

The Public Hearing is being held at the following location:

**Date:** Monday, October 19, 2015  
**Place:** TPepin's Hospitality Centre  
4121 N. 50th Street  
Tampa, FL 33610  
**Time:** 5:30 - 7:30 p.m. Open House  
6:30 p.m. Formal Presentation

### We Want Your Input!

A successful PD&E Study depends on the public's participation in the study process. We encourage your input throughout the study.

To provide comments, ask questions, and make suggestions about the study, please contact:

Kirk Bogen, P.E.  
Environmental Management Engineer  
FDOT District Seven  
11201 N. McKinley Drive, MS 7-500  
Tampa, FL 33612  
(813) 975-6448  
(800) 266-7220  
kirk.bogen@dot.state.fl.us

#### Media Contact

Kris Carson  
Public Information Officer  
FDOT District Seven  
11201 N. McKinley Drive, MS 7-500  
Tampa, FL 33612  
(813) 975-6202  
(800) 266-7220  
kristen.carson@dot.state.fl.us

All comments or other exhibits must be postmarked no later than **Thursday, October 29, 2015** to become part of the official public hearing record.

## Public Hearing Notice

### I-4 Project Development and Environment Study

### From east of 50th Street to the Polk Parkway (SR 570)

### WPI Segment No: 431746-1



#### Dear Property Owner or Interested Citizen:

You are invited to attend and participate in the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District Seven, public hearing for a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) study on Interstate 4 (I-4) from east of 50th Street to the Polk Parkway in Hillsborough County and Polk County, Florida. This public hearing is being held to allow interested persons the opportunity to provide comments concerning the location, conceptual design, and social, economic, and environmental effects for express toll lanes along 22.1 miles on I-4 from east of 50th Street to the Polk Parkway (SR 570). These new express toll lanes will be built in Hillsborough and Polk counties next to the existing non-toll lanes along I-4. Using a SunPass transponder, drivers can choose to pay a toll in order to use the express lanes and enjoy a quicker commute.

This letter also serves as notice to property owners (pursuant to F.S. 339.155) that all or a portion of their property is within 300 feet of the edge of right of way of the proposed project. However, this does not mean that all properties will be directly affected.

Your involvement is important to FDOT and to the success of this study. We invite you to share your ideas and comments about the proposed improvements at the public hearing. FDOT representatives will be available at the public hearing beginning at 5:30 p.m. to answer questions and discuss the project informally. Draft project documents and other project-related materials will be displayed and a PowerPoint presentation will run continuously during the open house. A court reporter will be available to receive comments in a one-on-one setting.

At 6:30 p.m., FDOT representatives will begin the formal portion of the hearing, which will provide an opportunity to make formal oral public comments. Following the formal portion of the hearing, the informal open house will resume and continue until 7:30 p.m. You can attend anytime during the two-hour meeting to review project information and talk one-on-one with project team members. FDOT welcomes and appreciates everyone's participation.

Persons wishing to submit written statements or other exhibits, in place of or in addition to oral statements, may do so at the hearing or by sending them to Ming Gao, P.E., Intermodal Systems Development Manager, FDOT District Seven, 11201 N. McKinley Drive, MS 7-500, Tampa, FL, 33612-6456. Email comments to kirk.bogen@dot.state.fl.us or submit comments online at [www.tampabayexpress.com](http://www.tampabayexpress.com). All exhibits or statements must be postmarked or emailed no later than Thursday, October 29, 2015 to become part of the official public hearing record.

If you have questions about the project or scheduled hearing, please contact Kirk Bogen, Environmental Management Engineer, at kirk.bogen@dot.state.fl.us or 813-975-6448.

Sincerely,



Ming Gao, P.E.  
Intermodal Systems Development Manager

Florida Department of Transportation  
District Seven  
MS-7-500  
11201 North McKinley Drive  
Tampa, FL 33612



### Project Documents

Draft project documents and other project-related materials will be available for review at the following locations from **Monday, September 28, 2015 to Thursday, October 29 2015**.

#### Bruton Memorial Library

302 W. McLendon Street  
Plant City, Florida 33563  
(813) 757-9215  
Library Hours:  
Mon-Thurs (10 a.m. to 9 p.m.)  
Fri (10 a.m. to 6 p.m.)  
Sat (10 a.m. to 5 p.m.)  
Sun (1 p.m. to 5 p.m.)

#### FDOT, District Seven

Intermodal Systems Development  
11201 N. McKinley Drive  
Tampa, Florida 33612  
(813) 975-6448  
FDOT Hours:  
Mon-Fri 8 a.m. - 5 p.m.



### Right of Way Acquisition Procedure

We understand that when a transportation project proposes the acquisition of private property, you may have questions and concerns. To better educate and inform you about the right-of-way acquisition process and your rights, the department has created real estate acquisition and relocation brochures. These brochures and other education materials will be available at the public hearing.

Copies of the brochures may also be found on our website:  
<http://www.dot.state.fl.us/rightofway/Documents.shtm>

We are interested in hearing your concerns and answering your questions. We also encourage you to speak with the FDOT Project Manager or a Right-of-Way Representative at your convenience.

### Non-Discrimination Laws and Regulations Compliance:

Public participation is solicited without regard to race, color, national origin, age, sex, religion, disability or family status. Persons who require special accommodations under the American with Disabilities Act or persons who require translation services (free of charge) should contact Lee Royal, Government Liaison Administrator, at (813) 975-6427, (800) 226-7220 or [lee.royal@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:lee.royal@dot.state.fl.us) at least 7 working days before the public hearing.

### En Español

Si usted tiene preguntas o comentarios o si simplemente desea mas informacion sobre este Proyecto, favor de ponerse en contacto con la senora Elba Lopez, al teléfono (813) 975-6403 o correo electrónico [elba.lopez@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:elba.lopez@dot.state.fl.us).

## What is a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study?

A PD&E study is a comprehensive evaluation of social, cultural, economic and environmental effects associated with a proposed transportation improvement. This analysis along with public input enables the FDOT, in cooperation with other state/federal agencies and local governments, to determine the location and future design of the proposed improvements.

## Project Description and Need

I-4 is a major east-west interstate that provides an important connection to the regional and statewide transportation network (such as I-275, I-75, and the Polk Parkway) linking the Tampa Bay region to the remainder of the state and nation. I-4 is a Strategic Intermodal System (SIS) highway. The SIS is the state's network of high priority facilities. The 22.1 miles of express toll lanes on I-4 from east of 50th Street to the Polk Parkway in Hillsborough County and Polk County, are critical in order to maintain and improve access to major transportation facilities, as well as enhance mobility within the Tampa Bay area. The FDOT has designated I-4 eastbound from Tampa as one of seven one-way evacuation routes in Florida. The need for interstate system improvements within Tampa Bay has been extensively documented in numerous studies, such as the Tampa Interstate Study (TIS), several PD&E studies, and the TBX Master Plan.

This study includes the Recommended Build Alternative of express toll lanes but also a do nothing, or No-Build Alternative. As part of the Recommended Build Alternative, the express toll lanes on I-4:

- Reduces congestion on the existing lanes.
- Provides a choice to the user to take a tolled option or stay in the existing lanes.
- Provides reliable travel times.
- Are consistent with local and regional transportation plans.

## Alternatives Being Considered

### No-Build Alternative

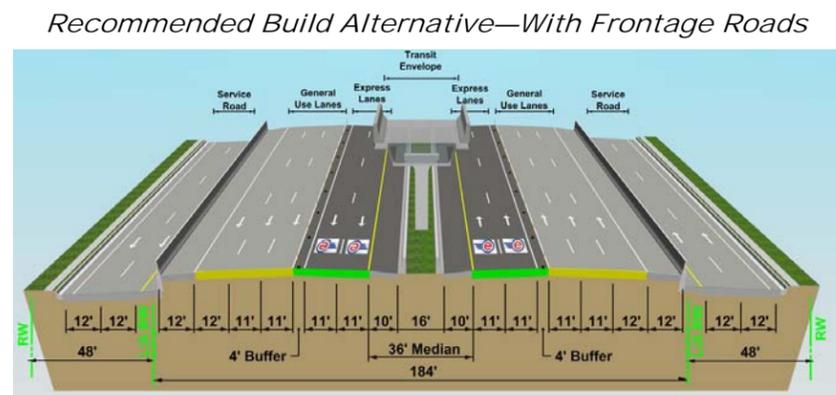
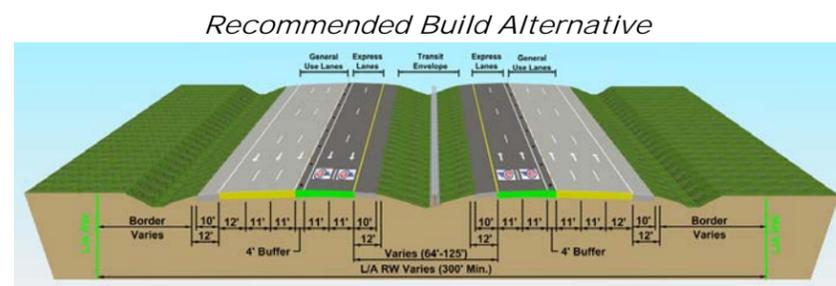
The No-Build Alternative assumes that no improvements except routine maintenance would be made to I-4 within the project limits. The advantages of the No-Build Alternative include no new costs for design and construction, no effects to existing land uses and natural resources, and no disruption to the public during construction. However, the disadvantages of the No-Build Alternative are the project's purpose and need would not be met and the project would result in increased congestion and user cost. Additionally, the No-Build Alternative is not consistent with local plans. However, this alternative will remain a viable alternative throughout the PD&E Study process.

### Recommended Build Alternative

The Recommended Build Alternative consists of providing express toll lanes adjacent to the existing non-tolled travel lanes on I-4. The proposed improvements are part of the Tampa Bay Express (TBX) Master Plan and would maintain the same three general use (non-tolled) lanes. The Recommended Build Alternative will provide for two express toll lanes in each direction of I-4 from east of 50th Street to the Polk Parkway.

The Recommended Build configuration allows for two 11-foot express lanes, two 11-foot non-toll lanes, and one 12-foot non-toll lane in each direction. The two 11-foot express lanes would be separated from the general use lanes by a four foot buffer. This typical section accommodates the 44 foot transit envelope referenced in the Environmental Impact Statement, or EIS, that was approved by the Federal Rail Administration.

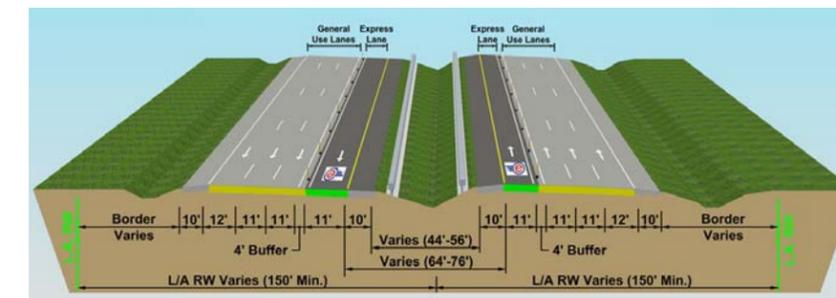
However, there are some areas where maintaining a 44-foot minimum transit envelope with Express Lanes cannot be accommodated without the acquisition of additional right of way. In order to minimize this potential right of way impact, elevating the transit corridor in order to accommodate both modes of transportation is proposed. For instance, in the Plant City area where there are service roads, the transit corridor would be reduced to 16 feet. This will allow for a pier to be placed in the center for an elevated transit corridor as depicted.



## TBX Starter Project (Staged Implementation)

The FDOT underwent an evaluation to identify a series of lower cost tolled lane projects that can be funded in a future FDOT Five-Year Work Program for staged implementation. These initial projects could be incorporated into the Master Plan projects at minimal additional costs. The shorter-term, lower-cost improvements are considered the "Starter Projects". The Starter Project improvements are consistent with the Recommended Build Alternative from east of 50th Street to Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard. However, there will be only one 11-foot express lane with a 4-foot buffer in each direction of I-4 from Martin Luther King Jr Boulevard to east of Mango Road.

*Starter Project (Staged Implementation)*



## Evaluation Matrix

The environmental and socio-cultural impacts of the Recommended Build Alternative were compared to the No-Build Alternative in an evaluation matrix. Although the No-Build Alternative experiences less impacts than the Recommended Build Alternative, the detrimental effects of increased traffic congestion and reduced highway safety associated with the No-Build Alternative potentially outweighs the minimal impacts as a result of implementing the Recommended Build Alternative.

Evaluation Criteria	No-Build Alternative	Recommended Build
<b>Potential Relocations</b>		
Number of Businesses and Residences	0	1
<b>Potential Right of Way (ROW) Impacts</b>		
Additional ROW needed for Roadway (acres)	0.00	12.27
Additional ROW needed for Ponds (acres)	0.00	0.00
<b>Potential Environmental Effects</b>		
Archaeological/historical sites	None	None
Section 4(f) sites	None	None
Noise-sensitive sites	395	582
Wetlands (acres)	0.00	17.93
Floodplains (acres)	0.00	6.29
Surface waters (acres)	0.00	46.53
Threatened and Endangered Species	None	Minimal
Contamination and Hazardous Material Sites	None	25 medium risk 5 high risk
<b>Estimated Project Costs</b>		
Right-of-Way Needed for Roadway	\$0	\$19,467,400
Wetlands Mitigation	\$0	\$1,793,000
Roadway and bridge construction	\$0	\$329,000,000
Preliminary Engineering Design	\$0	\$49,400,000
Construction Engineering & Inspection	\$0	\$49,400,000
<b>Preliminary Estimate of Total Costs</b>	<b>\$0</b>	<b>\$449,060,400</b>

### A Smart Solution—Tampa Bay Express

I-4 is a component of the Tampa Bay Express (TBX) toll lanes. TBX is helping change things, by giving you an exciting new commuting option. Built next to existing non-toll lanes, Tampa Bay Express allows drivers, who choose to pay the express lane toll, a more predictable ride to wherever they're going. All it takes is a SunPass, and then you're ready to use Tampa Bay Express lanes whenever you like.

A number of ideas have been explored to help reduce traffic congestion, but they are either too expensive or unworkable over the long run such as adding more non-toll lanes to our highways. Express toll lanes are the best solution because:

- They can be built next to existing non-toll lanes, making them easy to use.
- They can be built using projected tolls minimizing the impact to existing limited transportation funding resources.
- They can be maintained through toll collections.
- Express toll lanes are demonstrated to be an effective solution to urban traffic congestion.

The price for using Tampa Bay Express lanes will vary according to demand: when demand is lower, prices will be lower; when demand rises, so will the price. This is known as "dynamic pricing," and it is used in the travel industry (hotels, airlines, rental cars), and other industries as well. While prices vary according to demand, it is important to remember that once you enter a Tampa Bay Express lane, the price is fixed at the price you entered at and does not change.