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**CFX consultant to recommend developer-backed route for Osceola Parkway Extension**

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The Central Florida Expressway Authority staff and consultants will recommend the Osceola Parkway Extension route favored by Tavistock Development Company because it costs \$103 million less than the route that avoids Split Oak Forest and because it wouldn't require the relocation of over a dozen existing homes, they told members of the Project Advisory Group on Monday.

The consultants from RS&H also met Monday afternoon with the Environmental Advisory Group for the new toll road. At both meetings they unveiled the evaluation matrix that compares construction and right-of-way costs, social impacts and financial feasibility, among other categories, for the OPE. The estimated cost for the preferred alignments, which cuts through Tavistock's Poitras property on the west and nips the southwest corner of Split Oak, would cost \$903 million.

That price does not factor in the projected right-of-way cost savings the agency would realize if it accepts the terms negotiated with Tavistock and Suburban Land Reserve, who control 80 percent of the right-of-way needed for the preferred alignment. Those companies have already signed a contract offering to sell the right-of-way for \$93 million, which is less than half of the estimated value of the property. The actual cost, because of the agreement, would be closer to \$800 million.

The Split Oak Avoidance Alignment, which would involve building an elevated toll road in the median of Cyrils Drive would impact 19 existing homes, forcing relocation of 16 of those owners.

"The Avoidance alternative is very disruptive to the neighborhood to the south of Split Oak," Kristoff said. "That neighborhood is an old, established neighborhood, and the relocation of those residents would be extremely difficult."

In addition, the number of approved homesites in future developments, namely Lennar's Southern Oaks community and Del Webb at Sunbridge, that would be impacted more than doubles from 88 to 175, according to the matrix.

"Based on the analysis of the social, cultural, physical, natural, environmental and economic considerations the current preferred alternative is a combination of the Lake Nona alternative for the West and the Split Oak minimization alternative for the east," RS&H's Dan Kristoff said.

The consultants will present their recommendation at a public meeting at 5:30 p.m. Tuesday at Lake Nona Middle School and to the CFX governing board on December meeting.

The deal with Tavistock would also hinge on the selection of the Lake Nona Alternative, magenta, for the western segment.

The Tavistock-preferred Lake Nona alternative for the western segment would cost \$638 million – roughly \$178 million than the alignment that runs parallel to Boggy Creek Road, but it has several advantages, according to outreach specialist Kathy Putnam. For one, the Lake Nona alignment provides direct access from OPE to S.R. 417 and Orlando International Airport. The Boggy Creek alternative lacks the airport access.

Also, the Lake Nona alignment projects 47,300 average daily trips, compared to 35,867 for the Boggy Creek route. That represents a 32-percent increase, and it makes the project more viable financially, Putnam said.

The Split Oak Minimization alignment would impact 160 acres of the nature preserve, which includes 60 acres for the road and 100 acres south of the road that would be disconnected from the rest of the forest. Tavistock and SLR have offered to dedicate 1,550 acres for conservation as an additional enticement for the board to select the preferred alternative. The gift would expand the total contiguous acreage of nature preserves in and around Split Oak to 5,375 acres.

Tavistock Spokeswoman Jessi Blakley said the agreement was based on months of meeting and discussions with environmental groups. She said CFX pushed hard for the land to be unencumbered, so the future owner would have mitigation credits to use as needed.

If the CFX board accepts the impacts to Split Oak Forest, Tavistock and Suburban Land Reserve will designate the 1,550 acres outlined in yellow for perpetual conservation.

“It’s a unique moment in time for this, because part of what we’ve been talking with environmental groups – because they’ve been a huge player at the table – is that this is part of a bigger region of conservation. It’s not just Split Oak, right. It’s this larger region, and we happen to be partnered up with the other landowner, and we have the ability to gift 1,550 acres of unencumbered land,” she said.

A portion of the 582 acres in Osceola County is currently entitled for 1 million square feet of industrial distribution space. Blakley and Tavistock Vice President Clint Beaty noted that Osceola County had actually approved 2 million square feet at that location in the northeast corner of Sunbridge, and Tavistock reduced the entitlements in half. The entitlements are still in the county’s approved Concept Plan for Sunbridge.

“We have 24,000 acres developed (in Sunbridge), and we have 17 square miles in Lake Nona, over here,” Blakley said. “We have plenty of land to develop. This was all about coming to an arrangement with the stakeholders to develop a plan and to develop a route that we felt minimized impacts on things that no one wanted impacts on – whether it was homes or forest – and also gave back a buffer in a conservation area.”