

Florida Department of Transportation Presentation

February 5, 2019 LMKA Meeting

FDOT Roadway Improvements along SR5/U.S. 1/Overseas Highway from MM74 to MM80

FDOT made a presentation at the LMKA meeting February 5, 2019. They passed out a copy of the presentation to the members present. The complete presentation with photos, diagrams and maps can be found on the LMKA website. ([click here](#))

1. The presentation showed two areas of concern – the area at Sea Oats Beach and the part of the Fill at about MM77.5 where so many people crowded the shoreline pre-IRMA, especially on weekends.
 - Photos demonstrated the current condition of the two areas and the damage that needs to be repaired followed by the restoration plans and the project schedule.
 - At Sea Oats Beach there is damage to the articulating blocks intended to protect the highway during high tides and storms. Even before the storm, the blocks were not holding. In addition, the section of highway that was damaged has temporary pavement that must be replaced with a more permanent fix.
 - At the Fills there is major embankment washouts very near the bike path that runs parallel and just feet from the Overseas Highway.
 - Proposed design detail to improve both areas was presented. The goal is to get both areas back to the condition they were prior to Irma with hopefully a design that will be an improvement.
 - The project schedule for these two restoration projects indicated the plans will be completed by the end of December 2019 with contracts let by May 2020 and construction begun in September 2020 and completed in approximately 300 days. The estimated construction cost for both projects is \$4,816,918.
2. The presentation then went on to discuss the roadway **Base Vulnerability Study** for state roads throughout the county. While this study is in a very initial phase, they have estimated that the highway on Lower Matecumbe needs to be elevated 1 foot. As the study continues with better surveying, it is anticipated that the road will need to be elevated even more than this initial study indicates.
3. The last part of the presentation was a new project to raise the roadway along U.S. One from approximately MM74 to MM75 at Sea Oats Beach. The schedule for raising the highway shows that plans for this project will not be completed until October 2025 and construction started April 2026... all estimates.

During the presentation, FDOT representations clarified issues and answered questions.

Articulating blocks –The existing blocks have been in place over 10 years and 60% were already damaged before the storm. The new design illustrated in the presentation will hopefully correct the original design shortcomings.

Why so long to fix this problem? Permitting is difficult. The highway is so close to the ocean. The area is impacted by Sea Level Rise. Need review and permits from Army Corps and South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD). Government shutdown impacts schedule.

Vulnerability study – GIS system identified all roadways in the FDOT district that are or will be out of compliance in the future – a 7-8-month effort. It is thought that when surveying is completed, the highway will need to be elevated about 3’ considering high tide and the sea level rise. Eventual increase in elevation of road has not yet been scoped. How much the Sea Level has already increased has been documented by NOAA in Key West and SFWMD in the Upper Keys. Using that data, the future increase in sea level is projected out to about 2040 to determine how high U.S. One needs to be elevated.

Impact of turtle nesting at Sea Oats Beach... FDOT does not get involved with beach nourishment so this is an issue being addressed by Army Corp and the Village. FDOT does address lighting issues at turtle nesting areas.

Discussion followed regarding **the sand pile** across the highway from Sea Oats Beach. LMKA members asked if FDOT could put in a temporary bike path around the sand pile as it covers the bike path that many residents had used regularly. FDOT’s answer – they will work with the Village on getting this resolved.

Is **US One a State or Federal** highway? Both – It is State Road 5 and U.S. Highway 1.

Traffic issues during repairs: During repairs to the highway itself in 2020 – 2021 the work on the right of way will not interfere with traffic. Work on the roadway (new paving) will necessitate a lane closure at night.

The highway at **Sea Oats Beach is of the highest priority** for FDOT of any section of U.S. One in the Keys because it is the lowest elevation anywhere.

Are **signs such as real estate** “for sale” signs allowed in the right of way. No. Contact the Right of Way encroachment office.

Controlling parking on the Fills. FDOT will be working with the Village and FDEP (Heritage Trail) on parking issues. The Village is creating a plan which will be presented to FDOT’s Right of Way department. FDOT would be happy to place no parking signs if requested as it is dangerous to have vehicles parked too close to the shoulder of the highway.

Turn lanes – it was discussed that turn lanes or deceleration lanes are needed northbound at Iroquois Dr/Sunset Dr and at the boat ramp on the fills. (This information has been provided to Traffic Operations Department of FDOT)

Areas between the highway and the bike path that were damaged by/after the storm... FDOT is responsible and if specific areas are identified FDOT can repair them.

Access to and from U.S. One - numerous issues:

Too many vehicles drive through at the most convenient spot for them to get to and from properties on the bay side of the island making a mess of the right of way. FDOT could not come up with a specific solution other than to use landscaping to deter them.

Creating paved drives (curb cuts) –by getting a permit from FDOT, paved access can be created and hopeful that will encourage people to use paved areas.

Numerous areas where there is unpaved access, the drop off is significant. Impacted owners can fill the area – permit required.

The **Heritage Trail, part of FDEP state park system**, (our bike path) is responsible for maintenance of the bike path with some help from FDOT.

Road signs that have been gone since the hurricane.... FDOT is currently in the process of replacing them.

Bridges There are 48 bridges in the Keys on U.S. One.

- 40 in good or excellent condition
- 5 in fair condition
- 3 in poor condition

The bridges are 39 years old and have a life expectancy of 50 years. The life expectancy can be extended with proper maintenance. It was not known if any of the bridges in fair or poor condition are in Islamorada.

Toll on U.S. One. It is possible but there is a process to follow. FDOT will send a brochure explaining how.

Passing in turning lane: LMKA member Glenn Taylor suggested using rumble strips or speed bumps periodically in the turning lane to help stop people from using the turning lane as a passing lane. FDOT representatives did not think that approach had ever been used anywhere and would look into that idea.

Contact information:

Right-of-way Department 305-470-5473

Casals, Alejandro Alejandro.Casals@dot.state.fl.us

Bridge 305-470-5370

Orozco, Pablo J. Pablo.Orozco@dot.state.fl.us

Maintenance: Renato Marrero

renato.marrero@dot.state.fl.us

Permits: Ali Al-Said

ali.al-said@dot.state.fl.us

Community Outreach Specialist: Rodolfo Roman

O:305-470-5477

C:786-519-7160

Rodolfo.Roman@dot.state.fl.us