



## State Road 60 Lane Repurposing Study

### Frequently Asked Questions

#### 1. When was the traffic study for this analysis completed? Does the traffic study account for peak season traffic volumes?

- The traffic data collected to support the study was collected on May 11, 2023. For the City of Vero Beach, the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) identifies the 13 consecutive week peak traffic season as February 6<sup>th</sup> to May 7<sup>th</sup>. FDOT routinely collects traffic data throughout the year and publishes weekly peak-season correction factors. The purpose of the correction factor is to adjust traffic data collected throughout the year to represent peak-season data. Based upon the published FDOT peak-season correction factors, the collected traffic data from May 11, 2023 was increased by 3% to be reflective of peak-season conditions.

#### 2. Are angled on-street parking spaces proposed?

- No, only parallel parking is proposed.

#### 3. How has traffic increase and delay been evaluated? Is population growth accounted for in the traffic model?

- The Indian River County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) is projecting a 1.01% and 1.00% annual population and employment growth rate, respectively. This equates to approximately 58,000 new residents and 18,000 new jobs over the next 30-years.

Utilizing a computerized transportation planning model developed by FDOT, Kimley-Horn is able to project future traffic volumes within the study limits. These models are used to manipulate the roadway geometry and posted speed limit to project changes in vehicular traffic on SR 60 as well as the surrounding roadways.

The future projected volumes are then evaluated against FDOT generalized roadway capacities and the City's Comprehensive Plan to determine if the roadways will operate within acceptable roadway level-of-service characteristics.

#### 4. Will emergency vehicle response be impacted?

- The proposed lane reduction and associated parallel parking is not anticipated to compromise critical emergency vehicle operation. Downtown Vero Beach has a number of two-way streets that presently have parallel parking stalls. Kimley-Horn has met with both the Indian River County Sheriff's Office and City of Vero Beach Police Department representatives. Neither entity expressed operational concerns.

#### 5. Are increased accidents expected from parked vehicles opening doors into travel lanes?

- The proposed corridor changes indicate lane repurposing that results in two (2) travel lanes being maintained in both the eastbound and westbound directions. If a motorist elects to utilize an identified on-street parallel parking stall, they will need to use the same due care and attention when operating their vehicle as required by Florida Statutes as they would at any other time as to not exhibit careless driving. The proposed on-street parallel parking and the proposed buffered bike lanes are on opposite sides of the travel lanes.

## 6. Will reducing a lane negatively impact evacuation during a hurricane?

- The majority of the designated hurricane evacuation routes within Indian River County are 4-lane corridors (two lanes each direction), with the exception of US Highway 1 south of Indian River Blvd, 20<sup>th</sup> Place west of US Highway 1, 20<sup>th</sup> Street west of 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue and I-95. The following roadways are designated as hurricane evacuation routes:
  - SR A1A – 2-lane with bi-directional turn lane
  - SR 60 Merrill Barber Bridge – 4-lane
  - Indian River Boulevard – 4-lane
  - US Highway 1 (S. County Line to Indian River Blvd) – 6-lane with bi-directional turn lane
  - US Highway 1 (Indian River Blvd to N. County Line) – 4-lane with bi-directional turn lane
  - 17<sup>th</sup> Street Causeway Bridge – 4-lane
  - 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue (S. County Line to 49<sup>th</sup> Street) – principally 2-lane
  - SR 60 (Merrill Barber Bridge to 20<sup>th</sup> Street) – 4-lane
  - 20<sup>th</sup> Place (US Highway 1 to Indian River Blvd) – 4-lane
  - 20<sup>th</sup> Place (20<sup>th</sup> Avenue to US Highway 1) – 4-lanes westbound
  - 20<sup>th</sup> Street (94<sup>th</sup> Drive to 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue) – 6-lane
  - I-95 – 6-lane

## 7. Will the lane reduction lead to increased diversion traffic through surrounding single family neighborhoods?

- Traffic modeling was performed to project vehicular volumes in year 2045, based upon both scenarios of not eliminating lanes and eliminating lanes within the study limits. The traffic modeling is used to project the likelihood of vehicular trips seeking alternative routes under a reduced lane condition. The modeling indicates vehicular trips diverting to 21<sup>st</sup> Street between 20<sup>th</sup> Avenue and US Highway 1, however, the volume of diverted trips in year 2045 are well within the capacity that can be accommodated by that roadway.

## 8. Have studies been completed regarding the impact of traffic from increased Brightline trains?

- Under the scope of work associated with the SR 60 Lane Repurposing Study, Kimley-Horn did not attempt to re-evaluate transportation impacts associated with the newly operating Brightline passenger trains at the at-grade rail crossing within the study limits. There are no proposed changes to the lane configuration or available vehicular queuing for the 20<sup>th</sup> Place at-grade rail crossing. There is no proposed change to the lane configuration and there is a minor reduction in available vehicular queuing (from 129 to 121 vehicles) at the 19<sup>th</sup> Place at-grade rail crossing. The reduction in vehicular queuing is a result of the proposed length reduction to the pedestrian crossing distance on the east leg of the 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue/ 19<sup>th</sup> Place intersection.

## 9. How does the study intersect with the downtown master plan and the downtown retail study as part of a comprehensive plan?

- The traffic analysis prepared for the SR60 Lane Repurposing Study will be used as background data for the preparation of the Downtown Master Plan. The City recently completed an Urban Retail Market Study and Downtown Assessment that included a review of past plans or studies of Downtown. All of these studies will be used as background data in the formation of the Downtown Master Plan.

The Downtown Assessment identified streetscape and pedestrian improvements as a common recommendation of all the past planning documents for Downtown. Improvements to SR60 Westbound (20<sup>th</sup> Street) was identified in the Downtown Assessment as a key element for the new Downtown Master Plan to include wider sidewalks and shade trees on this street in Downtown. The Urban Retail Study identified that Downtown can support the development 88,000 sf of new retail, assuming urban retail practices are adopted for Downtown, including the improvement of the streetscapes and pedestrian areas of Downtown.

## 10. Have increased sidewalks in lieu of on-street parking been considered for this project?

- The plan presented, represents the improvements and changes requested to be evaluated by the City. In the previous community meeting, we represented the implementation costs of this plan to be between \$1,900,00 and \$3,900,000 dependent upon the City elects to partner with the Florida Department of Transportation.

Consideration has been given to expanding the sidewalk widths along both the eastbound and westbound corridors and eliminating the contemplated on-street parking. To widen the sidewalks and improve the streetscape on SR60 – Westbound (20<sup>th</sup> Street) is estimated to cost approximately \$5,000,000. The estimated total cost of this scenario for both eastbound and westbound is estimated to be approximately \$10,100,000.

## 11. Are there successful examples of similar projects that have been completed in other communities?

- The City of Delray Beach had a very similar roadway condition with US Highway 1 (5<sup>th</sup> Avenue & 6<sup>th</sup> Avenue) being 3-lane directional corridors through their downtown. In the early 2000's, the City of Delray Beach moved forward with reducing 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Avenues to 2-lane corridors. The repurposed 3<sup>rd</sup> lane in each direction was restriped as on-street parallel parking.

The result has been a reduction in overall corridor speeds and a 48% reduction in crashes.

## 12. How is a 10' wide parallel parking stall safer than a typical parallel parking stall? Have other communities implemented 10' wide parallel parking stalls?

- Typical car and truck widths are between 6 to 7 feet. A typical parallel parking stall is 22 ft long and 8 ft wide. The parking stalls proposed within this plan are 22 ft long and 10.5 ft wide. The wider parking stalls will make it easier for motorists to maneuver into them.

Kimley-Horn worked on a redevelopment of the City of Kissimmee downtown. The City of Kissimmee elected to utilize 10 feet wide parallel parking stalls for the benefit identified above.

## 13. What are the funding sources being considered for these projects? Are there any grants or cost-share programs available?

- FDOT has been clear since the lane reduction concept was proposed initially in 2013 that the FDOT 3R (repaving) program would not fund lane reduction improvements and FDOT in general would expect another party to pay for the lane reduction improvements.

The City through the Downtown Economic Development Zone Trust has allocated \$650,000 in the 5 yr. CIP for enhanced streetscape on SR 60.

Other funding sources may exist, but none have been identified and there is no commitment from another agency to fund the potential lane reduction improvements.

The City may elect to seek funding from other parties such as other funds within FDOT or the local MPO, but there is no guarantee that funding from these agencies would be made available to the City.

If the City moves forward with a lane reduction application, it will be incumbent upon the City to fund or seek funds for the project.

## 14. Please clarify the terms 85<sup>th</sup> percentile speed, road, street, and stroad.

- The 85th percentile speed is defined as the speed at or below which 85 percent of the observed free-flowing vehicles are traveling. Roads and streets are very similar. The best way to think of it is you live on a street (slower vehicular speeds). Roads (higher vehicular speeds) typically provide a throughway connection between land use destinations. A stroad is a derogatory phrase used to describe a road (higher vehicular speeds) that has residential land use access that would typically found on a street.

**15. Has closing 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue of from vehicular use to create more recreation area been considered?**

- This comment has arose during the twin pairs study, but the City is not aware of strong public support or support from the businesses on 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue to close 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue. While it is technically possible, the City would need to conduct separate and additional studies to determine the impacts and feasibility of closing 14<sup>th</sup> Avenue.

**16. Would the implementation of cameras be more cost effective to speed enforcement than policing?**

- Presently, the only locations that cameras can be utilized to legally issue speeding citations are in school zones, as of 2023.

**17. Can the parking at the courthouse be utilized for downtown?**

- The parking at the courthouse is open to the public.

**18. Eastbound proposes 22 parking stalls and 17 of them are beyond 17<sup>th</sup> Avenue. Will this impact business district parking? Additionally, the majority of the westbound parking stalls are located in close proximity to the Courthouse parking garage. Are additional parking spaces needed at this location?**

- Impact to business district parking is not anticipated. There is a popular misconception that a perceived parking deficit within downtown is a driving factor for these improvements. The driving factor has been to improve overall downtown safety through vehicular, bicycle and pedestrian improvements such as slowing vehicular traffic, expanding the bicycle facility widths and reducing pedestrian crossing distances.

**19. How many of the proposed parking stalls are located adjacent to commercial land uses?**

- Presently, 28 of 51 proposed parking stalls are located immediately adjacent to commercial land uses.

**20. Is there an option to widen sidewalks, enhance signage, and modify traffic signals in lieu of the proposed improvements?**

- The City will likely enhance signage downtown separate from the twin pairs study and work. Enhanced signage has been recommended by planning studies and has been recommended by the community.

Widening the sidewalks on SR60 as part of a lane reduction process is technically feasible. However, the cost is higher due to the change in curb lines and drainage required. KHA has estimated that the cost to widen sidewalks on both sides of the road for both directions of the twin pairs is over \$10 million dollars. The cost would be less if the wider sidewalks were proposed in specific locations instead of both sides of the road for both east and west bound SR60.

The City will be recommending FDOT optimize and improve traffic signals on SR60 to the maximum extent possible with or without a lane reduction proposal.

**21. Can more vehicles be moved more efficiently at a speed of 30 mph versus a speed of 45 mph?**

- Each roadway would need to be evaluated on a case by case basis.