



November 7, 2013

Thank you for attending the public hearing open house for project no. STP00-0000-00(833), P.I. No. 0000833. In this handout package, you will find a need and purpose statement, project description, location map, environmental statement, right-of-way statement, and comment card.

As you enter the room, you will notice displays of the proposed project. Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) representatives, who can be identified by the nametags they are wearing, are available to discuss the project and answer your questions. Please take this opportunity to discuss the project with a GDOT representative. There will be no formal presentation.

A court reporter will be available for those persons who would like to make a verbal statement about the project. You may also complete a comment card and deposit it into the box provided here, or send in written comments about the project until November 17, 2013. Written comments should be sent to Mr. Glenn Bowman, P.E., State Environmental Administrator, Georgia Department of Transportation, 600 West Peachtree Street NW, 16th Floor, Atlanta, Georgia 30308. Comments can also be made via the web at www.dot.ga.gov. Click on **Public Outreach** from the **Information Center** dropdown menu at the top right side of the page. All comments will be made a part of the project record. We hope you will take advantage of one of these opportunities to let GDOT know your view of the proposal.

The displays and plans will be available for review for ten days after the public hearing open house at the Georgia Department of Transportation Area Seven – Dublin Area Office, 2003 US Highway 441 South, Dublin, Georgia 31021. A copy of all comments received will be available for public review at this same location and at the Georgia Department of Transportation, Office of Environment Services, 600 West Peachtree Street NW, 16th Floor, Atlanta, Georgia 30308, as soon as compilation is completed.

Again, thank you for attending this public hearing open house and for giving us your comments. If you should have any questions or need additional information, feel free to contact the project manager George Brewer at (478) 538-8604 or Paul Alimia at (404) 631-1353 of the Office of Environmental Services.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Glenn Bowman" followed by a stylized flourish.

Glenn Bowman, P.E.
State Environmental Administrator

Gb/pa/mn

Attachments

STP00-0000-00(833), Laurens County
P.I. No. 0000833

Need and Purpose

The purpose and need of the proposed project is to improve east-west mobility and connectivity in the City of Dublin, East Dublin, and Laurens County by providing an additional Oconee River crossing. Currently, only one river crossing, United States (US) 80 in Dublin, exists along a 27 mile stretch from Interstate (I) 16 in Laurens County north to State Route (SR) 57 in Wilkinson County. The new crossing would improve local connectivity between Dublin and East Dublin as well as regional mobility in Laurens County. This additional connectivity would also help improve safety on US 80 through Dublin and East Dublin.

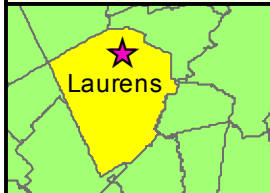
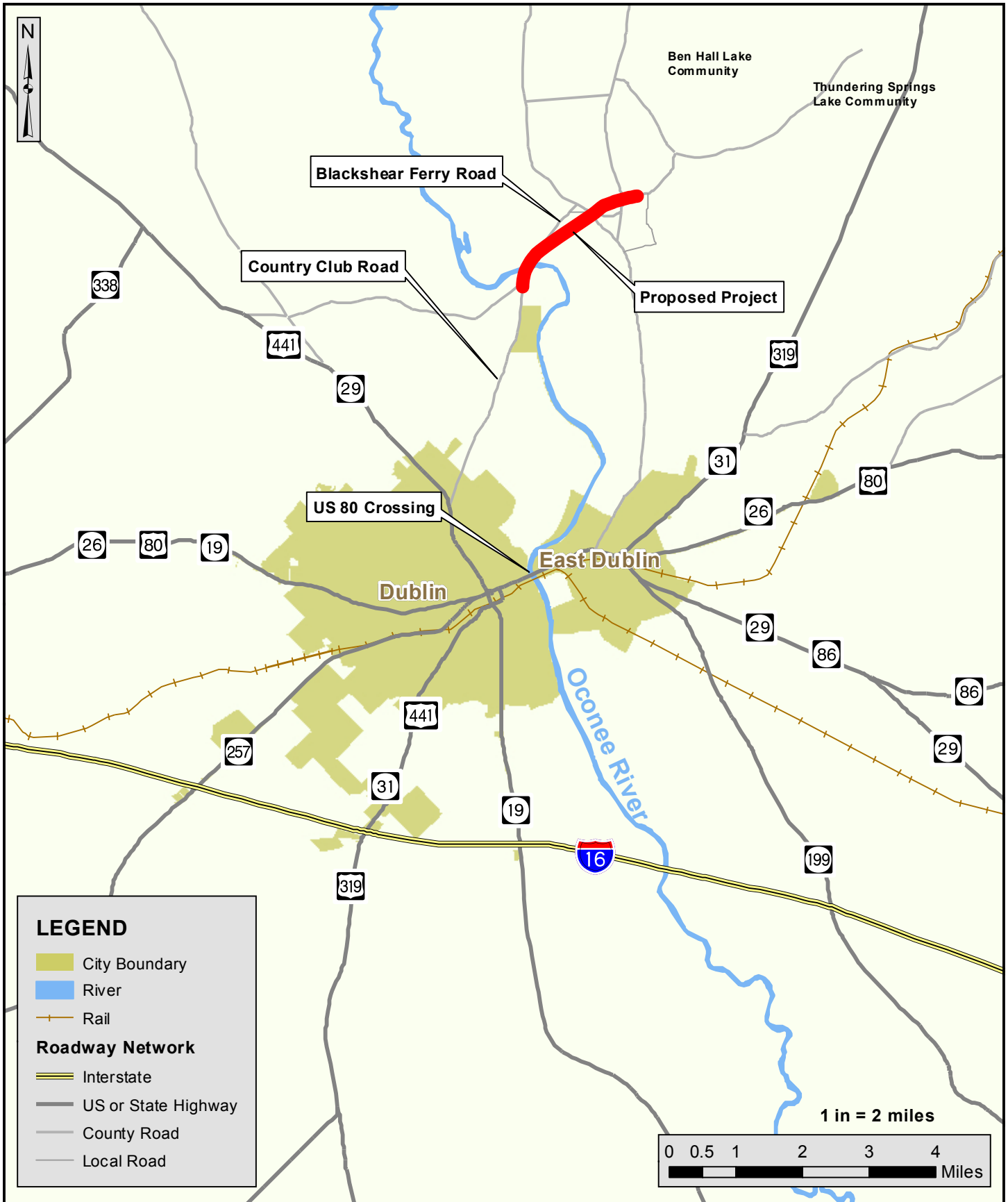
Project Description

The preferred alternative consists of the construction of a new roadway and bridge over the Oconee River in Laurens County. The project would be constructed on new location except for sections along CR 454/Country Club Road and CR 8/Ben Hall Lake Drive. The existing typical section along CR 454/Country Club Road consists of one 10-foot travel lane in each direction with an existing right-of-way of approximately 40 feet and a posted speed limit of 35 miles per hour. The existing typical section along CR 8/Ben Hall Lake Drive consists of one 10.5-foot travel lane in each direction with an existing right-of-way of approximately 80 feet and a posted speed limit of 55 miles per hour.

The preferred alternative would begin at MP 3.46 on CR 454/Country Club Road just south of the existing CR 455/Blackshear Ferry Road intersection and proceeds north as a symmetrical widening to just southeast of the Oconee River. The proposed roadway would continue onto a new bridge structure and cross the Oconee River. The project would then proceed northeast onto new location and intersect CR 520/Buckeye Road and continue east on new location intersecting CR 12/New Buckeye Road. The project would end at MP 0.91 on CR 8/Ben Hall Lake Drive. (see **Figure 1a**, Project Location Map and **Figure 1b**, Aerial View of Project Location Map). The overall project length would be approximately 2.33 miles. The functional classification for the new roadway would be major collector. The roadway would be expected to operate at LOS B when the project is completed.

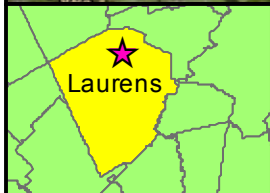
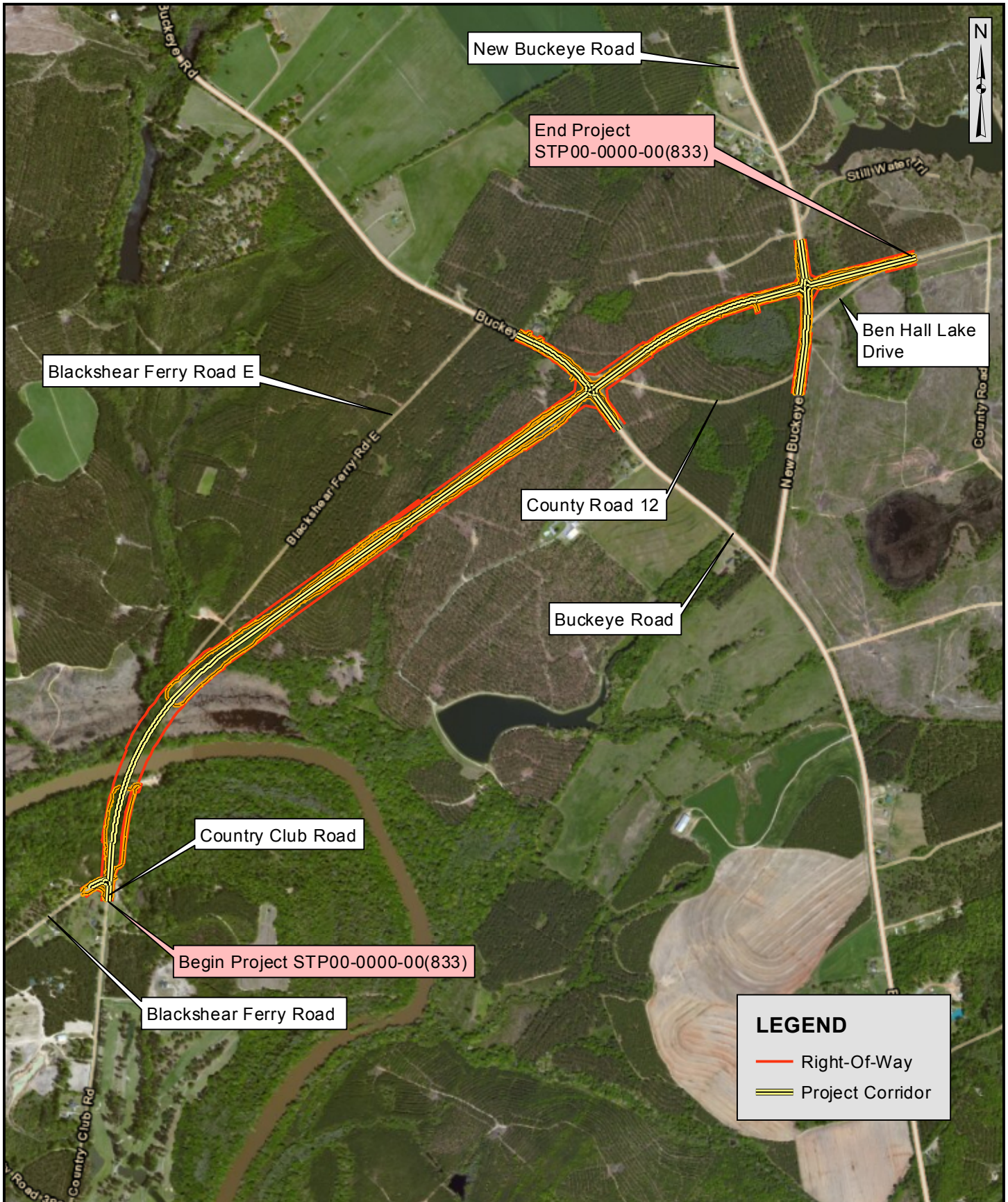
The proposed roadway would consist of one 12-foot travel lane in each direction with 8-foot rural shoulders along CR 454/Country Club Road and 8-foot shoulders along CR 455/Blackshear Ferry Road. The vertical and horizontal alignment would be designed to meet a 55 mph speed design. Traffic would be maintained on the existing roadways during construction of this project. Additional right-of-way would be required for this project. The proposed right-of-way width would vary from approximately 140 feet to 280 feet with mitered corners at street intersections in order to construct the bridge and approaches at an elevation sufficient to meet the 100-year storm event. Permanent easements would be required for the construction and maintenance of slopes. Access control of the new location facility would be by permit.

The new bridge across the Oconee River would be approximately 1260 feet long and 40 feet wide. In addition, construction of the project would require improvements to the existing intersections at CR 455/Blackshear Ferry Road and CR 454/Country Club Road; the proposed intersection of the project and CR 520/Buckeye Road; the proposed intersection of the project and CR 12/New Buckeye Road; and the new intersection of CR 8/Ben Hall Lake Drive and CR 12/New Buckeye Road.



New Oconee River Crossing
 GDOT Project Number STP00-0000-00(833)
 P.I. No. 0000833
 Laurens County, Georgia
 Project Location Map

Date: November 2013
 Scale: 1" = 1,500'
 Figure 1a



New Oconee River Crossing
 GDOT Project Number STP00-0000-00(833)
 P.I. No. 0000833
 Laurens County, Georgia

Date: November 2013
 Scale: 1" = 1,500'
 Figure 1b

The proposed improvement to the intersections are discussed below:

- **Existing intersection of CR 732/Blackshear Ferry Road and CR 454/Country Club Road:**
The existing intersection of CR 732/Blackshear Ferry Road and CR454/Country Club Road will be improved by increasing the travel lane widths of CR 454/Blackshear Ferry Road from approximately 9 feet to 12 feet in width. The lane widths of CR 454/Country Club Road will be increased from 10 feet to 12 feet. Additionally, right-of-way will be acquired in all quadrants of the intersection which will result in increased visibility at the intersection.
- **Proposed intersection of the project and CR 520/Buckeye Road:**
The proposed intersection of CR 520/Buckeye Road and CR 454/Country Club Road will be improved by widening the existing travel lanes on CR 520/Buckeye Road from 10 feet to 12 feet. The proposed intersection is designed to intersect at approximately 88 degrees. Additionally, right-of-way will be acquired in all quadrants of the intersection which will result in increased visibility at the intersection.
- **Proposed intersection of the project and CR 12/New Buckeye Road; and the new intersection of CR 8/Ben Hall Lake Drive and CR 12/New Buckeye Road:**
The proposed intersection of CR12/New Buckeye Road and CR 8/Ben Hall Lake Drive will be improved by relocating the intersection approximately 550 feet north of the existing intersection to form a new intersection with the proposed CR 454/Country Club Road construction. The angle of the new intersection will be improved from the existing condition of approximately 25 degrees, to the proposed condition of approximately 81 degrees. Both CR 8/Ben Hall Lake Drive and CR 12/New Buckeye Road will be widened from the existing 10-foot lanes to a proposed 12-foot lane width. Additionally, right-of-way will be acquired in all quadrants of the intersection which will result in increased visibility at the intersection.

Summary of Environmental Study

In compliance with the 1969 National Environmental Policy Act, the Georgia Department of Transportation has conducted an assessment of the social, economic and environmental effects for the proposed GDOT Project No. STP00-0000-00(833), P.I. No. 0000833, Laurens County - new Oconee River Crossing. The draft environmental document was signed by Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) on September 27, 2013. Copies are available at this public hearing for review. The following information gives a summary of the environmental document.

No residential units or businesses would be displaced by the project.

In accordance with Executive Order 11990, the proposed project was surveyed for wetland and stream involvement. About 14 jurisdictional wetlands, 3 ephemeral channels, and 7 jurisdictional streams were identified within the project's area of potential effect (APE). It is estimated that 2.11 acres of wetlands, 293 linear feet/0.026 acre of ephemeral channel, and 723 linear feet/0.31 acre of stream would be impacted by the proposed project. Impacts to the wetlands, ephemeral channels and streams cannot be avoided due to the existing right-of-way easement and the required right-of-way for the new location, widening and improvements necessary for the project. These impacts would be mitigated by purchasing approximately 2,207.8 stream credits and 14.6 wetland credits from a GDOT approved mitigation bank. The project would not have an adverse effect on water quality within the project corridor. A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 permit would be required for this project.

In accordance with Executive Order 11988, the proposed project was surveyed for floodplain involvement. A transverse crossing of the 100-year floodplain associated with Oconee River was identified. The proposed project would not significantly encroach upon the floodplain associated with the Oconee River.

The project was evaluated for its consistency with state and federal air quality goals, including CO, Ozone, PM_{2.5} and MSATs as part of this assessment. Result indicated that the project is consistent with the State Implementation Plan for the attainment of clean air quality in Georgia and complies with both state and federal air quality standards.

In compliance with the FHWA established guidelines for the assessment of highway traffic-generated noise, the proposed project was evaluated for noise impacts. For the construction of this project, the existing (2012) and future no-build (2038) conditions showed no impacted receptors. The build (2038) condition showed one impacted receptor (one residential unit – Receptor 13). Receptor 13 in the build conditions was impacted due to a substantial increase and not on the basis of approaching or exceeding the criteria set forth in 23 CFR 772. Based on determinations of feasibility and reasonableness, no barriers are proposed for this project.

In compliance with Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, the project has been surveyed for existing and eligible National Register properties. No existing or eligible historic or archaeological resources were found to be located within the project's area of potential environmental effect.

In accordance with the Endangered Species Act and Joint Coordination Procedures, the project area was evaluated for presence of habitat that may support the occurrence of federal- and state-listed threatened and endangered species. The proposed roadway improvements would have no significant adverse effect on the robust redhorse since impacts to the Oconee River will be minimal. The project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the eastern indigo snake. The project will not result in a “take” of the bald eagle. The project would have no effect on wood stork, red-cockaded woodpecker, and relict trillium. Section 7 consultation with the USFWS was completed for these species. Furthermore, according to the USFWS critical habitat portal, there are no areas of critical habitat in the U.S. for protected species listed in Laurens County.

In accordance with the Farmland Protection Policy Act, the criteria of 7 CFR, Part 658 have been applied to determine project effects on farmland. Based on the assessment of these effects, no additional alternates need to be examined.

The proposed project has been surveyed for potential sites where contaminated soil and/or water from leaking underground storage tanks may exist. No sites were found. In the event that any hazardous and/or toxic waste sites are discovered during construction, procedures outlined in GDOT's Standard Specification 107.22 would be followed. Implementation of the proposed project would not preclude any necessary site remediation to be performed by others.

Copies of the environmental document are available at this hearing for your review or by sending your request to:

Mr. Glenn Bowman, P.E.
State Environmental Administrator
Georgia Department of Transportation
600 West Peachtree Street, NW – 16th Floor
Atlanta, Georgia 30308

Right-of-Way Acquisition

Once a project is approved, of appraising, purchasing property and, if required, assisting individuals, families or businesses in relocating. When purchasing property, we desire to pay full market value for the necessary property. This value will be established by using qualified real estate appraisers who will prepare, written appraisals using actual sales data in the surrounding community.

In making an appraisal, the appraiser will contact each property owner and arrange a convenient time to make an on-site inspection of the property with him or her. After completion of the appraisal, the right-of-way appraisal staff will review and field check the findings for accuracy to ensure that all things relating to value have been considered in establishing the amount to be offered. When only a part of the property is needed, we will purchase that part plus pay for loss of value, if any, to the remaining property. In all cases, when the acquiring agency purchases property, we will make additional payments to property owners for the cost of transferring ownership to the acquiring agency. These costs generally include transfer taxes, deed-recording fees, mortgage pre-payment penalties and the pro-rata share of city or county taxes.

The Georgia Department of Transportation is aware of the problems experienced by individuals, families, businesses, and nonprofit organizations when they are required to move. It is our commitment that no family or individual will be required to relocate until comparable decent, safe and sanitary housing is available or is provided for those occupants.

Additionally, the acquiring agency will provide assistance to businesses and nonprofit organizations in relocating to other sites and will encourage them to remain in the community.

The information pamphlet “*What Happens When Your Property is Needed for a Transportation Facility*” is available at the greeter’s table at the Public Hearing Open House (PHOH), and this booklet outlines the services offered and any payments for which you may be eligible, such as moving expenses and replacement housing benefits for owners and tenants. The brochure also outlines the eligibility requirements for receiving these payments.

Results of the field inspection by GDOT personnel have revealed that Project STP00-0000-00(833) will not displace any residential units and businesses.

Please note that Laurens County is currently purchasing right-of-way for the proposed project. For any right-of-way questions, please contact Bryan Rogers at (478)-272-4755.

Georgia Department of Transportation

Public Hearing Open House Comment Card

Project STP00-0000-00(833), Laurens County, P.I. No. 0000833

November 7, 2013

Please print responses.

Name _____

Address _____

Do you support the project? *For* *Against* *Conditional* *Uncommitted*

Comments _____

How did you hear about this meeting? *Radio* *Newspaper* *Signs* *Word of Mouth*
 Other _____

Was the location of the meeting convenient for you to attend? *Yes* *No*

If no, please suggest a general location that is more convenient to your community.

Was the time of the meeting convenient for you to attend? *Yes* *No*

If no, please suggest a time frame that is more convenient for you. _____

Were your questions answered by GDOT personnel? *Yes* *No*

Do you understand the project after attending this meeting? *Yes* *No*

Please share your suggestions on improving the way GDOT conducts public meetings.

Mail To:

*Mr. Glenn Bowman, P.E., State Environmental Administrator
Georgia Department of Transportation
600 West Peachtree Street, NW – 16th Floor
Atlanta, Georgia 30308*