



BUILDING A BETTER I-4

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Interim Improvements to I-4 and County Road (C.R.) 532 in Osceola County (ChampionsGate) Public Hearing

Video Presentation Script

Good evening and welcome. For the record, this public hearing is being conducted by the Florida Department of Transportation and Osceola County. It is being held virtually and at the Omni Orlando Resort at ChampionsGate in the Osceola County Conference Center at 5:30 p.m. on September 16, 2020. The public hearing is for improvements to Interstate 4 and County Road 532 near ChampionsGate in Osceola County. The Financial Project Numbers are 444187-1, 444329-1 and 443958-1.

Please note, all written and verbal public comments and questions made during the hearing tonight will become part of the hearing record. The questions and comments will be responded to following the hearing within a timely manner. In the meantime, should you have general questions about the project, Frequently Asked Questions will be shown on screen at the end of the presentation and have also been posted on the project website at I4Beyond.com/ChampionsGate.

This public hearing is conducted in accordance with

Chapter 23, United States Code 128

Title 40, Code of Federal Regulations, Parts 1-5-0-0 through 1-5-0-8

Section 339.155, Florida Statutes

And pursuant to Florida Statute 355.199, the Florida Department of Transportation is conducting this public hearing concerning access management changes to County Road 532. This hearing is being held to afford persons the opportunity to express their views relative to the proposed improvements.

This hearing is being held in accordance with Title VI (6) of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and Title VIII (8) of the Civil Rights Act of 1968 as amended.

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability or family status.

Persons wishing to express their concerns relative to FDOT compliance with Title VI (6) may do so by contacting Jennifer Smith, FDOT District Five Title Six Coordinator, at the mailing address 719 South Woodland Boulevard, DeLand, FL 32720-6834, or by phone at 386-943-5367, or via email at Jennifer.Smith2@dot.state.fl.us.

Or by contacting Jacqueline Paramore, State Title Six Coordinator, at the mailing address 605 Suwannee Street, Mail Station 65, Tallahassee, FL 32399-0450, or by phone at 850-414-4753, or via email at Jacqueline.Paramore@dot.state.fl.us.

Forms are available for you in English, Spanish and Haitian Creole with both the local and state Title 6 information.

All inquiries or complaints will be handled according to FDOT procedure in a prompt and courteous manner.

FDOT staff and design team members are here to discuss your concerns and answer your questions. All graphics presented during this presentation are available to view or download at I4Beyond.com/ChampionsGate.

Please feel free to discuss any project issues you may have with the design team. Your input is very important to us. For attendees participating via GoToMeeting or in-person, a handout containing information about the projects and proposed improvements is available to view or download at I4Beyond.com/ChampionsGateHandout.

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This public hearing includes three projects with the Financial Project Numbers 444187-1, 444329-1 and 443958-1. The following improvement projects are located on the west side of Osceola County:

The Interstate 4 and County Road 532 interchange in the ChampionsGate area of Osceola County will be reconfigured to a diverging diamond interchange. This is a joint project between Osceola County and FDOT. The County is designing the project and FDOT will oversee its construction.

Another project will add new eastbound and westbound I-4 auxiliary lanes, one in each direction, between the ramps of State Road 429 and County Road 532, as well as an auxiliary lane continuing on northbound State Road 429 to Sinclair Road. FDOT is designing and constructing this project, as well as a project to mill and resurface eastbound and westbound I-4 from the Polk-Osceola County line to west of State Road 417 in Osceola County.

The combined area around County Road 532, Osceola Polk Line Road and ChampionsGate Boulevard is rapidly developing, with several residential and commercial projects under construction.

The section of I-4 between County Road 532 and State Road 429 serves — on average — nearly 130-thousand vehicles each day, with more than 20-thousand vehicles traveling on County Road 532 and another 25,000 vehicles traveling on State Road 429 daily.

Travelers on I-4 experience daily congestion through this area, especially during the afternoon and evening hours.

The purpose of these projects is to provide operational and safety improvements to the I-4 and County Road 532 interchange, as well as on I-4 between County Road 532 and State Road 429.

These proposed improvements support the region's long-term economic health by providing more reliable trips to jobs, schools, stores and entertainment. Employees will have an easier commute to work and home again; visitors have a better experience in Central Florida; and trucks are able to deliver their goods more efficiently.

The proposed improvements at the I-4 and County Road 532 interchange include:

- The westbound I-4 entrance ramp will have two lanes to accommodate single right and left turn lanes from County Road 532.
- The eastbound I-4 exit ramp will have three lanes to accommodate single right and two left turn lanes from County Road 532.
- The eastbound I-4 entrance ramp is expanded to three lanes to accommodate dual left turns and a single right turn from County Road 532.
- The westbound I-4 exit ramp is expanded to four lanes to provide dual right and left turn lanes onto County Road 532.

To improve traffic flow at the I-4 and County Road 532 interchange, a directional median is proposed at the nearby intersection of ChampionsGate Boulevard and Goodman Road. A new directional median will restrict movements from northbound Goodman Road to right turns only onto ChampionsGate Boulevard. An existing median already restricted movements from southbound Goodman Road to right turns only onto ChampionsGate Boulevard.

Eliminating left turns from Goodman Road onto ChampionsGate Boulevard is safer and improves operations.

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A new directional median will restrict movements from northbound Goodman Road to right turns only onto ChampionsGate Boulevard. To travel westbound on ChampionsGate Boulevard from northbound Goodman Road, motorists will need to use Berwick Drive to travel eastbound on ChampionsGate Boulevard. At the Goodman Road intersection, motorists can make a U-turn to travel westbound on ChampionsGate Boulevard.

The most significant improvement proposed for this interchange is reconfiguring it to a diverging diamond.

At an informational open house FDOT hosted last year, the Department shared plans for diverging diamond interchanges at Sand Lake Road (State Road 482) and Daryl Carter Parkway. A diverging diamond interchange is one of several innovative interchanges that are part of I-4 Beyond the Ultimate design plans for the 20 miles of Interstate 4, south of the current I-4 Ultimate project.

A diverging diamond interchange helps improve safety and traffic flow in several ways. This is how a diverging diamond interchange works:

1. To travel through the interchange, the driver should proceed through the first traffic light, staying in the lane in which he or she is driving. The lane will guide the driver to the opposite side of the road. Before the lane crosses back to the right side of the road, the driver will encounter one more traffic signal.
2. If the driver wants to turn right onto a freeway ramp from the arterial road, the driver should use the right-turn lane, just like in a conventional interchange.
3. When turning left onto a freeway ramp, the driver should stay in the left lane and follow the lane through the first traffic light on to the other side of the road. Then, before going through the second traffic light, the driver will turn left onto the freeway ramp.
4. Turning right onto the arterial road from a freeway ramp is as easy as taking a right turn at a conventional interchange. When turning right onto an arterial road, remember to yield to oncoming traffic and watch for pedestrians and bicyclists using marked walkways.
5. To turn left onto the arterial road, follow the left lane and, when traffic allows, take a left turn. The lanes will guide the driver from the left side of the road to the right side of the road, similar to going straight through the interchange.

Diverging diamond interchanges reduce the number of conflict points, or places where vehicles cross paths, by allowing drivers to make left turns without crossing in front of oncoming traffic.

In addition to reducing conflict points for drivers, a diverging diamond also provides benefits for pedestrians and bicyclists. This project will add bike lanes and sidewalks along County Road 532 for improved bicycle and pedestrian connectivity and safety.

As seen on the graphic with the orange arrows, bicyclists will follow the same traffic flow as other vehicles through the diverging diamond and will be on the inside of the roadway through the interchange. At the traffic signal, they will return to the outside lanes. The blue arrows on the graphic indicate pedestrian routes or bicyclist routes, if they choose to use them, along the new sidewalks and crosswalks on County Road 532.

To improve traffic flow on I-4 between County Road 532 and State Road 429, FDOT is proposing several improvements:

- New eastbound and westbound I-4 auxiliary lanes, one in each direction, between the ramps of S.R. 429 and County Road 532.

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- An auxiliary lane on northbound State Road 429 continuing from I-4 to Sinclair Road.
- The westbound I-4 exit ramp and the eastbound I-4 entrance ramp at the County Road 532 interchange will also be widened to two lanes to increase traffic flow and capacity.
- The project includes milling and resurfacing State Road 429 between I-4 and Sinclair Road.

In addition to the proposed improvements at the I-4 and County Road 532 interchange and on I-4 between County Road 532 and State Road 429, FDOT is proposing to mill and resurface I-4 from the Polk-Osceola county line to west of State Road 417.

Extensive data gathering activities such as surveying, soil testing, wetlands assessments, and investigations of protected wildlife have been completed.

We are currently in the design phase of the projects. We are finalizing the design of the roadway features, identifying stormwater treatment and permitting needs and determining environmental impacts due to the proposed improvements. The design phase of these projects is anticipated to be completed late 2020.

Construction is expected to begin in the spring of 2021.

No additional right of way is needed for these projects.

Osceola County and FDOT recognize the success of any transportation improvement project is dependent upon a successful public outreach effort.

A public engagement plan was developed to establish and maintain a strategy for public and stakeholder involvement in the design projects.

Public notification and project updates are provided through:

The I-4 Beyond the Ultimate monthly newsletter.

Public notices in The Orlando Sentinel and Florida Administrative Register.

News releases to local media.

The project website at I4Beyond.com/ChampionsGate.

This public hearing is being held to connect with stakeholders and to obtain input regarding the proposed improvements.

Public comments will be documented in the public involvement record for these projects.

In a few minutes, you will have the opportunity to offer verbal comments about the proposed improvements for Interstate 4 and County Road 532 near ChampionsGate in Osceola County. Your comments will become part of the official public hearing transcript.

You may also provide your comments electronically. A comment form is available on the project website, I4Beyond.com/ChampionsGate.

For attendees at the satellite location, you may also complete a public comment and drop it into the box provided at the back of the room. Or if you prefer, you may mail us your comments. The mailing address is provided on the comment form.

You can send in your comments at any time; however, all comments and exhibits postmarked before September 28, 2020, will become part of the public hearing record.

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The I-4 Beyond the Ultimate website, I4Beyond.com, features interactive maps, 3-D animations, construction timelines and more to help you understand and stay up to date on design and construction.

If you regularly drive I-4 through the I-4 Beyond the Ultimate, I-4 Ultimate, or Wekiva Parkway work zones, check out our I-4 Advance Construction Alerts. You can get your alerts daily or weekly ... specifically for the parts of I-4 you drive regularly. Visit I4Beyond.com/alerts to learn more and sign up.

If you have any questions after this public hearing, please contact ...

Conroy Jacobs, Osceola County Project Manager for the ChampionsGate diverging diamond interchange, at 407-742-0557, or by email at Conroy.Jacobs@Osceola.org.

Su Hao, FDOT Project Manager for the auxiliary lane project and for the milling and resurfacing on I-4, at 386-943-5161, or by email Su.Hao@dot.state.fl.us.

Thank you for your interest and participation in these projects. We encourage you to review the documents and plans on display. If you would like to speak during the public testimony portion of tonight's public hearing, there are three ways you can do this.

For attendees on the GoToMeeting platform, if you have not already indicated you wanted to speak tonight, please message the moderator in the Chat function of the platform.

For attendees at the satellite location, please fill out speaker card.

For attendees listening on the phone, if you have not already indicated you wanted to speak tonight, please call 844-276-FDOT (3368).

Our moderators will provide you with more information.

Persons with disabilities who require accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact Su Hao, P.E., FDOT Project Manager, at 386-943-5161, or by email at Su.Hao@dot.state.fl.us. If you are hearing or speech impaired, please contact us by using the Florida Relay Service, 1-800-955-8771 (TDD) or 1-800-955-8770 (Voice).

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability or family status. Persons wishing to express their concerns relative to FDOT compliance with Title VI may do so by contacting Jennifer Smith, FDOT District Five Title VI Coordinator at Jennifer.Smith2@dot.state.fl.us.