

Paul S. Sarbanes Transit in Parks



Sanibel City Council June 5, 2012

Alternative Transportation in the
J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge



Paul S. Sarbanes Transit In Parks Program

Formerly known as Alternative Transportation in Parks and Public Lands (ATPPL)

Partner Agencies:



Sarbanes Program Goals

- Reduce congestion and pollution
- Conserve natural, historical, and cultural resources
- Improve Refuge visitor mobility and accessibility
- Enhance the Refuge visitor experience
- Ensure access to all

Additional Project Goals

- Supported by the public
- Cost effective



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- PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT**
 - OPTIMIZE REFUGE VISITOR CIRCULATION**
 - MAXIMIZE EFFICIENT PARKING**
 - IMPROVE BICYCLE & PEDESTRIAN CONNECTIONS**

Planning From the Ground Up

- Background Data Collection (2007 – present)
- Public Engagement (2007 – present)
- Existing Conditions (2008 – 2009)
- National Best Practices Review (2008 – present)
- Biological Assessment (2009)
- Draft Alternatives (2009 – 2010)
- Technical Evaluation and Measures of Effectiveness (2010 – 2011)
- Refined Draft Project Recommendation (2011 – 2012)



A young birder at the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge.

Public engagement and agency coordination
have been essential at each stage of the process.

Public Engagement

- ❑ Completed surveys from Phase I in 2009: more than 2,100
- ❑ Completed surveys in 2011: 243
- ❑ Total attendees at the six public workshops and meetings: 387
- ❑ Attendees at March 29th open house: approximately 65



January 2009 workshop



February 2009 survey



April 2, 2009 workshop



April 16, 2009 workshop



January 2011 workshop



April 2011 workshop



Summer 2011 online survey



March 2012 open house

We Listened

- Remove all new on-island circulator elements
 - No Environmental Institution Circulator along Sanibel-Captiva Road
 - No extension to resorts
 - No Island-wide circulator
 - No Circulator to mainland
 - No Circulator to Captiva Island
 - No Circulator along Periwinkle Way
- No gasoline/diesel propulsion type
- No two-way travel on Wildlife Drive
- No canoe landing at Dixie Beach Blvd
- No pontoon tour enhancements



“You listened to us –
thank you.”

- attendee at
March 29th open house

Based on comments from the community,
these elements are no longer being considered

**Refined DRAFT
Project
Recommendation**

A. Wildlife Crossings

Benefits

- Protects wildlife from vehicles
- Increased safety on roadways

Supporting Data

- 622 wildlife fatalities on Sanibel-Captiva Road between 2003 and 2010
- Received support from 92 percent of the public in 2012



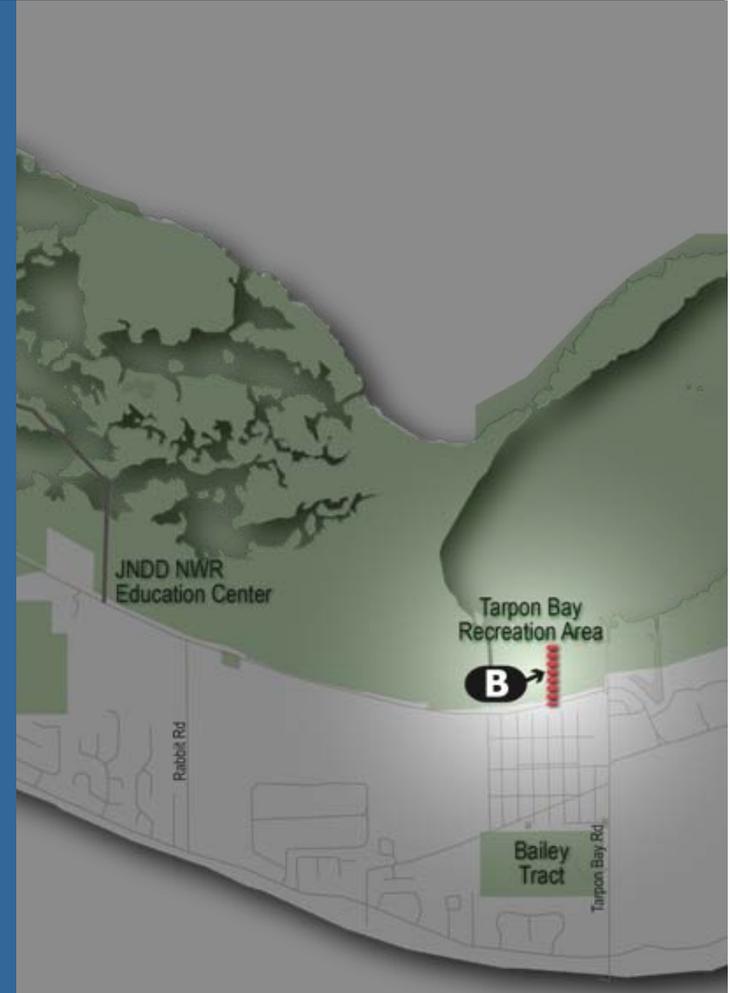
B. New Trail Connecting Tarpon Bay Recreation Area to the Shared Use Path

Benefits

- Improves pedestrian and bicycle access between the Refuge and Tarpon Bay Recreation Area
- Enhances Refuge visitor experience

Supporting Data

- No designated connection from the Shared Use Path to Tarpon Bay Recreation Area
- Approximately 642,000 Refuge visitors, including 198,000 Tarpon Bay visitors (annual average from 2008 to 2010)
- Received support from 96 percent of the public in 2012



C. Enhanced Refuge Wayfinding Plan for Existing Refuge Signage

Benefits

- Focuses pedestrian movements
- Enhances Refuge visitor experience
- Would use the minimum number of signs required that meets City standards

Supporting Data

- Steady increase in Shared Use Path users
- Received support from 95 percent of the public in 2012



D. Bailey Tract Wayfinding to Shared Use Path

Benefits

- Improves interconnectivity between Bailey Tract and the Refuge
- Improves pedestrian and bicycle access
- Protects flora and fauna by focusing user activity

Supporting Data

- Approximately 642,000 Refuge visitors, including 30,000 Bailey Tract visitors (annual average from 2008 to 2010)
- Received support from 95 percent of the public in 2012



E. Expanded Refuge Parking Options at Existing Satellite Overflow Parking

- Add additional safety measures for pedestrians as needed

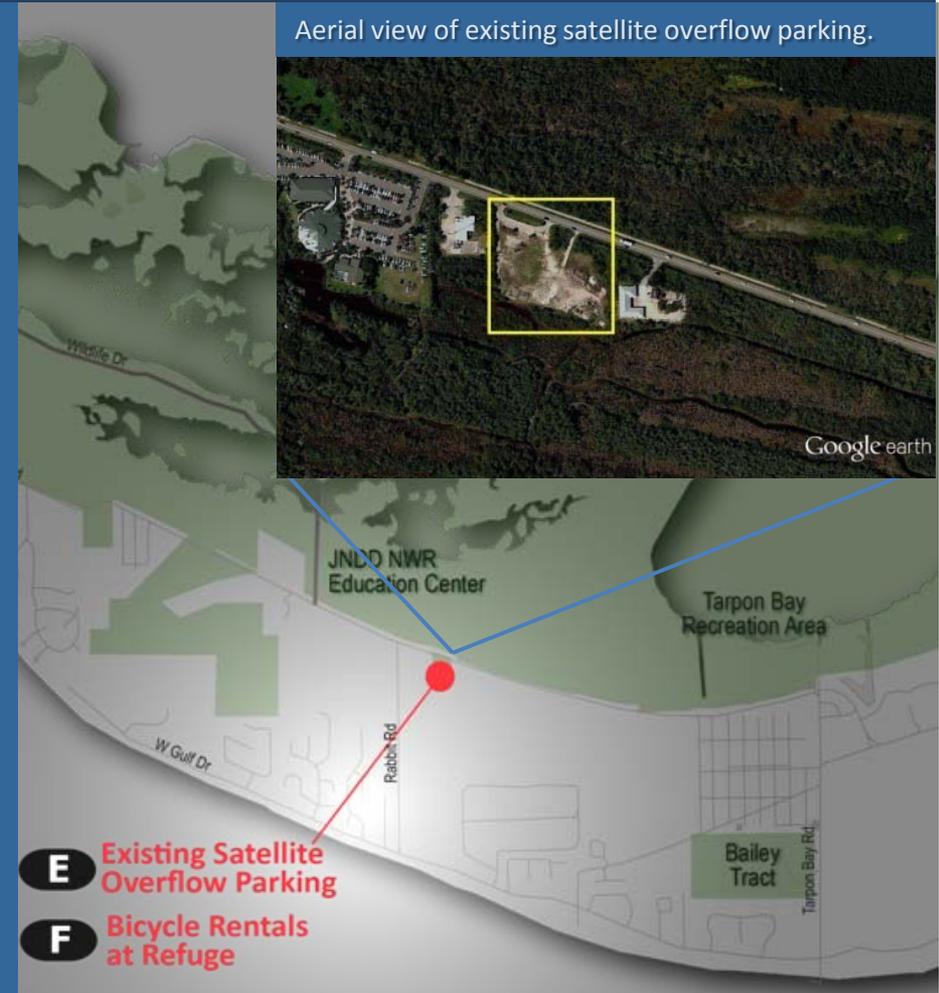
F. Bicycle Rentals at Refuge (contingent upon E.)

Benefits

- Preserves sanctuary & wildlife habitat
- Reduces unauthorized parking
- Encourages more bicycle use at Refuge
- Reduces congestion and pollution on Wildlife Drive

Supporting Data

- Insufficient parking capacity at Refuge during peak season (187 spaces for ~3,000 average daily visitors)
- Received support from the public (E. 91 percent; F. 86 percent) in 2012



G. Enhancements to Refuge Tram & New Shuttle Service

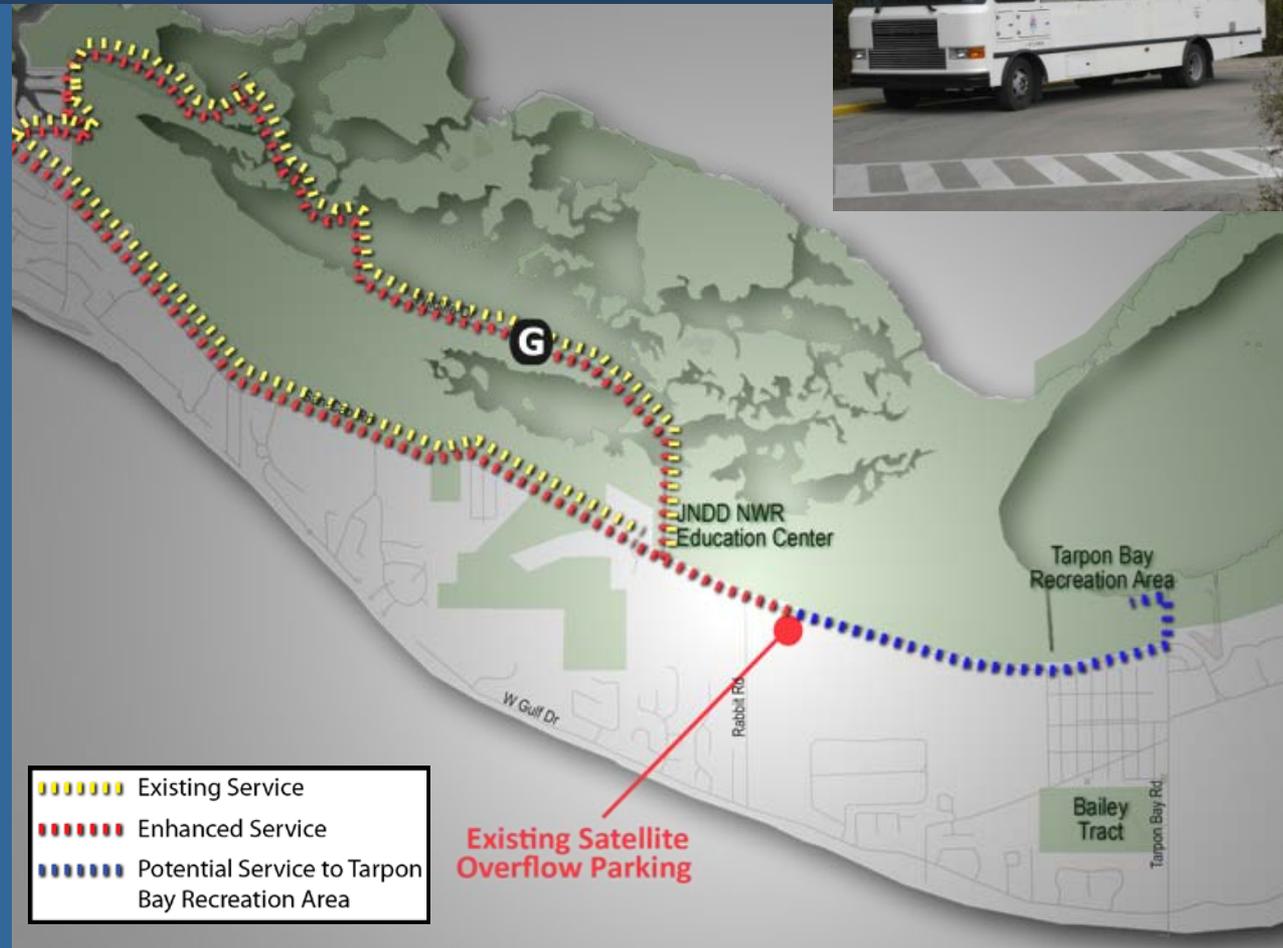
- 30 minute headways during peak season for Refuge Tram
- Direct shuttle service from existing satellite overflow parking to Refuge
- Non-guided service along Wildlife Drive

Benefits

- Reduces vehicles on Wildlife Drive
- Fewer vehicles results in reduced congestion & pollution
- Improves Refuge visitor mobility, accessibility & choices

Supporting Data

- Current tram demand exceeds supply in peak season
- Received support from 85 percent of the public in 2012



These project elements have been reorganized into Secondary & Supportive Project Elements. These projects are located wholly within the Refuge. The Sarbanes program stresses increasing access to Federal lands, not just within them.

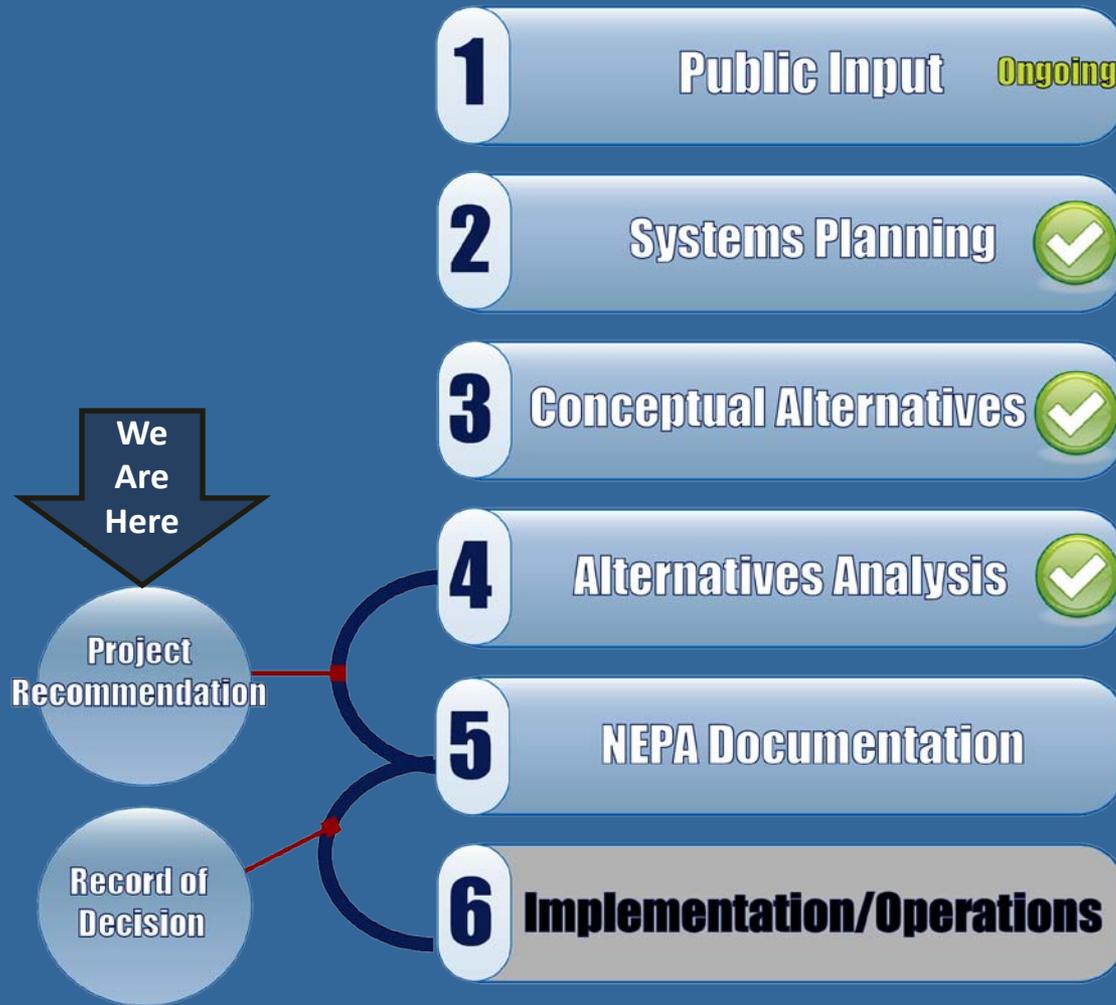
1. Indigo Trail Surface Treatment (Additional Crushed Shell Fill)
2. Calusa Shell Mound Trail Surface Treatment (Replace Boardwalk)
3. Wulfert Keys Trail Surface Treatment (Additional Crushed Shell Fill)
4. Bailey Tract Trail Surface Treatment (Additional Crushed Shell Fill)



Public Support for Project Recommendation Elements

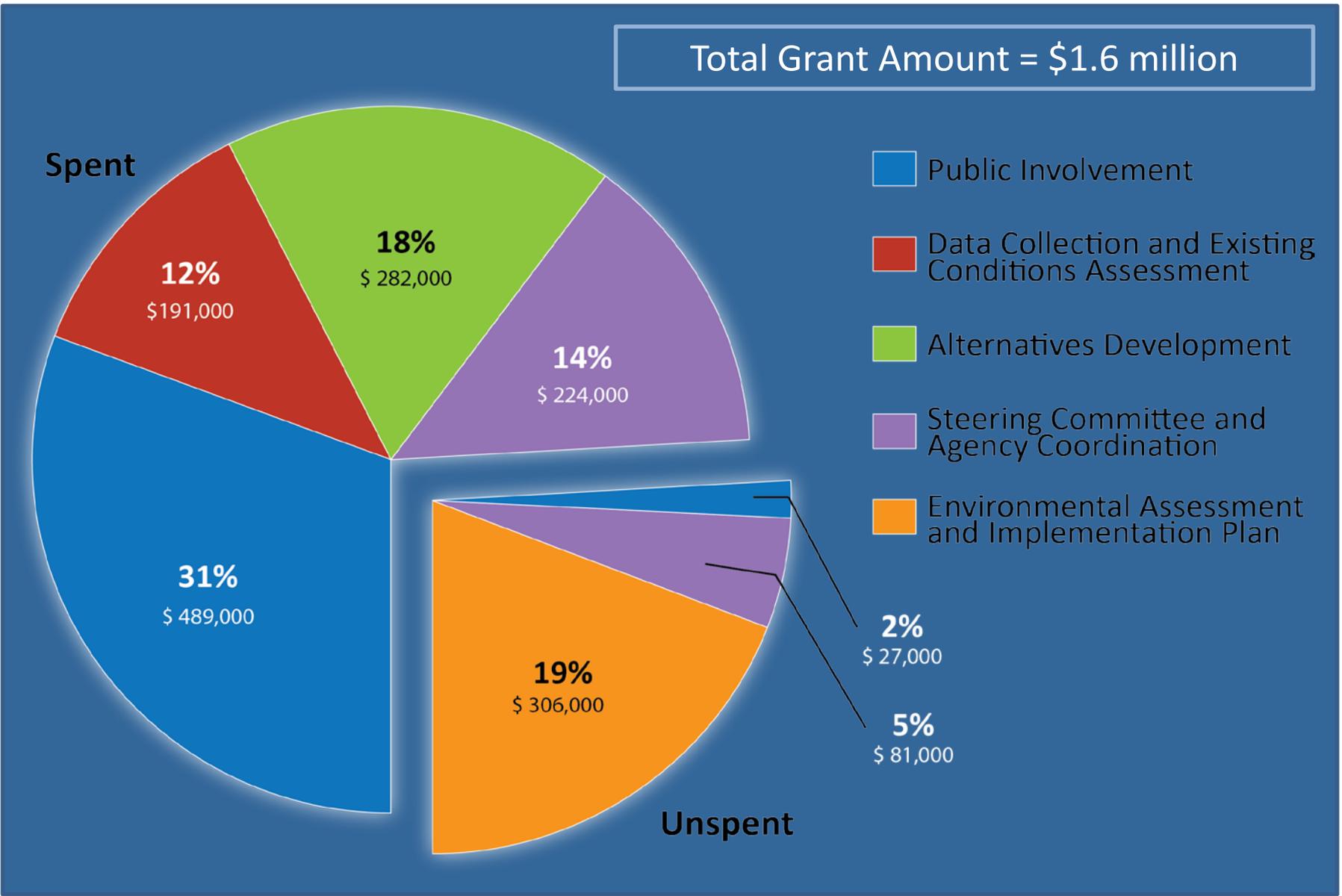
Project Recommendation Element	Do you support the element? (2012)	
	Yes	No
A. Wildlife Crossings	92%	8%
B. New Trail Connecting Tarpon Bay Recreation Area to Sanibel Shared-Use Path	96%	4%
C. Enhanced Refuge Wayfinding Plan for Existing Refuge Signage	95%	5%
D. Bailey Tract Trail: Wayfinding to Sanibel Shared-Use Path	95%	5%
E. Expanded Refuge Parking Options at Existing Satellite Overflow Parking	91%	9%
F. Bicycle Rentals at Refuge (contingent upon E.)	86%	14%
G. Enhancements to Refuge Tram and New Refuge Shuttle Service	85%	15%
H. Secondary and Supportive Project Elements: Trail Surface Treatments to Indigo Trail, Shell Mound Trail, Wulfert Keys Trail, and Bailey Tract Trail	92 - 98%	2 - 8%

Next Steps



*NEPA = National Environmental Protection Act

Total Grant Amount = \$1.6 million



 Agency Coordination

 Final Documentation

Present Project Recommendation

- Sanibel City Council (June 5)
- Lee County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) Committees (June 7) and Board (June 22)
- Federal Partners: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Federal Transit Administration

Conduct Environmental Assessment

- Federal Environmental Analysis and Documentation
- Summer 2012

Develop Implementation and Financial Plans

- Fall 2012

Thank you

