earth Tech
Daniel Ingram, Earth Tech – Ecologist
Ron Johnson, Earth Tech - Ecologist
Dale Youngkin, KCA
Jonathon DeNike, KCA
Jennifer Geirsch, FHWA
Michelle Hart, FHWA
Kathy Chapman, US Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Mary Moffat, US Army Corp of Engineers
Galen Barrow, GDOT - OEL
Jack Weeks, GDNR

- The meeting began with a round of introductions and the distribution of updated plots showing the latest alignment modifications, including the reconfiguration of SR177 and US441 (plot #1), Colon by-pass (plot #3), realignment of US441 at the Strickland residence (plots #9 & #10), and the new one-way pair alignment in Pearson, on new aerial photography backgrounds (plots #20 & #21).
- Kathy Chapman (USFWS), Daniel Ingram (Earth Tech – Ecologist) and Lisa Westberry (GDOT – OEL), prior to the PAR meeting, walked the project corridor to review all of the wetlands and impacted streams. Kathy noted several areas that she wanted to visit while in the field.
- Scott explained the factors that were considered in determining the location and footprint of the proposed alignment. These factors consisted of utilizing the existing roadway, lanes, reducing the median type and width varied based on the need to minimize wetland impacts, avoid historical resources, reduce or avoid community impacts, etc.
- The first area of discussion was the re-alignment of SR 177 at the intersection of US 441 with SR 94 south of Fargo and the re-alignment of westbound SR 94/Riverside Drive with the entrance to the new Okefenokee State Park Visitor Center. Kathy would like to look at the 44' depressed median south of the State Park area. She questioned the need for the 44' median, stating that it was insensitive to the resources and there was unnecessary fill added in the floodplain. Scott explained that this area would probably qualify for the reduced median of

32' since it appeared to have more than ½ mile of impacted wetlands within a mile.

- Kathy Chapman suggested improving several of the existing pipes and culverts along US441. She stated several crossings had old, outdated culverts that were too high in elevation, which prevented proper drainage and fish and wildlife movement by impeding flow. Wetland #7 served as one of many examples where Kathy suggested improvement to culverts and pipes along the project. Kathy will include a complete list of inadequate culverts along with all of her comments in her letter sent to GDOT. Examples of inadequate culverts were visited during the field portion of the meeting.
- A suggestion was raised between Mary Moffat (USACE) and Kathy Chapman (USFWS) to replace existing inadequate culverts with bottomless culverts that in turn could qualify for stream mitigation credits.
- Kathy also brought up the issue of wood stork foraging habitat. She said that some of the old borrow pits appear to be good foraging habitat for wood storks, and that food was a limiting factor to wood stork reproduction. Kathy mentioned that there is a nesting colony of wood storks over 30 miles east of the project corridor; and as wood storks are known to feed within a 40 mile radius of their nesting sites, many of the borrow pits within the corridor are within feeding range. Kathy stated that, since other wading birds have been observed foraging within these borrow pits, food is known to be available within them. These borrow pits are considered to be good for feeding because they are open, marshy, and shallow, and dry up in the summer. Kathy said there needs to be a screen of vegetation between the road and the pits, otherwise the birds will not use them because of disturbance from passing vehicles. Thus, even though these borrow pits are considered "low" quality wetlands according to the USACE, they may be considered "high" quality wildlife habitat by USFWS for certain threatened and endangered (T & E) species, such as wood storks. Mary suggested the possibility that, as a general condition of the 404 permit, there may be a requirement to have instructions on each page of the plans stating that no work is to be done (and no fill placed) outside of construction limits, and that right-of-way clearing will be limited.
- Scott explained that a west bypass around Colon was chosen to reduce the social impacts of displacing approximately 1/3 of the residents in the area and to avoid impacts to the historic hotel. Kathy questioned the historic boundaries around the Chauncey House and the Old Hilliard Place, just north of Colon. Kathy requested to look at this site while in the field.
- Kathy expressed concern over the 222 feet of impacts to Stream 51. She requested measures be taken to limit the impacts.
- According to the Ecology Report, Tatum Creek is listed under section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act as having impaired water quality. This listing is due to low dissolved oxygen levels from non-point source pollution. Because of this, Kathy recommended that impacts to this stream should be avoided as much as possible. Mary questioned if this may also be an area that could be used for on-site mitigation.



MEETING MINUTES

- Kathy stated that, many times, GDOT projects involve additional clearing at bridges to allow for construction. The areas cleared are often the best wildlife habitat. In general, she stated that an additional clearing at bridges should be avoided if possible or minimized. If additional clearing was necessary, it should be restored afterward.
- Kathy requested the transition from the 4-lane section with the 44' depressed grassed median to the urban 5-lane section south of Homerville be shifted south to minimize impacts to Wetland #146.
- North of Homerville, the borrow pit wetlands (#6) are frequented by numerous wading birds, and there is a transplanted colony of the State listed yellow pitcher plant (*Sarracenia flava*), rescued from another developed site. Kathy suggested the project avoid impacts to this area, or at least minimize impacts as much as possible. As road widening is proposed on the western side, she stated that these plants would need to be relocated. She also stated that more information is needed as to who planted them and why, and suggested that this be researched.
- Kathy requested that the 5-lane section continue further to the north and transition after passing the mobile home community on the east side of the road and just north of the airport.
- Stream #12 has a lot of water in it, but it is not moving. Kathy questioned if the highway was impeding the flow in this stream, and if culvert improvement could remedy this situation.
- It was discussed among the group that some stream mitigation will be necessary for these projects. The mitigation could include stream-crossing improvements like bottomless culverts, and perhaps reversal of channelization of local streams. This could potentially eliminate or minimize the need for off-site mitigation.
- Kathy stated that there are other areas within this drainage basin that could use some restoration from their currently degraded conditions, including tracts adjacent to the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge and the new Okefenokee State Park. Because of the large amount of wetland impacts resulting from these projects, USFWS would like to see some "special" compensatory wetland mitigation as opposed to creating wetlands in the middle of timber company plantations. Wetland restoration earns the greatest amount of mitigation credits with the least given to preservation. Credits for wetland creation falls somewhere in between the other two but is the most difficult to achieve.
- The State DNR wants to protect the Suwannee River between the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge and the crossing of US 441, and is attempting to purchase a corridor of land bordering the river. However, some landowners in this area do not want to sell, or are asking premium prices for their land, which the State is unwilling to pay. Meeting members wondered if this restoration of the Suwannee River corridor could fit into the mitigation plan for this project. This area is predominantly timber plantations, and tributary streams are most likely channelized. Mitigation work could include stream restoration and planting of bottomland hardwoods. Finding compensatory wetland mitigation for the project does not fall within the Earth Tech team's scope of work.



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- Kathy brought up the issue of the Florida black bear. The bear is currently not listed in Georgia but has been petitioned for listing. Kathy felt that floodplain restoration along the Suwannee River would create a good migration corridor for the bears. Also, stream crossing structures should be enlarged to allow bears to cross under the highway, as the bears will not cross busy highways or could get killed trying. Kathy stated that bears and signs of bear have been seen in the project area, especially around the southern portion in EDS-441(47) near the Suwannee River and Okefenokee Swamp.
- At the location of the Cowart Commissary and the tobacco barn at CR 101, Scott explained that the reason for the bypass was to avoid impacting the historic resources. Kathy requested to visit this area while in the field.
- Guest Millpond has a State of Georgia historic marker next to it. The caretakers there told Kathy that they had seen bald eagles feeding and nesting there in previous years. The highway alignment shifts to the east in the vicinity of the pond, avoiding any impacts in this area. Just north of Guest Millpond, on the west side of the existing ROW, is potential gopher tortoise habitat. Kathy saw an active burrow in this area while in the field with Daniel Ingram. She believes that this burrow belongs to a younger individual, not a full grown adult. This area could be potential habitat for the eastern indigo snake, as these sandy areas are adjacent to wetlands used by the snakes for foraging. Kathy suggested the need for a more extensive tortoise/snake survey in this area.
- US441 alignment through Pearson has been reduced from 12+ alternatives to two alternatives, the eastern bypass and the western one-way pair alternative. Scott explained the development issues with the eastern bypass vs. the western one-way pair, as well as wetland minimization issues. Scott then showed a drawing of the previous western one-way pair alignment and explained the improvements he made to avoid a longitudinal stream impact and dividing a low-income/minority community. He then explained how the western one-way pair alignment would resolve these issues.
- Kathy noted that she and Daniel did not look at any of the resources on the eastern side of Pearson, as Lisa Westberry (GDOT-OEL) told her that the eastern bypass alternative was not likely to be considered. It was decided that Kathy would need to look at all of the wetlands/natural resources along this alignment.
- The eastern bypass would to be very expensive with the necessary bridge crossing at the railroad, and will likely cause businesses in town to dry up as traffic is directed away from Pearson. Kathy said that the small amount of possible development along the eastern bypass route is little compensation for the increased construction costs and the larger amount of environmental impacts. There is a difference of roughly 26-29 acres in wetland impacts between the eastern bypass and the new one-way pair. Kathy favored the western one-way pair alternative because it has less wetland impacts. Most federal agencies favor the western one-way pair alignment over the eastern bypass.
- Kathy requested that further modification to the western alignment be done to minimize wetland impacts at Wetland #69. A larger stream crossing structure was recommended by Kathy at Little Red Bluff Creek. She also requested an urban section around the area of Little Red Bluff Creek to reduce the width of the

MEETING MINUTES

corridor along US 441 and minimize impacts to this area of good quality wildlife habitat.

- The group broke for lunch at 12:00 noon, and at 1:30 p.m. the meeting continued in the field to examine areas as specified by Kathy, Mary, and Daniel.
- The first field stop was at Wetland #3, where the impacts of the re-alignment of the intersection with US 441, SR 94, and SR 177 were discussed. A previously unexamined pond south of SR 177, which will be impacted by the intersection re-alignment, was visited. This pond had been excavated and diked, and was called non-jurisdictional by Mary and Kathy.
- The next stop was the site of the planned visitor center for the new Okefenokee State Park, where Jack Weeks (GDNR) discussed with other meeting participants the design of the roadway and medians, ROW width, joint development of the road and the park, and the hydrology impacts of the road construction in the vicinity of the park. Jack stated that GDNR is purchasing the Leviton House to use as a new park ranger house. Kathy requested a copy of the final survey of the new Okefenokee State Park.
- At Stream #7, Kathy stated that the culvert would be inadequate for animal crossing after the expansion of the road, due to the increased length of the culvert. She suggested replacing the existing culvert with a bottomless culvert or adding a drop inlet in the median. The drop inlet would allow light into the culvert and possibly encourage animal crossing.
- At Stream #9, Mary declassified the stream as jurisdictional. This area should be considered a wetland, and that the ditch area should be recalculated into the wetland area.
- Mary considered Wetland #25 to be an isolated pit.
- At Wetland #26, Kathy pointed out that this was very good wildlife habitat, especially on the western side, and that the culvert was now too high on the eastern side possibly due to scour. Kathy felt that a new culvert crossing was necessary, preferably a box culvert, due to the fact that the existing culvert was above the water level.
- At Wetlands #30-31 Daniel show that the pit was clear-cut. He asked Mary if it should be considered jurisdictional. Mary will check on this. Kathy also requested Mary call GA Forestry Commission to check on Best Management Practices.
- Stream #34 was determined to be a ditch within a wetland, not a stream, by Mary.
- After visiting the Colon area, Kathy expressed her dislike for the Colon bypass route. She stated the bypass impacts a lot of wetlands to avoid the historic Forrest Motel. Scott informed her that the historic resource was not the only reason for the new location of US441. Along with the historic resources, new location was chosen for US441 to minimize the impacts to the community of Colon. By widening on the existing a third of the residence of Colon would be displaced. Kathy would like to see other options considered in this area such as an urban section. She further stated that the USFWS would not recommend the bypass.
- Stream #51 was determined to be a wetland, as it has no well-defined channel. A similar conclusion was reached at Streams #63, #69 and #72. None of these areas showed a clearly defined ordinary high water mark, necessary for recognition as streams according to the Corps of Engineers.



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- Kathy recommended culvert replacements at the crossings of Stream/Wetlands #62/63 and #71/72, due to large scour holes holding water well below the bottoms of box culverts. Scott questioned whether these areas were actually caused by scour. The scour holes were 10'-15' from the end of the pipes. He stated that these areas would be looked at closer.
- Stream #76, Mary decided to leave it designated as a stream pending further investigation.
- The stream status of Jones Creek (Stream #79), which is bridged, was debated. Mary said that she would discuss this issue with her supervisor.
- Tatum Creek (Stream #94) is listed under Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act as having impaired water quality. As stated earlier in the meeting, this was due to low dissolved oxygen levels from non-point source pollution. Kathy again stated that impacts to this stream should be avoided, if possible. She also requested that the bridge adequacy be checked, and suggested spanning more than the minimal amount of stream to allow reduced impacts and better wildlife movement in the floodplain.
- Excavated Pit #116 appeared to be a good wood stork foraging habitat. The pit is open with no trees or shrubs but only emergent vegetation present, and was still holding shallow water over a large area.
- At Wetland #146 Kathy suggested beginning to narrow the median at this point.

May 23, 2002

- The first stop north of Homerville was at the borrow pits (Excavated Pit #6) next to the Homerville Airport. These pits held several colonies of the State-listed yellow pitcher plant, according to the Natural Heritage Program these plants were rescued from another site that was to be developed and replanted in the pits. The plants were growing quite vigorously on this site, with some individuals reaching two feet in height. Kathy wanted to avoid impacts to this area as much as possible, given that these plants had already been moved once to avoid destruction. She noted that the plants closest to the road would need to be relocated as the widening was on this side of the road. Daniel said he would check with the Natural Heritage Program to get information about the relocation of these pitcher plants. Pipewort (*Eriocaulon decangulare*), a common associate of pitcher plants, was also seen growing in this site.
- Kathy recommended larger culverts at Wetlands #9 and #12. The Wetland #12 was previously considered to be a stream, because of the classification on the USGS quadrangle map. However, Mary concluded that this was not a stream, merely a swale, having no well-defined channel.
- Wetland #24 contains a plant community with hooded pitcher plants (*Sarracenia minor*), sundews (probably *Drosera rotundifolia*), butterworts (*Pinguicula* sp.), pipewort, and clubmoss (*Lycopodium* sp.). Some meeting members also observed yellow pitcher plants here as well. This plant community is located close to the existing highway on the east side, possibly overlapping with the ROW. Kathy recommended protecting this plant community if possible. As the highway is currently planned to expand to the west at this location, impacts could likely be avoided or minimized. Kathy suggested notifying the contractor to avoid this area

during construction. This served as a good example of the USFWS and USACE's recommendation to minimize clearing along the ROW.

- Wetland #25 looked relatively good with regards to culverts, although there appeared to be possible scour holes further out. Kathy stated that she agreed with the alignment in this area.
- At the location of the Cowart Commissary and tobacco barn, Kathy stated that fragmenting the wetlands along the bypass route, which effectively destroys the wetland for habitat use, were not worth saving the historic structures. The interior of the tobacco barn was relatively intact, with original machinery and tools.
- At Stream #34, the area cleared for prior bridge construction was not restored to its original condition. Kathy stated that, since the original existing wetland was never restored, wetland impacts in this area are not reduced by the current upland site conditions. Daniel stated that he had called this area a forested wetland, and impacts to this area were calculated as such. Fill was evident in the cleared area, which does not currently meet wetland criteria. Kathy suggested removing the old fill and planting hardwoods as potential mitigation. However, Scott pointed out that the cleared side with the old fill is the side that the proposed widening would occur.
- On the west side of US441, an active gopher tortoise burrow was located between Wetlands #45 and #46 possibly within the existing ROW. Kathy said that gopher tortoises prefer pen areas. Kathy said the gopher tortoise may have moved closer to the road because the trees and shrubs were too dense. Kathy recommended the area be surveyed for more gopher tortoise burrows and to determine if any burrows are used by eastern indigo snakes.
- Wetland #66 may be impacted by the re-alignment of the intersection of US 441 with US 221/SR 31. Kathy suggested minimizing the impacts as much as possible to this wetland. Scott said there would not be much of an impact to this area. Kathy also suggested removing the existing asphalt from SR 31 after the intersection is realigned. Scott said the existing pavement would be needed for continue to provide access to land owners.
- Wetland #69/Stream #71 were considered to be of high quality. Kathy recommended avoiding impacts as much as possible. A triple box culvert is located here, and a layer of duckweed covered the remaining standing water. Kathy suggested an urban or reduced median to minimize impacts here, and stated that the area was close enough to town to justify the urban section. She also suggested looking at the adequacy of the existing structure and using a better design for the new structure.
- Kathy, Mary, Galen, and Daniel examined the wetlands along both alternative routes in the vicinity of Pearson (eastern bypass and western one-way pair).
- Kathy stated that she would be calculating her own mitigation credit requirements for the streams and wetlands along the project. Daniel will recalculate credits based on the re-classification of streams.
- Mary and Ron visited the remaining stream sites not yet visited to get USACE determinations. Mary determined that Streams #06, #79, and #94 (in 47,48,49) and Stream #52 (in 46, 41) are the only jurisdictional streams in the project.



MEETING MINUTES

- Daniel, Kathy, and Galen visited the West Pearson Bypass alternative wetlands. Wetland #89 was determined to be a pond with a wetland fringe (two separate features). The eastern half of Wetland #86 was clear-cut and have low quality. Kathy felt that the remainder of Wetland #86 was high quality hardwoods.
- The Wetland #82 southern boundary along U.S. 82 was determined to be too high. Daniel moved the boundary approximately 400 feet to the north. Kathy felt that Wetland #82 was high quality with mature trees.
- Wetland #81 was a mix of clear-cut, hardwood forest, and mixed pine/hardwood forest. Kathy felt that the wetland was of high enough quality to avoid in favor of the thru-town alternative.

US 441 PIM Summaries from Comment Cards at Meetings:

Fargo, 3/18/02

Officials in attendance: Patricia Oettmeier (Mayor of Fargo), Jasper Stewart, Johnny Griffis

Number of people (general public) in attendance: 53

Number of comment cards received: 24

Number of oral statements received: 0

Total number of comments received: 24

Number of these supporting the project: 19 (79.2%)

Number of these opposing the project: 2 (8.3%)

Number with no answer/ambiguous: 3 (12.5%)

Main concerns:

The most common comments dealt with safety and beautification issues for the section of U.S. 441 going through Fargo. Fifteen (65.2%) of the comments received stated concerns about the median through town. Twelve of these people requested a grassed median through town and some of these requested landscaping/tree planting of the median through town. This concern was for beautification of the town as well as for safety concerns for pedestrians crossing the roadway. Two people requested a raised median through town for safety reasons. One other commenter did not approve of median placements near the Suwannee River Bridge.

Safety was also a concern regarding traffic speed through the town of Fargo. Seven (30.4%) of the commenters asked for ways to reduce the speed of traffic through town (four specifically asked for rumble strips), and suggested a 35 mph speed limit through Fargo. One commenter asked for the S.R. 94 lanes to be moved one block south to alleviate congestion at the Railroad crossing. Another commenter asked for a school/pedestrian crossing.

One person expressed concern over losing their house and another had concerns about impacts to their business. Four commenters said that widening should occur to the GA/FL state line.

Homerville, 3/18/02

Officials in attendance: Carol Chambers (Mayor of Homerville), John Strickland (County Commissioners Chairperson)

Number of people (general public) in attendance: 18

Number of comment cards received: 6

Number of oral statements received: 3

Total number of comments received: 9

Number of these supporting the project: 8 (88.9%)

Number of these neither opposing nor supporting the project: 1 (11.1%)

Main concerns:

One person requested more information, but no specifics were given regarding what type of information. Another commenter requested further study of the Old Home Place Grocery Store and expressed concern over its potential displacement as this used to be this person's home. Another commenter stated that they utilize U.S. 441 frequently to drive back and forth to Florida, and believe that the road improvements will make the drive safer and more pleasurable. The commenter that expressed neither support nor opposition to the project overall stated concerns over loss of personal property.

Homerville, 3/19/02

Officials in attendance: Carol Chambers (Mayor of Homerville)

Number of people (general public) in attendance: 19

Number of comment cards received: 5

Number of oral statements received: 3

Number of comments received: 8

Number of these supporting the project: 7 (87.5%)

Number of these neither opposing nor supporting the project: 1 (12.5%)

Main concerns:

One commenter had concerns about the median and requested a median opening and turn lane to allow access to his mobile home development located between milemarkers 36 and 37 at Moonshadow Road. One other person suggested continuing the widening to the Georgia/Florida state line. Another commenter requested that a bike path be incorporated as part of U.S. 441 between Homerville and Fargo. One commenter suggested moving the alignment an additional road length to avoid his properties located north of Homerville at the proposed routes at Moon Shadow Road. The commenter that expressed neither support nor opposition to the project expressed concerns for loss of personal property.

Pearson, 3/19/02

Officials in attendance: Ellie Morris (Mayor of Pearson), Dorsey Thigpen (City Clerk)

Number of people (general public) in attendance: 46

Number of comment cards received: 14

Number of oral statements received: 4 (including two who also filled out comment cards)

Total number of comments received: 16

Number of these supporting the eastern bypass (but NOT western) through Pearson: 7 (43.7%)

Number of these supporting the western bypass (but NOT eastern) through Pearson: 6 (37.5%)

Number of these supporting the project overall with no bypass preference: 3 (18.8%)

Number of these opposing the project overall: 0 (0%)

Main concerns:

All commenters who favored the eastern bypass option stated that they feel the project would be good for the growth of Pearson. All commenters supporting the western bypass option stated that this is the more cost effective route. Some of these people also stated that they were concerned with impacts to their private property if the eastern bypass were chosen. The supporters of the project overall who had no preference for either bypass, stated that they feel the road improvements will be good for the economic development of Pearson.



MEETING MINUTES

DATE: 10:00 am January 14, 2002

ET Project No.: 52186

SUBJECT: FHWA Meeting
EDS-441(41)(46)(47)(48)(49)

Location: KCA

Attendees:

Jennifer Giersch	FHWA	404.562.3653
Wayne Mote	GDOT -OCD	404.656.5383
Andy Aiello	GDOT- OEL	404.699.4432
Chauncey Elston	GDOT-OEL	404.699.4435
Bryan Davis	Terracon	770.623.0755
Brody Frederickson	Terracon	770.623.0755
Scott Gero	Earth Tech	770.990.1511
Neil Davis	Earth Tech	770.990.1500
Laura Dawood	KCA	404.607.1676
Dale Youngkin	KCA	404.607.1676

Scott Gero started the meeting with introductions and a background summary of the project, specifically decisions so far in regard to GEPA and NEPA documentation, for Jennifer. Specific issues discussed were:

EDS-441(47)-State Line to Fargo

Due to the fact that the federal agencies will not accept the state line as a logical termini and since there are no traffic generators south of Fargo without going 20± miles into Florida, Fargo would be a logical terminus. GDOT needs to direct where the Logical Termini needs to be. Jennifer confirmed that the Corps has authority over logical termini through their permitting process and their need to comply with NEPA for federal actions. KCA is waiting to hear back from the S. GA Regional Development Center to determine if there are proposed plans south of Fargo.

Logical Termini Fargo

The three options in Fargo are CR 8 at the north end of Fargo, SR 94 in Fargo and SR 94 south of Fargo. Scott stated that traffic on US 441 changed 117% at the US 441/SR 94 intersection (south of Fargo) and traffic changed 17% on US 441, north of the US 441/SR 94 (in Fargo). Jennifer stated that traffic should support logical termini. SR 94 south of Fargo is adjacent to SR 177, the entrance to the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge. Based on traffic, Jennifer thought it made more sense to use SR 94 south of Fargo as termini instead of the state line.

Fargo Options

Due to the presence of historic properties on existing GDOT right-of-way in Fargo, a 5-lane typical section would not fit and avoid history. Scott will look at other options, such as a one-way pair through town, and bypass options that would avoid history.

Navigable Waters (Suwannee R.)

Laura asked how determinations are made regarding exemptions from Section 10 permit, stating that the Corps has confirmed that the Suwannee River is navigable in the project area from the mouth of the Suwannee R. to the Okefenokee Swamp (GDOT had provided FHWA documentation about exemptions). Andy explained that exemptions are only for waterways that are not carrying interstate commerce, and stated that a letter requesting exemptions must be written to FWHA (letter should state the proposed waterway will be at least as, or more, navigable than before the project). KCA would send carbon copies of the request letter to the Corps and Coast Guard. Chauncey will provide KCA with the information for the exemption letter.

PIM/Public input/Bypass options

Scott asked Jennifer about meeting with town officials before the PIM to discuss bypass options and asked how much weight public desires/opinions have in the process. Jennifer stated that public involvement is very important, and that the press release as well as posting signs would be a good idea for PIM. However, Jennifer said not much weight is given to public opinion when historic resources and Section 4(f) of US DOT code are involved. Bryan Davis concurred, and explained that a historic resource may be of national significance, so may outweigh local or regional desires. The PIM and public involvement will include educating the locals about the process. The meeting with the locals is targeted for early February.

Pearson Options

Scott discussed how one-way pairs would not be feasible due to the narrow city streets and the history. He discussed how a local had mentioned that the 5-lane section north of Pearson had displaced many residences when it was built in the late 1980s, and that it would be a good idea to utilize as much of the existing 5-lane as possible. Scott developed the idea of a jog in US 441 that would be to the southwest of Pearson. Earth Tech will prepare displays of the various concepts for Wayne to look at and pass on to other DOT offices.

4(f) Issues

The park in Fargo is to be a state park, not a visitor center, according to a news article that was circulated at the meeting. According to the AJC (Jan. 13, 2002), the land was deeded to the state in Dec. 2001.

Wayne asked about the jurisdiction for the sidewalk park on the west side of Pearson. Jennifer offered to look into this, but asked to first be informed as to the impacts to the park. Chauncey will also look into the matter and provide the Earth Tech team with guidance on linear parks. KCA will find out who owns this land.

MEETING MINUTES

If a 4f evaluation is necessary, secondary and cumulative impacts would be elements to include.

It was recommended to anticipate a lot of time for 4(f) reviews (6 months).

Other

Jennifer suggested local native American tribes be included in early coordination, and also asked to be cc'd on all early coordination (i.e. a list of contacts and the basic letter). She suggested that the US FWS would likely be interested in the project due to its proximity to the Okefenokee Swamp and suggested that it may be a cooperating agency.

It was stated that the 4(f) document not be submitted without the Draft Environmental Document.

Jennifer also asked to see a discussion of US 441/SR 520 (Pearson) tie-in to highway traffic in the Need and Purpose statement.

Laura will provide Jennifer with a copy of the GEPA document for EDS-84(20) in Homerville.

Jennifer would like to be kept apprised of future meetings.

A tentative schedule was arranged as:

Meetings with local officials prior to PIM: Beginning of February

PIM: Early to mid-March

PAR: mid-April

DATE: 9:00 am June 5, 2002

ET Project No.: 52186

SUBJECT: **Monthly Status Meeting #6**
Grip Program – US 441 from the SR 94/SR 177 to Pearson, GA
EDS-441(47), Clinch County P.I. No. 422420
EDS-441(48), Clinch County P.I. No. 422400
EDS-441(49), Clinch County P.I. No. 422410
EDS-441(46), Clinch County P.I. No. 422390
EDS-441(41), Atkinson & Clinch Counties P.I. No. 422380
BRF-023-1(12), Atkinson County P.I. No. 421440

Location: GDOT – Office of Environment Location

Attendees: Scott Gero, Earth Tech
Cindy Lee, Earth Tech
Neil Davis, Earth Tech
Laura Dawood, KCA
Lori Kennedy, KCA
Dale Youngkin, KCA
Jonathon DeNike, KCA
Bryan Davis, Terracon
Chauncey Elston, GDOT OEL Liaison
Jerry Hobbs, GDOT – OEL
Susan Knudson, GDOT – OEL
Lisa Westberry, GDOT - OEL
Jim Pomfret, GDOT – OEL
Wayne Mote, GDOT – OCD Liason
Ben Buchan, GDOT - OCD

- Scott Gero started the meeting by discussing the events of the PAR meetings on 22-23 May.
- The first topic of discussion was the Colon bypass. Scott told meeting members that Kathy Chapman, USFWS, did not like the idea of a bypass in this area due to potential wetland impacts, and because she did not think that the historic resource, the Forrest Hotel, was worth saving. Mary Moffat, US ACOE, however did not seem opposed to a bypass in the Colon area. Meeting members from GDOT recommended that we wait until we receive written comments from Mary and Kathy before we make assumptions on their opinions.
- Jerry Hobbs questioned the need for a bypass for Colon to save four houses and spend \$400,000 more than for widening existing US 441 in this location. Jerry also pointed out that costs of mitigation, etc. needs to be factored into the cost of the bypass as well as right-of-way, relocation, and new pavement costs. Scott reiterated that although only four residences are involved, this represents a substantial portion of the local community (with only 15 residences total), and he also discussed the issue of wetland quality (lower along the bypass route than along the existing highway) and mitigation credits. Susan Knudsen (GDOT) stated that mitigation for wetlands costs a minimum of \$1400 per credit. The wetlands in this area are cypress heads, and we do not yet have delineations or

MEETING MINUTES

total area for these wetlands. Jerry stated that, as long as Mary Moffat was not opposed, Scott should continue with the bypass option. He also stated that if future need warrants going back to original location, it could be done then.

- Scott said that the bypass in the vicinity of the Cowart Commissary and associated tobacco barn will remain in place until we know that the commissary has been moved across the road next to the barn and SHPPO has agreed to declassify it's historic status. Once the building has been moved, the only area of concern for history and archeology will be the footprint of the building, according to Bryan Davis (Terracon) and Jim Pomfret (GDOT).
- Scott explained that Mary Moffat (US ACOE) had reclassified many streams either as wetlands or non-jurisdictional. There are now only four recognized jurisdictional streams left along the entire project corridor. It was decided that these will not be renumbered in any of the reports to avoid confusion, and will instead be called non-jurisdictional.
- The pathway for written comments from the PAR meeting will be from Kathy Chapman to Mary Moffat, then to GDOT and the consultants. The Earth Tech team will coordinate responses with GDOT. Scott asked whom responses should be directed to. Jerry said responses should be to the ACOE comments, as these will incorporate USFWS comments.
- The PAR report is to be modified, with supplements, to include the new alignment & modifications presented at the PAR meeting (i.e. Colon bypass and Grandpa's house), and the Ecology Reports are going to be updated to incorporate the reclassification of streams and the new alignment changes. Susan stated that a PAR summary, including all comments and responses is to be included in the NEPA document. She suggested contacting Rich Williams to obtain a copy of a NEPA document that includes a PAR for an example.
- GDOT meeting members stated that they have never seen a PAR cover sheet that had been signed, even though they always include a signature page. GDOT said to ignore the signature sheet.
- Scott discussed mitigation for the entire GRIP corridor. He repeated Kathy's preference that the mitigation would be in one location rather than in several small locations, considering the amount of wetland impacts caused by this project. The PAR participants talked about restoration of the Suwannee River floodplain as the one large mitigation site. This would aid in the general plan of a Greenways Trail, which is being discussed and developed. The Greenways Trail would be a water ways trail which begins at Cumberland Island, runs up the St. Mary's River, across the Okefenokee Swamp, down the Suwannee River and end in the Gulf of Mexico. The Georgia DNR as well as the Mayor of Fargo and others are pursuing the creation of this idea. There are some private landowners along the Suwannee between the swamp and US 441 who are holding out for a premium price on their river front property. Jack Weeks of the DNR said that DNR was not willing to pay that premium price. There are some landowners that are willing to sell or donate along the river. It was suggested that part of the mitigation of US 441 could be achieved in restoring some of the wetlands along the river in conjunction with this Greenways Trail project. It was determined that there needed to be some coordination and research into this. Earth Tech is not

MEETING MINUTES

- In terms of operations and functionality, meeting members agreed that the eastern bypass is safer and more functional than the one-way pair. However, the 4-lane with a 20' raised median western bypass eliminates this concern.
- Scott mentioned that the existing 5-lane section of US 441 north of US 82 would only need to be a 2-lane roadway and the abandoned pavement could be utilized as street parking and pedestrian walkways for stores, which lost most of their business when this section was widened.
- Scott and Jerry discussed the side road improvements to be done in conjunction with the western bypass designs.
- The western bypass route allows for a shorter business route through Pearson, and gives more visibility to local businesses such as Hardee's and gas stations. The eastern bypass takes traffic so far out of town that travelers may not have any idea of what's available in Pearson. Also, the business route is much longer with the eastern bypass alignment.
- Scott and Lori were concerned about the lack of participation at the PIM. Many townspeople and business owners did not attend the meeting, even though they had seen the announcements. Meeting members wondered how many more meetings would be necessary to get everyone's input in Pearson. It was suggested and agreed that other than going door to door and meeting one on one with every citizen in town, there would be no way to get a true feel for what the towns people wanted and therefore the best attempt has already been made to achieve the preference of the citizens.
- Considering all of the latest information, it appears that opinions in Pearson are still split 50/50 with regards to the alternatives.
- With regards to costs, either of the western in-town alignments would be significantly less expensive than the eastern bypass.
- Jerry, Ben and Wayne came out in favor of the western bypass with two-way traffic and 4-5 lanes (depending on median design). They described this alignment as "the path of least resistance" that still meets the Need and Purpose of the project. There's no certainty of development on the eastern bypass alignment, as the Mayor has not yet given any specific prospects beyond Cherokee Industries. Dale Youngkin stated that he had talked with the plant manager at Cherokee, who said they weren't planning on a large expansion in the near future, only utilizing the existing adjacent ball field, which was to be moved elsewhere in the next year. Given the lack of known development potential, plus the greater amount of wetland impacts, and the lack of sufficient traffic volume to warrant the eastern bypass, GDOT favors the two-way western bypass. Scott stated that Earth Tech would incorporate and progress the 4-lane with a 20' raised grassed median in-town west by-pass in Pearson into the Concept Report.
- Jerry and Scott discussed particulars of the highway design with regards to ROW width, median design and widths, side roads, and access. Scott said that he will make modifications to the alignment as necessary.
- Laura explained that the responses to the PIM comments were all put together and were in final review. She said GDOT should receive them soon. Wayne Mote said to send them to OEL for their review.

MEETING MINUTES

- Susan Knudson suggested that we buy an ad in the paper to try and publicize the Public Hearing meeting more, since the attendance at the PIM was not as high as we would have liked. In addition, Susan suggested that if access is a problem in Pearson (ie. as with the wheelchair bound elderly individuals), we may want to suggest either a new location for the PH, perhaps closer to the historic grid of the city or see if there would be any vehicles to bring people back and forth to the PH.
- The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 a.m.

**EDS-441 (49)
Section 23.59 - 32.11 Clinch County**

	1995	1996	1997
Total Accidents	7	6	2
Accident Rate	109	93	30
Total Injuires	14	8	1
Injury Rate	218	124	15
Total Fatalities	0	0	0
Fatality Rate	0	0	0

Rates are per 100 Million Vehicle Miles

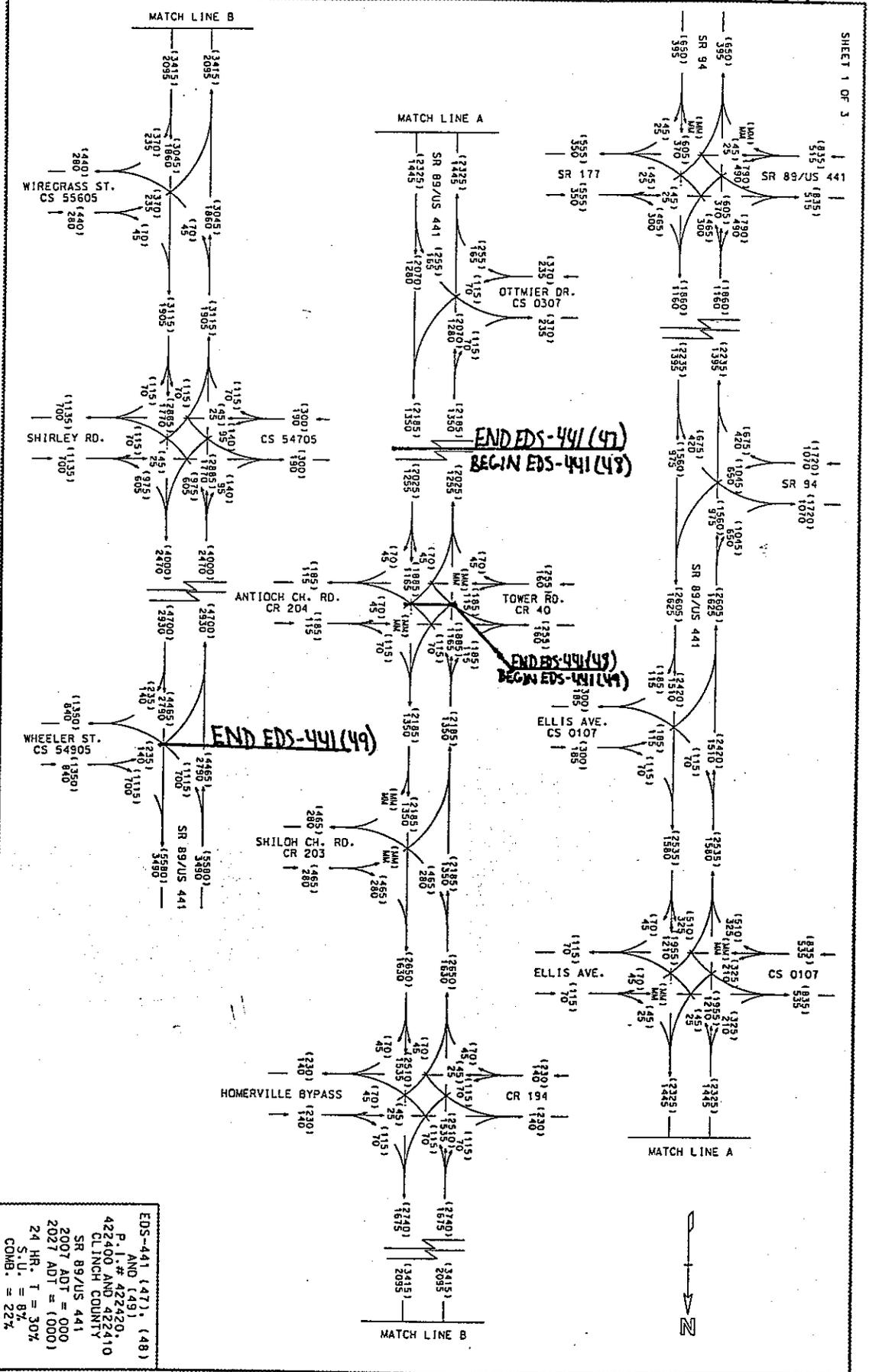
Statewide Data

	1995	1996	1997	1998
Accident Rate	140	147	141	127
Injury Rate	100	96	94	83
Fatality Rate	2.67	2.68	2.3	2.65

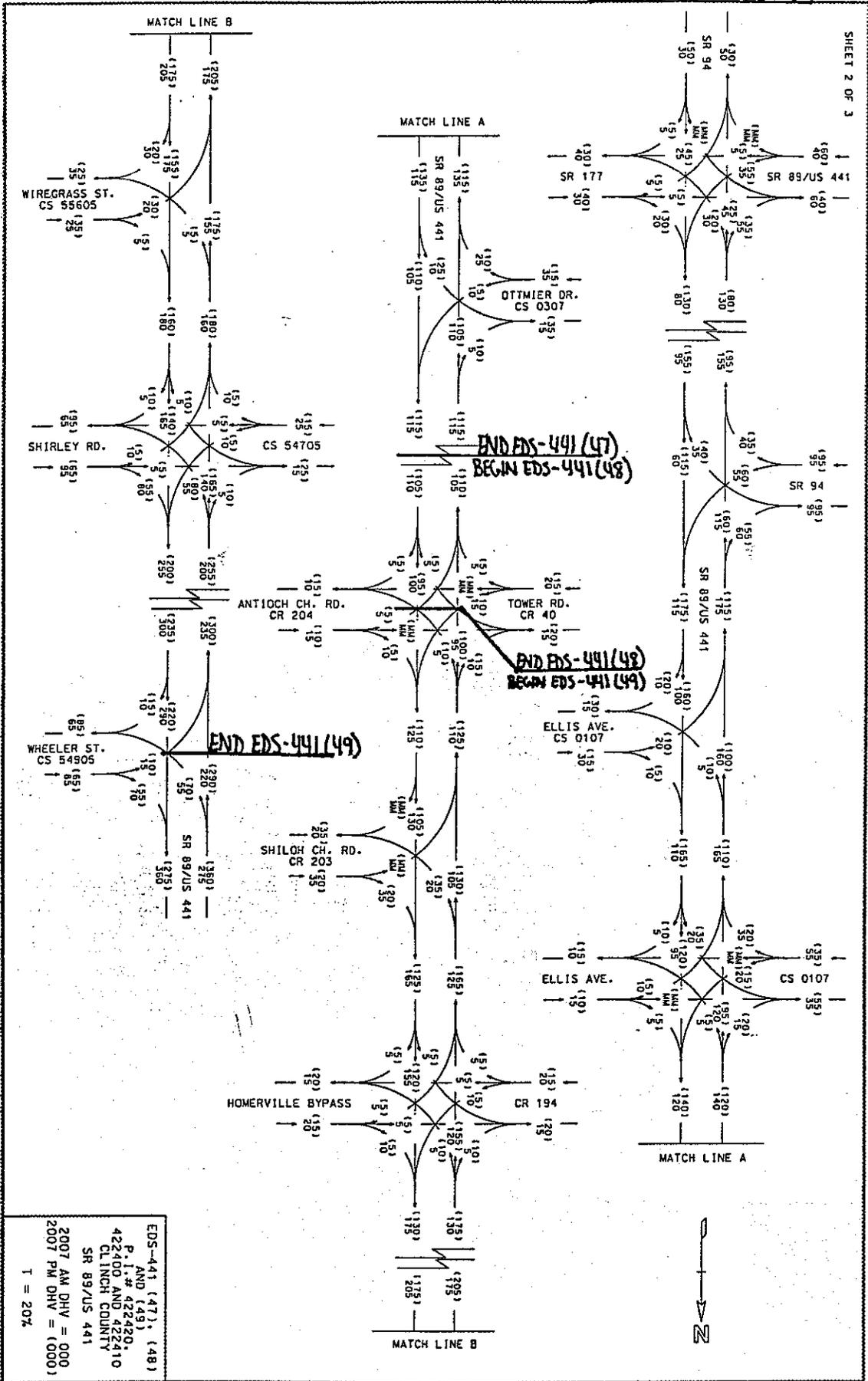
Rates are per 100 Million Vehicle Miles

BEGIN EDS-441(47)

SHEET 1 OF 3



EDS-441 (47), (48)
 AND (49)
 P. I. # 422420,
 422400 AND 422410
 CLINCH COUNTY
 SR 89/US 441
 2007 ADT = 000
 2027 ADT = (000)
 24 HR. T = 30%
 S.U. = 8%
 COMB. = 22%



EDS-441 (47), (48)
 AND (49)
 P.I.# 422420,
 422400 AND 422410
 CLINCH COUNTY
 SR 89/US 441
 2007 AM DHV = 000
 2007 PM DHV = (000)
 T = 20%

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE OF GEORGIA
OFFICE OF CONSULTANT DESIGN

PROJECT CONCEPT REPORT

Project Number: EDS-441(49)
County: CLINCH
P.I. Number: 422410

Federal Route Number: 441
State Route Number: 89



Recommendation for approval:

DATE 8-22-02

Wayne S. Sufate Jr
Project Manager

DATE 8-22-02

James B. Bell
State Consultant Design Engineer

The concept as presented herein and submitted for approval is consistent with that which is included in the State Transportation Improvement Program (STIP).

8/27/02
DATE

Martha F. Roman
State Transportation Planning Administrator

DATE

Office of Financial Management Administrator

DATE

State Environmental / Location Engineer

DATE

State Traffic Safety and Design Engineer

DATE

District Engineer

DATE

Project Review Engineer

DATE

State Bridge & Structural Design Engineer

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE OF GEORGIA
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DATE _____

Office of Financial Management Administrator

DATE _____

State Environmental / Location Engineer

DATE _____

State Traffic Safety and Design Engineer

DATE 9-3-02

D. O. C.
District Engineer

DATE _____

Project Review Engineer

DATE _____

State Bridge & Structural Design Engineer

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE OF GEORGIA
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Office of Financial Management Administrator

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State Environmental / Location Engineer

DATE _____

State Traffic Safety and Design Engineer

DATE _____

District Engineer

DATE 9/3/02

David J. Mackay *DEW*
Project Review Engineer

DATE _____

State Bridge & Structural Design Engineer

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
STATE OF GEORGIA
OFFICE OF CONSULTANT DESIGN

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District Engineer

DATE _____

Project Review Engineer

DATE 9/02/02

Paul V. Tullis Jr
State Bridge & Structural Design Engineer