



155 F Road Loxahatchee Groves, FL 33470

TO: Town Council of Town of Loxahatchee Groves

FROM: Francine Ramaglia, Town Manager

DATE: July 1, 2025

SUBJECT: Presentation and Update Regarding CSX/Northlake Blvd Closure by Mary McNicholas of Geoffrey B. Sluggett & Associates, Inc., Town's Local Lobbyist, and Tricia Barr of Simmons & White

Background:

CSX/FDOT Project Manager Mel Pollock, Palm Beach County Engineer David Ricks, Tricia Barr and Bryan Kelley with Simmons & White, and Ms. McNicholas with Sluggett & Associates will be here to present the most up to date status of the closure and the detour routes including planned management of traffic during the anticipated closure.

Our team—the Mayor, the Town Manager, Public Works Director and Superintendent along with Mary McNicholas with Sluggett & Associates, Tricia Barr and Bryan Kelley with Simmons & White —has been working diligently alongside CSX/FDOT Project Manager Mel Pollock, Palm Beach County Engineer David Ricks, and other agency staff to prepare for the upcoming closure at the Northlake Boulevard CSX rail crossing. This work is part of the larger Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) SR710/Beeline Highway improvement project.

Recap of the Project

- CSX has confirmed the need for a full rail crossing replacement at Northlake Boulevard due to safety concerns.
- This will require a complete closure of both eastbound and westbound lanes at the crossing.
- The crossing falls under a Palm Beach County agreement but is included within the FDOT project limits.
- The closure is expected to last 8 days, beginning on a Friday evening—with current planning focused on the third Friday in July.
- Emergency access will be maintained in both directions via the SE Beeline Highway to Westbound Northlake Boulevard ramp, with 24/7 law enforcement presence.
- At least three weeks' public notice will be provided prior to the closure.



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- Detour routes and traffic strategies (signal timing, signage, and road configuration adjustments) are being reviewed collaboratively by FDOT's Smart Workzone Consultant, Palm Beach County Traffic Division (PBCTE), and affected municipalities.

Our team has participated in multiple stakeholder coordination sessions and has been in regular dialogue with both CSX/FDOT and County officials. A primary focus has been understanding and reducing the impact on major corridors like Okeechobee Boulevard, which may see increased volume during the closure.

We have worked closely with the Indian Trail Improvement District (ITID) and other neighboring Western Communities to ensure local perspectives are incorporated into detour and safety planning. To that end, the Mayor attended a special meeting held by ITID this past week. We are especially appreciative of the Palm Beach County Fire Rescue and Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office (PBSO), which has committed to increasing patrols in the affected areas during the closure period.

FDOT and CSX are leading this coordination to ensure streamlined, accurate communication and planning. We are supporting efforts to prevent conflicting information from circulating among the many involved agencies.

Next steps include:

- Continued localized coordination with the County and FDOT to finalize emergency access and traffic control planning.
- Launching a County-led public outreach and education campaign, which will include a town-hosted session in our chambers with a Zoom option.
- Continuing to refine and finalize detour options—attached are the DRAFT route alternatives and traffic impact analysis for your review.

We also anticipate performing traffic counts and engineering observations during the detour period to not only direct the management of traffic most effectively, but also to determine to what extent Okeechobee needs to have enhanced traffic controls and calming measures. We anticipate a proposal from Simmons & White which we will provide to you upon receipt.