

## Meeting Minutes

Date	September 15, 2022	Meeting Date	August 2, 2022
Project Name	International Drive (I-Drive) Pedestrian Bridge Overpass Intersection Analysis and Overpass Conceptual Design Study	Project #:	
Subject	Project Advisory Group (PAG) Meeting #1		
Participants	See Below		
Location	Embassy Suites 8250 Jamaican Court Orlando, FL 32819	Prepared By	Rick Baldocchi, P.E. Christine Dellert
Distribution	Meeting Participants		

- Introduction of Participants**

Blanche Hardy, Orange County	Georgette LeMieux, Oerther Foods
Rick Baldocchi, AVCON, Inc.	Sgt. Gerald (David) McDaniels, OCSO
Michael Chatham, HHCP	Chris Mueller, Hilton Orlando
Pam Allard, Walgreens	Renzo Nastasi, Orange County
Krista Barber, OCCC	Carmen Petersen, Universal
Marcos Bastian, Orange County	Ian Phyers, Orange County
Loreen Bobo, FDOT-District 5	Marc Reicher, I-Drive CRA
Allan Bradley, Huber Group, LLC	Jason Sorensen, Orange County
Brian Brink, OCFR	John Stein, Starflyer Gallery
Fernando Ching, Rosen Hotels & Resorts	Tim Swan, Westwood Property Association
Kristen Darby, Visit Orlando	Craig Swygert, Clear Channel Outdoor
Megan Dowdy, Dowdy Realty	Maria Triscari, I-Drive Resort Area COC
RJ Dowdy, Dowdy Realty	Michael Wajda, OCFR
Cpl. Kyle Gabrus, OCSO	Josh Wallack, Mango's Tropical Café
Anthony Hernandez, AMCOR Media	Cpt. Don Woods, OCSO
Jesslyn Hernandez, Coldwell Banker Realty	Scott Workman, OCFR Fire Marshal
Stacy Huber, International Square, Inc.	

The purpose of this meeting was to introduce key area stakeholders, provide a general overview of the International Drive Pedestrian Overpass Intersection Analysis and Overpass Conceptual Design Study, and solicit initial comments from participants. A summary of the discussion is below.

Blanche Hardy introduced the project and purpose of the meeting and shared a PowerPoint presentation with information on the project overview, goals, work to date, and initial questions and comments from participants. Items discussed included:

1. PAG
  - a. The PAG consists of key study partners who will periodically meet (4-5 times) to provide strategic guidance and support to ensure the study meets its objectives.
2. Background on the Pedestrian Overpass Intersection Analysis
  - a. Several district goals already have been identified for future development of the I-Drive corridor. They include (1) connected — to improve walkability and provide ample multimodal options; (2) complete — to create a complete atmosphere with a variety of uses; (3) authentic — to develop and reinforce community identity and provide civic gathering spaces; (4) prosperous — to be an economic generator for the region and Orange County; and (5) sustainable — to promote efficient use of natural resources and incorporate green building practices, making sure to incorporate local assets.
  - b. Connected is the priority goal for the project.
3. Challenges
  - a. There are challenges mainly related to the connected goal of this project. This area currently has a 45 out of 100 walkability score. Bicycle lanes recently were added to part of Sand Lake Road, west of where the bridge would be. The County is installing the first transit lanes on International Drive south of where the bridge would be.
  - b. Other challenges are related to make this a complete district by connecting north, south, east, and west safely.
4. General Overview of the Project
  - a. The County already has met with the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) to provide a general overview of the project. FDOT would need to approve eliminating the existing pedestrian walkways on the street.
  - b. The project will consider design and visibility and visualization of the existing buildings and their businesses in this study.
  - c. There are plans currently underway to convert the intersection of Sand Lake Road and Interstate-4, directly west of the project, to a diverging diamond configuration to increase traffic flow and reduce left-hand turns and crashes in the area. The project is going out for bid in 2023 and hopefully will be completed in 2025.
  - d. The pedestrian bridge project is located at the intersection of Sand Lake Road and International Drive. This is the key northern entry point for cars coming from Interstate-4 and entering the Convention Center District. The improved traffic flow and reduced cross traffic should reduce backups and decrease congestion.
  - e. A list of project challenges includes utilities, right-of-way impacts, access impacts, visibility impacts, traffic speed impacts, ADA accessibility, fire/rescue access and parking, pedestrian use, and security. Several of the items will be addressed during upcoming Project Advisory Group meetings to inform the design of the project.
  - f. The study area is the intersection of International Drive and Sand Lake Road with businesses on the intersection that include McDonalds, Perkins/Skyplex, Walgreens, International Plaza/Checkers. This is an eight-lane to eight-lane roadway on Sand Lake Road 120 feet across. International Drive is six lanes wide north of Sand Lake Road and seven lanes wide south of Sand Lake Road — over 100 feet for a pedestrian to cross.

- g. There are 22,500 average annual daily traffic (AADT) counts on International Drive; 28,000 AADT on Sand Lake Road to the west and 36,500 AADT on Sand Lake to the east. Pedestrian activity is limited by the existing conditions.
  - h. A diagram showed the walkshed of 5-, 10-, and 15-minutes from the intersection. This bridge will facilitate the customers of businesses beyond the intersection, impacting pedestrians traveling to many of the restaurants and other businesses in the larger walkshed.
5. Project Goals
- a. The goals of this project include providing pedestrians a safe crossing at the intersection; be iconic — even “Instagrammable” — as a gateway to the district; improve the vehicular capacity and better manage those vehicles; minimize the impacts on the adjacent properties; minimize relocating existing utilities; enhance the pedestrian nature of the district and match work already done or underway in the district; provide ADA accessibility; make a positive and fun experience for pedestrians; and utilize lighting to enhance the experience and safety.
6. Safety
- a. The County showed a series of photos of people on bicycles or foot trying to navigate the intersection under dangerous conditions when they have the right of way. All photos were taken within an hour on July 27, 2022.
  - b. In Florida, there are eight fatalities and 49 injuries per day on the roads. In 2021, there were 444 pedestrian deaths — a 31% increase from 2020.
  - c. If you are 60 or older, your chances go up of being a fatality in a vehicle conflict.
  - d. Orange County will work with FDOT on reducing speed in the intersection and immediate area. The department has come up with a new target speed criteria that will be incorporated into this project, which is the highest speed at which a vehicle should operate on a thoroughfare in a specific context, consistent with the level of activity around it.
7. Iconic Gateway
- a. The County showed a series of examples of recognizable structures from around the world that create a symbol that says “you’re in a special place. Something significant is happening here.” This area will be a transition from a high-speed highway to a walkable entertainment district.
  - b. One example showed a circular pedestrian bridge in Europe with ramps, elevators, and stairways. Responses from groups like this and other stakeholders and data will inform this bridge’s unique design.
8. Questions and Discussion
- a. The County shared a list of questions with participants that included:
    - i. Maintain crosswalk surface crossing or create barrier to on grade crossing?
    - ii. Provide a roof for sun/rain protection?
    - iii. Options for vertical circulation (i.e., combination of stairs, elevators, escalators, or ramps)?
    - iv. Provide space for activities and vendors on the bridge?
    - v. Can the bridge facilitate connection into venues on the corners?
    - vi. Can the bridge entry points be moved away from the corner?
    - vii. Is there a preference to provide ramps?

- viii. Can vertical circulation include elevators?
  - ix. Can audio and visual components be included on the bridge?
  - x. Is it desirable to include a photovoltaic component to the bridge?
  - xi. Will there be security required on the bridge? Cameras?
  - xii. Will barriers be required at the bridge perimeter?
  - xiii. Will FDOT limit lighting elements on the bridge?
- b. **RJ Dowdy:** Project needs to eliminate surface crosswalks to direct pedestrian traffic to bridge. Roof is not necessary but could use solar panels for some shade or shelter. Escalators and elevators in all four corners are critical; ramps would be ideal, but space is limited. Should also consider needs for future transit projects when discussing the project with the corner property owners.
- c. **Orange County Sheriff's Office:** Clarifies that there have been four bicycle or pedestrian injuries at the project intersection during the past 12 years.
- d. **Megan Dowdy:** Bridge does not need vendors, activities, or charging stations. It should be more functional.
- e. **Josh Wallack:** Need to block off and heavily landscape the project area at grade to direct all pedestrian traffic to the bridge. Functional is important, but people expect to see an iconic gateway to reflect existing and future developments in the district.
- f. **Marc Reicher:** What is the ADA requirement for the bridge?
  - i. If the project uses elevators, the County already has spoken with Orange County Sheriff's Office and Fire Rescue to understand their needs. But also have to consider the project footprint. Will provide different options at the next meeting but will meet all ADA requirements.
- g. **RJ Dowdy:** Because the intersection is at different elevations on various sides, see differences in how customers behave and visit the properties based upon steps. Elevators or escalators would help increase safety.
  - i. Code requires two means of egress when people are coming off elevated platforms or bridges.
- h. **Chris Mueller:** The crosswalk was left open on the Hyatt bridge project, which eventually needed to be barricaded so that guests would use the bridge.
- i. **Allan Bradley:** Asks if there are pedestrian traffic counts for project area.
  - i. Still at the data collection phase but will have them.
- j. **Cpt. Don Woods:** OCSO does not favor an enclosed bridge for security reasons. Prefers no seating. Would want to include cameras.
- k. **Brian Brink:** Would like to know if this project will overlap with the diamond divergent project on Interstate-4 at Sand Lake and the I-4 Express lanes being built toward Champion's Gate.
  - i. It should not overlap; anticipate bringing this project before the Board of County Commissioners next spring for approval of the study. Probably at least five years out from construction.
  - ii. County agreed to undertake feasibility study but moving forward will require participation of property owners to facilitate the right-of-way for this project.

- l. **Fernando Ching:** Would like to know if there is a count for scooters or bicyclists.
    - i. These are included in the pedestrian counts but could look at data via video.
  - m. **Loreen Bobo:** Will need to direct people only toward the bridge, not a surface crosswalk option. FDOT does have some design requirements at the top of the bridge. Consider providing shade on bridge due to environmental conditions. Will be able to provide further details on lighting requirements.
  - n. **Craig Swygert:** Where are we at from a funding model and what is the participation of the corner property owners?
    - i. At the feasibility study phase working with FDOT to place a pedestrian bridge within primarily FDOT right-of-way. The next phase is going to the Board of County Commissioners. The next phase would be design, but we need to ensure all the property owners agree about the impacts to the four quadrants. The County has applied for a federal grant to cover a portion of the cost.
  - o. **Josh Wallack:** We are committed to making sure that our corner participates in every way possible.
  - p. **Georgette LeMieux:** We are fully committed to the project, as well. Need to consider how signage and parking capacity on that corner will be impacted.
9. Next Meeting Date
- a. Will share and provide more details on way overpass could be designed to look at the next meeting.
  - b. More information on the project also can be found at:  
[https://www.orangecountyfl.net/TrafficTransportation/TransportationProjects/InternationalDrivePedestrianOverpass.aspx#.YvWs\\_-zMLDI](https://www.orangecountyfl.net/TrafficTransportation/TransportationProjects/InternationalDrivePedestrianOverpass.aspx#.YvWs_-zMLDI)