

SCOPING BOOKLET

PROJECT DERENNE, CHATHAM COUNTY

PI 0008358, I-516 AT CS 1503/DERENNE AVENUE

PI 0010236, SR 21 FROM CS 346/MILDRED STREET TO SR 204

PI 0008359, EAST DERENNE FROM SR 204 TO HARRY S. TRUMAN PARKWAY



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Chapter 1 Introduction

The City of Savannah, in partnership with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT), has been leading a multi-year planning and design effort (known locally as “Project DeRenne”) to study and develop feasible solutions to inadequate mobility and congestion along DeRenne Avenue, a major arterial roadway that serves as a critical east-west connection within the City of Savannah and Chatham County.

Project DeRenne consists of a new location roadway (West DeRenne/Hampstead Connector) and operational improvements along West DeRenne and East DeRenne avenues in Savannah, Georgia from I-516 to Truman Parkway. Three separate projects are included in the Coastal Region Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-2021 Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), adopted June 28, 2017 that together provide solutions that address congestion on Interstate 516 (I-516)/State Route 21 (SR 21) and DeRenne Avenue. Project DeRenne includes following three projects:

- PI 0008358, I-516 at CS 1503/DeRenne Avenue, also known as the “Boulevard”;
- PI 0010236, SR 21 from CS 346/Mildred Street to SR 204, referred to as “West DeRenne Avenue Improvements”; and
- PI 0008359, East DeRenne from SR 204 to Harry S. Truman Parkway, referred to as “East DeRenne Avenue Improvements” (see Figures 1A-C).

Access Management

Access Management can include changing roads and land use patterns to limit the number of driveways and intersections that connect to main roads. The goal is to improve traffic flow and encourage walking and biking.

Operational Improvements

Operational Improvements can include intersection improvements, traffic signal coordination, and work zone management



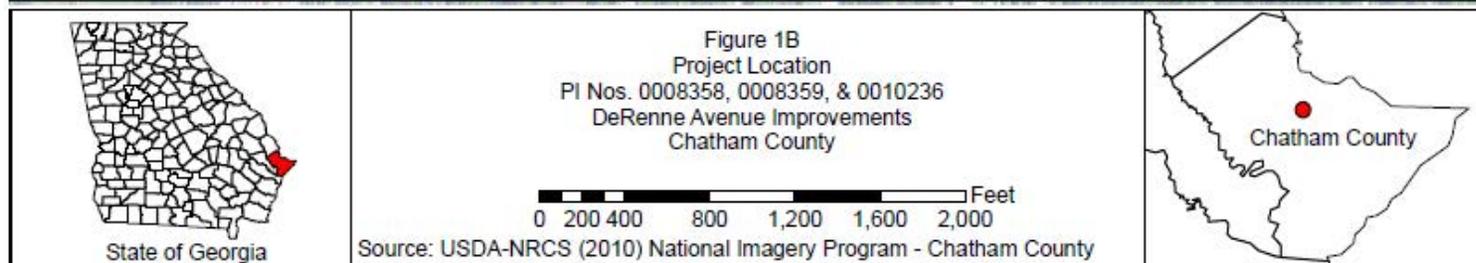
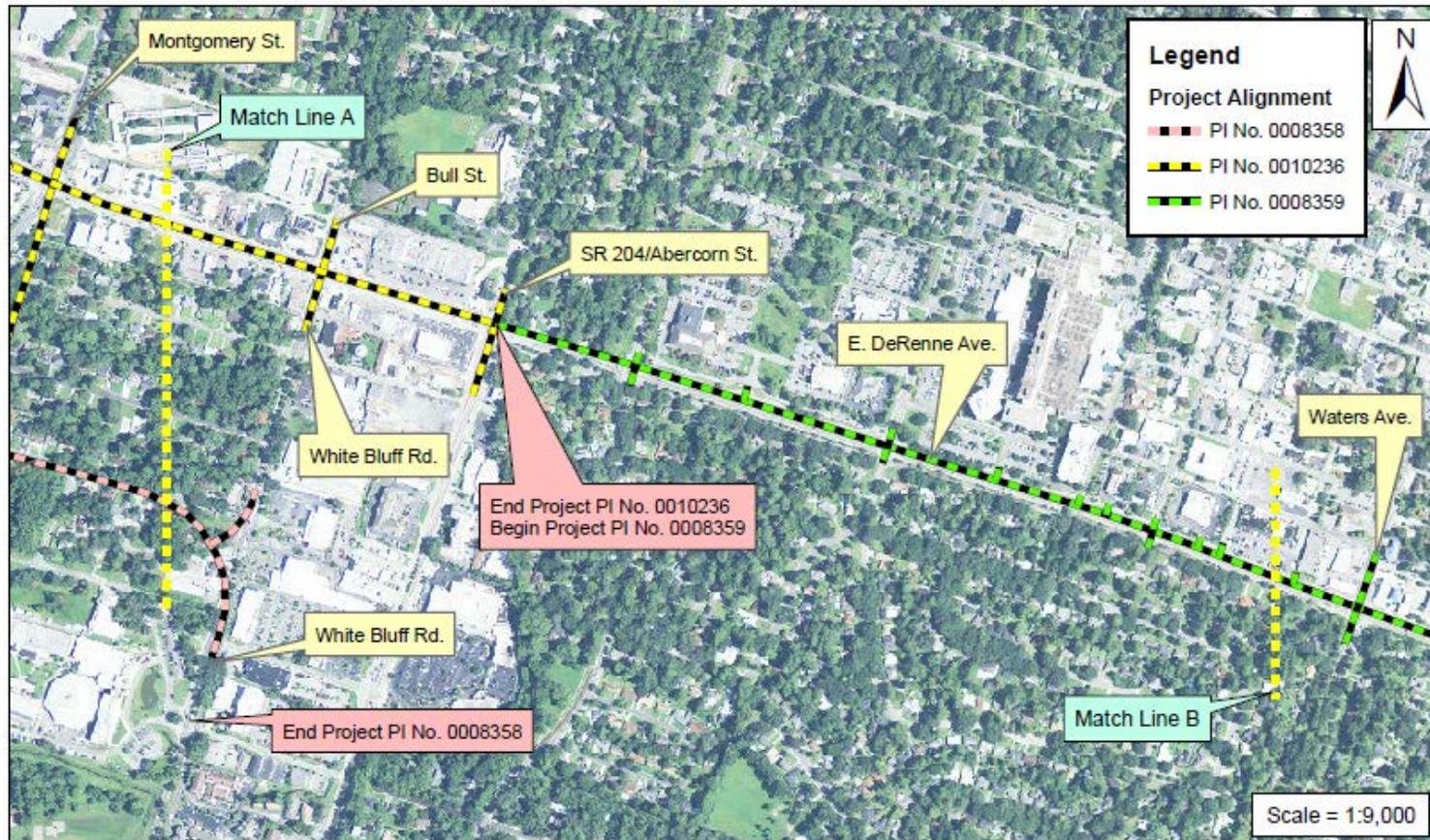




Figure 1C
Project Location
PI Nos. 0008358, 0008359, & 0010236
DeRenne Avenue Improvements
Chatham County

0 200 400 800 1,200 1,600 2,000 Feet

Source: USDA-NRCS (2010) National Imagery Program - Chatham County



Need and Purpose

DeRenne Avenue is a major arterial (six-lane and five-lane) connecting two high-capacity, controlled-access facilities (I-516 and the Truman Parkway) that serves as a critical east-west connection within the City of Savannah and Chatham County. In addition to regional travel conveyance, DeRenne Avenue also provides access to and from Hunter Army Airfield, two regional hospitals (St. Joseph's/Candler and Memorial University Medical Center, one of only four Level I trauma centers in Georgia), a large technical college, and several public schools. The abundance of peak-hour travel demand on DeRenne Avenue, coupled with the transition from free flow travel on I-516 to a signal-controlled arterial, results in heavy congestion along DeRenne Avenue that restricts regional travel and mobility. In addition to heavy congestion, the pedestrian network along DeRenne Avenue is fragmented, bike facilities are not present, and poor access management along the corridor make DeRenne Avenue less than suitable for alternative modes of transportation.

The purpose of the proposed projects is to:

- Enhance mobility by reducing existing queuing and delay to improve corridor travel times, and
- Improve the operational performance of the W. DeRenne Avenue signalized intersections (specifically the heavy eastbound to southbound and northbound to westbound movements around Hunter Army Airfield).

Early Project Planning

Phase I of Project DeRenne began in 2008 after an examination of existing and future traffic conditions along the project corridor. A *Steering Committee* and *Project Advisory Committee* (PAC) were formed to guide city officials in order to identify potential solutions to problems and deficiencies along DeRenne Avenue between I-516 and Abercorn Street.

Extensive community outreach was conducted, including neighborhood meetings, stakeholder interviews, and two public workshops between 2008 and 2010. This outreach effort led to the creation of guiding principles that would govern the remainder of the planning process (see Guiding Principles on Page 6).

Stakeholders

*Savannah-Chatham Public
School System*

*Savannah Technical College,
Memorial Hospital*

St. Joseph's/Candler

*Preserving Savannah's
Neighborhoods*

Savannah Park and Tree

Hunter Army Airfield

Further, two design options were identified through Design Charrettes held in November 2009: Intersection Option and Boulevard Option. An evaluation of these options found the Boulevard Option to be a better solution to solving the traffic issues along DeRenne Avenue.

In 2010 the City Council resolved to devote local funds to continue to develop the Boulevard Option and move forward to Phase II of project development – engineering.

Initiation of the NEPA Process

The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process began with the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) and Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) identifying an Environmental Assessment (EA) as the appropriate level of documentation for Project DeRenne. When the NEPA process began, and based on what was known about project alternatives and environmental resources at the time, significant environmental impacts were not known. While adverse effects were anticipated, the level of significance of these effects, in terms of context and intensity, was not clear. For the purposes of NEPA, “significance” is determined by consideration of both the context and intensity of the effect. Intensity refers to the severity of the effect, and context refers to the current and proposed short- and long-term effects on the whole of a given resource (e.g. affected region).

As detailed studies of the social and cultural environment were underway, an evaluation of project impacts revealed the likelihood for significant adverse impacts to the community and to historic resources. The FHWA made the decision to elevate the NEPA process to an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), which is required when significant impacts due to the proposed action are anticipated. The differences between the EA and EIS process are largely procedural. A more detailed discussion of the NEPA EIS environmental review process is provided in Chapter 2.

2008 Guiding Principles

Neighborhood Preservation

- Preserve the integrity of existing neighborhoods.

Local Land Use Initiatives -

Promote implementation of adopted future land use initiatives and promote revitalization of existing commercial properties.

Beautification and

Streetscape - *Enhance visual appearance and promote a sense of place that is representative of the local Savannah character to those entering the corridor.*

Modal Accommodations -

Improve the accommodations for alternate travel modes and travel demand management.

Transportation and Safety -

Improve current and future transportation operations and travel safety.

Economic Development -

Promote a healthy and sustainable business environment where revitalization of existing commercial properties, redevelopment of strategic locations, and continued reinvestment in healthy businesses is encouraged.

Chapter 2 Environmental Review Process

NEPA Overview

The EIS process was formally initiated on July 18, 2017 when the Notice of Intent (NOI) to prepare an EIS was published in the Federal Register. Once initiated, other major milestones that comprise the EIS process include Scoping, preparation of a Draft EIS (DEIS), public review, and preparation of the Final EIS (FEIS) and Record of Decision (ROD). These major milestones, as well as the anticipated time frame for when these activities will take place on Project DeRenne, are illustrated below.



Mitigation

The Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations define mitigation as: Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action, minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action, rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment, reducing or eliminating the impact over time, and compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments (40 CFR 1508.20).

Scoping

Scoping refers to a formal exchange of information for projects requiring an EIS. Scoping activities are aimed at engaging interested parties in the decision making process. The process is used to identify the range of alternatives, potential impacts, and the significant issues to be addressed in the EIS. Agency scoping will be sought to help guide the study and comments on the need and purpose, evaluation of alternatives, resources methodologies, and the mitigation strategies will be requested.

Although many public outreach activities were conducted prior to the publication of the NOI to prepare an EIS, they serve as project scoping as they were integral to the development of project alternatives and an understanding of likely project impacts. Agency and public scoping will continue

Project Website

www.ProjectDeRenne.com

throughout the NEPA process and will be accomplished through a variety of techniques, including public meetings, stakeholder meetings, press releases, and project website updates.

DEIS

The NEPA requires an EIS for proposed actions that would significantly affect the quality of the human environment. The EIS is a decision making tool and will document decisions made throughout the project development process. The DEIS will discuss the following:

- problems that the proposed project is intended to solve,
- environment in which the project would occur (affected environment),
- range of alternatives (possible solutions),
- likely impacts of the proposed action on a variety of environmental factors (impacts shall be discussed in proportion to their significance),
- coordination with project stakeholders and interested parties, and
- mitigation strategies.

Public Review

The DEIS will be published and made available for public review. NEPA requires that federal agencies consult with other agencies and the public prior to making any final decisions on the proposed action. Members of the public and agencies will have an opportunity to review and comment on the DEIS during a 45-day review period. A Public Hearing Open House (PHOH) will also be held during this 45-day review period. This meeting will allow the public an opportunity to review project plans, discuss concerns and questions with project representatives, and provide comments. Comments received during the public review period may help resolve any unresolved issues that need to be considered before any final decisions are made.

Final EIS and ROD

The Final EIS/ROD will include the following:

- disclose the outcome of the public review period,
- provide any revised information or data since the publication of the DEIS,
- present any modifications to the proposed action;
- identify a “selected alternative”, and
- disclose the FHWA decision on the proposal action.

The FHWA allows for and intends to utilize a combined FEIS/ROD for this project. Once finalized, copies of this document will be sent to resources agencies and public parties. The FEIS/ROD concludes of the federal environmental review process. A decision to continue moving forward with the proposed action would allow the next project phases to begin, including acquiring right-of-way and final design. The GDOT and FHWA will continue to evaluate the project and will provide Environmental Reevaluations until the project is let for construction.

Chapter 3 Environmental Resources to be Evaluated

The EIS will examine a variety of factors in an effort to identify and evaluate potential impacts associated with the proposed action on the social, cultural, natural environment and physical environment. Surveys will be conducted to identify resources and the project teams will work with the public and agencies with jurisdiction over the resource to identify impacts associated with the proposed action, and appropriate mitigation measures when unavoidable adverse impacts are identified. The table below lists the resource areas to be studied in the EIS.

Environmental Issues to be Addressed in the EIS	
Social Environment	
Land Use Plans	The DEIS will indicate if the proposed action is consistent with state, county and local existing and future land use plans.
Transportation Impacts	The existing transportation deficiencies will be examined, and the extent to which the proposed action solves these problems will be addressed.
Neighborhoods and Environmental Justice Populations	The DEIS will assess project benefits and impacts on study area neighborhoods, with specific attention to minority and low-income populations. Adverse or disproportionately high impacts affecting minority or low-income populations will be documented.
Displacements	The DEIS will identify any commercial and residential properties that would be displaced or impacted by the project.
Community Facilities	Effect on community facilities, including parks, schools, libraries, colleges, community centers, emergency management facilities, and places of worship will be evaluated.
Cultural Environment	
Historic and Archaeological Resources	Historic properties, archeological sites, parklands, and other cultural resources will be identified. Effects to significant resources will be examined.
Visual and Aesthetics	Effects on visually sensitive areas and resources, including tree and building removal and the introduction of new structures (roadway, walls, bridge, ramps) will be examined.

Natural Environment	
Water Resources	Effects on wetlands, streams, and other surface waters, including their ecology, will be examined.
Protected Species	Surveys for Federal and State protected plants and animals will be conducted. Effects on species and their habitats will be addressed.
Water Quality	Effects on surface and groundwater resources, including the addition of impervious surfaces and/or the disturbance of soil will be examined.
Floodplains	A determination will be made as to whether properties in the study area are located within a 100-year floodplain. Effects on floodplain areas will be examined.
Physical Environment	
Air Quality	The potential impact on air quality, as well as a discussion of compliance with the Clean Air Act Amendments of 1990 and an evaluation of conformity with the State Implementation Plan will be documented.
Noise Assessment	The study will include an analysis of potential impacts of noise and vibration associated with the build alternatives.
Contamination/Hazardous Materials	DEIS will document any known hazardous materials or contamination within the study area. Sites requiring further analysis will be identified.

Chapter 4 Alternatives Under Consideration

Locally Preferred Alternative

As mentioned earlier, the Boulevard Option was identified as the preferred option through a public outreach process employed during Phase I of Project DeRenne. Phase II of Project DeRenne took the preferred concepts identified during Phase I and developed three distinct projects that would function together to satisfy the project’s need and purpose. The proposed projects consist of a new location roadway (West DeRenne/Hampstead Connector) and operational improvements along West DeRenne and East DeRenne avenues. The proposed action includes the following three projects: PI No. 0008358, I-516 at CS 1503/DeRenne Avenue, referred to as the “Boulevard”; PI 0010236, SR 21 from CS 346/Mildred Street to SR 204, referred to as “West DeRenne Avenue Improvements”; and PI 0008359, East DeRenne from SR 204 to Harry S. Truman Pkwy, referred to as “East DeRenne Avenue Improvements”. These three projects as discussed below represent the locally preferred alternative.

➤ **PI No. 0008358 – I-516 at CS 1503/DeRenne Avenue (Boulevard)**

- A new four-lane roadway that would connect I-516 (just west of Mildred Street) to a redirected White Bluff Road via a widened Hampstead Avenue would be constructed. This new roadway would be a four-lane divided roadway with sidewalks and a multi-use path.
- White Bluff Road, south of Hampstead Avenue, would be realigned to connect to the new Boulevard. White Bluff Road, just north of Hampstead Avenue, would be realigned to tee into the new Boulevard.
- The project would include two bridge structures. One bridge would carry outbound traffic over I-516 to facilitate an on-ramp configuration. The other bridge would carry inbound traffic over the access to Hunter Army Airfield.
- Montgomery Street, south of DeRenne Avenue, would be narrowed to a two-lane, median divided roadway with on-street parking and sidewalks.
- Bicycle and pedestrian traffic to and from the Hunter Army Airfield would be accommodated on the planned multi-use path connection to the realigned, pedestrian enhanced, intersection with White Bluff Road.

➤ **PI 0010236 - SR 21 From CS 346/Mildred Street to SR 204 (West DeRenne Avenue Improvements)**

The West DeRenne Avenue Improvements would operate in conjunction with the Boulevard (PI 0008358 described above) to improve the portion of DeRenne Avenue (GA 21) between Mildred Street and the intersection of SR 204/Abercorn Street (inclusive). This portion of DeRenne Avenue is GDOT-owned and city-maintained. These improvements would include:

- a continuous raised median between intersections;
- improved intersection configurations at Montgomery Street, White Bluff Road and Abercorn Street to reflect the change in travel patterns with the implementation of the Boulevard; and
- enhanced pedestrian accommodations along the corridor and at the intersections.

➤ **PI 0008359 - East DeRenne from SR 204 to Harry S. Truman Pkwy (East DeRenne Avenue Improvements)**

The East DeRenne Avenue Improvements would improve the segment of DeRenne Avenue between SR 204/Abercorn Street and the Harry S. Truman Parkway. This portion of DeRenne Avenue is on the National Highway System and city maintained. These improvements include:

- conversion of the existing two-way left turn lane to a raised, planted median;
- optimizing the intersection configuration of DeRenne Avenue and Waters Avenue;

- develop a bicycle facility along DeRenne Drive; and
- enhanced pedestrian accommodations along the corridor and at the signalized intersections.

No Build Alternative

With the No Build alternative the GDOT would take no action to construct the proposed projects. The No Build alternative provides a baseline for comparing impacts with the other alternatives. While this alternative would avoid the adverse effects associated with project implementation, it would not meet the project's Need and Purpose to enhance mobility along the corridor, reduce delays, and improve efficiency at major intersections from the interchange of I-516 and SR 21/DeRenne Avenue to Harry S. Truman Parkway. In most cases, the No Build alternative is not intensively analyzed since it is not anticipated to result in adverse effects; however, there are circumstances when the No Build alternative could result in additional or more severe impacts than the Preferred Alternative. Nonetheless, the No Build alternative will remain under consideration throughout the NEPA process until an action to select a different alternative is made by the lead agency, FHWA.

Other Alternatives

Other alternatives were considered early in the project development process, but were later dismissed due to undesirable impacts and/or inability to meet the projects' Need and Purpose. During Phase I of Project DeRenne, substantial public outreach was conducted to evaluate various alternatives. Between 2008 and 2010, there were over 40 meetings held, including Steering Committee meetings, PAC meetings, Public Workshops, charrettes, and targeted stakeholder meetings with special groups. The stakeholders contributed a wide variety of concerns and suggestions. Multiple alternatives were identified through the public involvement process, including the No Build Option, the Intersection Improvements Option, the Boulevard Option, and a Median Option along the project section east of Abercorn Street. Each option was presented to the PAC for consideration. The alternatives presented were:

- No Build Option
- Intersection Improvements Option
- Boulevard Option
- Median Option (east of Abercorn Street only)

Each option was considered based on a Cost/Benefit Analysis, the effect on traffic congestion, the impact on properties, and the potential for economic development. After careful consideration to all of the developed alternatives, the PAC members met on February 10, 2010 and 14 (out of 15) members expressed strong constituent support for the Boulevard Option over the Intersection Improvements Option or No Build Option. Along the section east of Abercorn Street, 15 (out of 15) members expressing strong constituent support for the Median Option over the No Build Option.

After the Boulevard and Median Options were identified by the PAC in 2010, Phase II of the Project DeRenne began, and additional alternatives were developed for consideration. These alternatives included the Flyover Bridge Alternative, the Flyover Bridge Alternative 2 (avoiding Hunter Army Airfield), a Continuous Flow Intersection (CFI) Alternative, and Widening DeRenne Avenue from six to eight lanes between the end of I-516 and SR 204/Abercorn Street, and from four to six lanes from SR 204/Abercorn Street to Harry S. Truman Parkway.

Major factors used to compare alternatives included operational improvement, environmental impacts (notably, displacements, environmental justice impacts, and impacts to historic resources), right-of-way impacts, and public comments. These alternatives were eliminated from further consideration due to a variety of factors, including not meeting the Need and Purpose of the project, not favored by the public, substantial impacts to minority and/or low income populations, substantial impacts to Hunter Army Airfield, and substantial right-of-way and/or business and residential displacements. While the No Build Option also does not meet the Need and Purpose and lacked support from the stakeholders, it will remain under consideration throughout the NEPA process until an action to select a different alternative is made by the lead agency, FHWA.

Chapter 5 Agency Coordination and Public Participation

Agency Coordination

Coordination with several public agencies has been on-going since the NEPA process began in 2010. Early coordination efforts included requests for information about known resources or expertise within the project area. Several agencies have already provided critical inputs into the development of technical studies and will continue to play key roles. Section 6002 of the Safe, Accountable, Flexible, Efficient Transportation Equity Act – A Legacy for Users of 2005 (SAFETEA-LU) requires that the lead agencies establish a plan for coordinating public and agency participation and comment during the environmental review process. An Agency Coordination Plan will be implemented to continue with agency coordination within the development of the EIS.

Public Participation

The planning and development of Project DeRenne was designed to include extensive input from the public. The city of Savannah began engaging the public before the NEPA process began, gathering important information from the public that influenced the design, location, and impact of Project DeRenne. Between 2008 and 2010, there were over 40 meetings held, including Steering Committee meetings, PAC meetings, public workshops, charrettes, and targeted stakeholder meetings with special groups. The public participation conducted during Phase I of Project DeRenne led to the locally preferred alternative, (referred to as the Boulevard

Option). The stakeholders, listed below, contributed a wide variety of concerns and suggestions.

- Poplar Place / University Place Neighborhoods
- Commercial Business West
- Savannah-Chatham County Public Schools
- Fairways Parks/ Greenview Neighborhood
- Commercial Business East
- Hunter Army Airfield
- Memorial University Medical Center
- Magnolia Park/ Blueberry Hill
- Commercial Business at Large
- Manor/ Poplar-Lamara Heights
- South Garden
- St. Joseph's/Candler
- Kensington Park/ Groveland Neighborhood
- Tatenville Neighborhood

During Phase II of Project DeRenne, additional opportunities for outreach and project updates have been provided by the city of Savannah, in partnership with the GDOT and FHWA. In addition to the project website, traditional public information open house (PIOH) meeting, and a public walk-through and field exercise, there has been targeted outreach to the environmental justice (EJ) populations identified in the project area. The EJ outreach activities included:

- on-site meetings at Savannah Summit, an apartment complex that is largely occupied by elderly African-American, low-income residents;
- meetings at Savannah Tech to obtain input from the large minority student population;
- door-to-door outreach and handout distribution in the mobile home parks and apartment buildings occupied by low-income minorities,
- on-site outreach and handout distribution at popular places of business where some of the low-income and minority population in the area near Rogerwood Apartments and the mobile home parks, including a barber shop and hair salon; and
- “Pop-Up Meetings” were held on-site in the project area that targeted the typically underserved minority and low-income populations in Rogerwood Apartments, Hunter Mobile Home Park, Herb’s Trailer Park, Doug’s Trailer Park, and Henry’s Trailer Park. Flyers and meeting materials were provided in both Spanish and English.

Project Website

The city of Savannah maintains a project website and regularly posts project updates and relevant information to the public. The city of Savannah will continue to host the project website, www.ProjectDeRenne.com, throughout project development.

April 23, 2013 Public Information Open House

The GDOT held a PIOH on April 23, 2013 for the proposed projects. Notification of the meeting was provided by a legal advertisement in the local newspaper and signs were posted in the project area. Attendees were provided with a welcome letter, project location map, and a project description. Comment cards were provided, and a court reporter was available to record verbal comments. The public was able to view large displays showing the locally preferred alternative and speak with project representatives from the GDOT and the city of Savannah.

A total of 165 people attended the April 2013 PIOH. Of the 123 responses received, 70 were in support of the projects and 5 respondents were opposed. Thirty-five (35) comments expressed conditional support for the project pending potential design changes and 13 respondents were uncommitted. There were several comments expressing support for the project, stating its necessity for mitigating traffic congestion as well as its potential to benefit the area economically and aesthetically.

There were also a range of concerns presented by the respondents. Some commenters believe that raised medians proposed along DeRenne Avenue may hurt businesses along the project corridor and restrict future growth. Other commenters questioned the commitment of the government to complete the full scope of the project. Logistical and safety issues were raised in regard to the redirection of traffic flow from DeRenne Avenue onto smaller side roads. These were voiced especially by those residents living on Hampstead Avenue and Ranger Street. Some commenters expressed concern for potential negative effects that the redirection of traffic may have on these surrounding residential neighborhoods.

Other concerns were expressed, including the following:

- sidewalks should not be installed on DeRenne Drive in the Fairway Oaks neighborhood;
- a potential bottleneck at the proposed Hampstead Boulevard and White Bluff Road;
- concern about purchasing of residences and adequate compensation for their properties;
- the proposed roundabout would not be appropriate for the traffic volume for the project; and
- concern of how bike lanes would connect with Truman Linear Trail Park.

The Savannah Summit (2014-2015)

Outreach at the Savannah Summit has included invitations to regular public meetings, such as the Public Information Open House, but also targeted outreach. The Savannah Summit is a large apartment complex along Hampstead Avenue that is mostly occupied by an elderly African-American and low-income population that is one of the least mobile in the project area. Therefore, the complex was identified as an important community that required additional outreach efforts due to their limited mobility and typically underserved status. The community residents rely heavily on public transportation, so their input was needed to address their mobility concerns with the project. A meeting with the residents was held on April 24, 2014. Residents were provided an overview of the project, specifically the Boulevard concept, and asked for their comments. A court reporter recorded the meeting, during which the residents in attendance asked questions and offered their concerns. Most of their concerns centered on pedestrian mobility, pedestrian safety, and the future location of bus stops.



Also at the April 24th meeting, the city staff and NEPA project staff provided a detailed walkthrough along Hampstead Avenue, including a simulation of the Boulevard concept with props (cones, color-coded tape, and black and green material to represent areas of pavement and landscaping) to show where and how wide the lanes, sidewalks, and other important features would be in relation to the building. Written comments, as well as verbal comments via court reporter, were encouraged.

An additional city-led meeting was held on March 3, 2015. The Hampstead Avenue Frontage Road concept was discussed. Eighteen residents attended. Several concerns were voiced, and city officials agreed to follow up with questions related to signal timing and crosswalks.

The Savannah Summit residents will be provided further opportunity to comment on the proposed project through targeted outreach as needed and the GDOT-led Public Hearing.

Public Walk-Through and Field Exercise (May 7, 2014)

Following the 2013 PIOH, the public was invited to a meeting and walk through field exercise led through a joint effort of the GDOT, FHWA, project consultants, and city staff. The Boulevard concept was presented at the request of the Mayor. During the meeting, GDOT staff, FHWA, and city personnel answered questions regarding impacts that could result from the proposed concept. The meeting was followed by the field exercise, where a full-scale, life-size layout of

the typical section of the Boulevard concept was shown along Hampstead Avenue.

Savannah Tech - Poplar Place/University Place (2014-2015)

Outreach to the Savannah Tech-Poplar Place/University Place neighborhood has included public meetings such as the 2013 PIOH, but targeted outreach as well. The neighborhood was invited to a city-led informational meeting to review the Hampstead Avenue Frontage Road concept on March 3, 2015. This concept was a slight modification of the original Boulevard concept, with an additional frontage road to address public concerns regarding access. There were photo simulations and engineered concept layouts of both the Boulevard and Frontage Road concepts, which were described in detail to the public. The meeting was held at Savannah Tech.

The Poplar Place residents had previously expressed support of a Frontage Road idea in a letter dated January 27, 2014, and several residents continued their support of the Frontage Road Concept in comments made to the city and GDOT after the March 3, 2015 meeting. However, some of the impacted residents who live in three mobile home parks (Hunter Mobile Home Park, Herb's Trailer Park, and Doug's mobile home park immediately off DeRenne Avenue) and an apartment complex (Hampstead Oaks Apartments) are considered EJ populations and may not have had reasonable opportunities to comment. Most outreach to the Poplar Place/University Place area was concentrated on those living along DeRenne Avenue and the Montgomery Street area north of Birchfield Drive, and specific tools to ensure their participation were not employed at that time. Additional outreach was conducted in 2015 to attempt to provide the mobile home park and Rogerwood Apartment residents with additional project information as described below.

December 12, 2015 Community Outreach

At Rogerwood Apartments, ten buildings make up the complex, and at least two buildings are expected to be displaced by Project DeRenne. Access to the complex from Hampstead Avenue would be closed and a new entrance constructed on Montgomery Street. Four mobile home parks are also located in the Poplar Place and University Place neighborhoods; Hunter Mobile Home Park, Herb's Trailer Park, Doug's Trailer Park, and Henry's Trailer Park. Three of the mobile home parks – Hunter Mobile Home Park, Doug's Trailer Park, and Henry's Trailer Park, are expected to be



displaced because of the project. Herb's Trailer Park would not be directly affected by the Project DeRenne.

Project team members conducted two community outreach meetings on December 12, 2015 from 10am-1pm in the Hair Dimensions parking area, and again from 2pm-5pm next to Rent-N-Roll Custom Wheels and Tires in the Poplar Place/University Place neighborhoods. This outreach was targeted to the typically underserved minority and low-income populations in Rogerwood Apartments, Hunter Mobile Home Park, Herb's Trailer Park, Doug's Trailer Park, and Henry's Trailer Park. Flyers announcing the meetings were distributed door-to-door from Mildred Street/West DeRenne Avenue to Abercorn/East DeRenne Avenue to Janet Drive/White Bluff Road to Hampstead Avenue/Mildred Street. At the meetings, several materials were available for public review, including a description of the project, a location map, a right-of-way acquisition statement, a comment card, and a display of the proposed improvements. Project representatives, including Spanish-speaking personnel, were available to discuss the project and answer questions. After the meeting, handouts were left with the Hair Dimensions salon, a barbershop in front of Hunter Trailer Park, and the city. Both the flyers and the meeting handout were provided in Spanish and English. Ten people from the outreach area attended the meetings, including residents and business owners. While they discussed the projects with the team, no verbal or written comments were received.

Summary

Throughout the project development process, the public could access project information at online at the project's website (www.ProjectDeRenne.com), and project team members have fielded emails and letters from homeowners associations, statements from Savannah Summit meetings, and individual residents and business owners. The local news media reported on several public meetings. The city of Savannah continues to hold regular meetings with residents of many neighborhoods along the project corridor.

Chapter 6 Contacts Information

The designated contacts for Project DeRenne are Ryan Perry, PhD., NEPA Analyst (GDOT Office of Environmental Services) and Jennifer Giersch, Environmental Coordinator (FHWA, Georgia Division).



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