

**State of Florida Department of Transportation**  
**TYPE 2 CATEGORICAL EXCLUSION DETERMINATION FORM**

---

**1. GENERAL INFORMATION**

County:	Pinellas		
Project Name:	I-275 (SR 93) Project Development and Environment Study		
Project Limits:	South of 54th Avenue South to north of 4th Street North		
Project Numbers:	<u>12556</u>	<u>424501-1</u>	<u>Not Available</u>
	ETDM No.	WPISeg. No.	Federal-Aid No.

---

**2. PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED**

**a. Purpose and Need**

The purpose of this project is to provide for operational and safety improvements that maximize capacity within the I-275 corridor, improve lane continuity and connect I-275 within Pinellas County to the future network of express lanes planned for the Tampa Bay Region. Improvements are needed within the I-275 corridor to help alleviate existing traffic congestion, enhance safety and better accommodate future travel demands associated with projected growth in employment and population. The addition of special use/express lanes is included in the FDOT's Approved SIS Highway Component 2040 Cost Feasible Plan.

In 2012, Annual Average Daily Traffic (AADT) volumes on I-275 ranged from a low of 82,000 vehicles per day north of 54th Avenue South to a high of 142,500 vehicles per day north of 4th Street North. Under these existing traffic loadings, several sections along the I-275 mainline operate deficiently (Level of Service – LOS E) during both the morning and afternoon peak travel periods and does not meet the minimum LOS standard D for SIS highway facilities. Without improvements, the operating conditions along I-275 will continue to deteriorate, resulting in unacceptable levels of service throughout the entire study corridor.

The following information supports the proposed project's purpose and need:

**Safety/Crash Rate Issues**

Crash data from the Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles indicated there were 2,082 crashes recorded in the project limits during the five year period of 2009 through 2013. There were a total of 976 injuries and 18 fatalities. The crash rates were higher than the average statewide crash rate for urban interstates within the vicinity of certain interchanges within the project limits, and along mainline sections between 22nd Avenue and 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue North.

Safety within the project limits will be enhanced due to maximizing capacity that will be provided by the proposed lane continuity improvements on I-275. The lane continuity improvements will reduce driving decisions related to lane changes, thereby decreasing potential conflicts among vehicles.

## **Lane Continuity Issues**

Currently, I-275 from south of 54th Avenue South to 4th Street North has one continuous lane in the northbound direction and no continuous lanes in the southbound direction. The proposed intermittent widening and restriping of existing lanes within I-275 Segments A and B comprise the lane continuity improvements that will form two continuous lanes on I-275 in each direction between 54th Avenue South and 4th Street North; thereby improving the safety of motorists by reducing driving decisions which relate to lane changes and the incidence of associated crashes.

## **Managed/Special Use Lanes Intent**

I-275 Segment C is a component of the Tampa Bay Express (TBX) toll lanes. As part of the TBX Master Plan, one tolled lane is to be added to I-275 in each direction from Gandy Boulevard to 118th Avenue North. From 118th Avenue North to north of 4th Street North, two tolled lanes will be provided in each direction on I-275. Access will be provided between the tolled and non-tolled lanes near Gandy Boulevard, at 118th Avenue North, and between 4<sup>th</sup> Street North and the Howard Frankland Bridge.

### **b. Proposed Improvements**

The proposed action involves the provision of capacity and operational improvements along 16.3 miles of I-275 from south of 54th Avenue South to north of 4th Street North in Pinellas County, Florida. This evaluation considers the operational and highway safety benefits of implementing capacity improvements and compares them to the cost savings and minimization of adverse impacts associated with a No Build Alternative. The No Build and Build Alternatives are evaluated and compared based on a variety of parameters utilizing a matrix format. This process identifies the alternative that best balances the benefits (such as improved traffic operations and safety) with the impacts (such as environmental effects and construction costs). In addition to capacity and operational improvements, the proposed action also considers the multimodal transportation needs of the I-275 project corridor, specifically incorporation of a multimodal envelope as part of the proposed improvements in order to be consistent with the Locally Preferred Alternative (LPA) of the Pinellas Alternatives Analysis (AA).

The Preferred Build Alternative consists of providing lane continuity improvements within Segments A and B (from south of 54th Avenue South to south of Gandy Boulevard), and express lane improvements in Segment C (from south of Gandy Boulevard to north of 4th Street North). The lane continuity improvements consists of intermittent widening and restriping of existing lanes on I-275 to form two continuous lanes in each direction. In Segment B, a 40-foot (ft) multimodal transportation envelope within the I-275 median is preserved for the future implementation of light rail transit use envisioned as part of the Federal Transit Administration (FTA) approved Pinellas AA. The express lanes proposed in Segment C are part of the Tampa Bay Express (TBX) Master Plan, which consists of an integrated system of express lanes identified for the Tampa Bay Region.

The I-275 interchange modifications proposed within the project segments are as follows, these future interchange improvements will be further analyzed in appropriate interchange analysis documents:

#### **Segment A**

- 31st Street South – moving SB on ramp from a left hand merge to a right hand merge

#### **Segment B**

- 5th Avenue North – SB off ramp contains a new auxiliary lane (connected with 22nd Avenue North)

- 22nd Avenue North – SB on ramp contains a new auxiliary lane with connection to 5th Avenue North
- 38th Avenue North – Additional lane on NB off ramp (from 1 to 2).

**Segment C**

- 118th Avenue – new GUL and SUL ramps
- Roosevelt Boulevard – new GUL NB on ramp
- MLK Boulevard – NB on ramp widening
- Ulmerton Boulevard – NB on ramp widening
- 4th Street North – NB on ramp and SB off-ramp widening

The proposed express lane improvements initially considers (prior to the design year 2040) one express lane (EL) in each direction of I-275 from south of Gandy Boulevard to north of 4th Street North. This near-term express lanes project is known as the Starter Project. The longer-term Master Plan Project shall provide for one EL in each direction of I-275 from south of Gandy Boulevard to 118th Avenue North/Roosevelt Boulevard and two ELs in each direction of I-275 from 118th Avenue North/Roosevelt Boulevard to north of 4th Street North. The separately prepared Final Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) documents the engineering and environmental analyses conducted to assess the environmental and sociocultural effects of implementing the No Build and Build Alternatives.

The Department is advancing the Starter Project within Segment C as part of the phased implementation of the Master Plan. The approval of this Type II Categorical Exclusion also constitutes approval for the construction advertisement for the Starter Project (424501-2) within Segment C from south of Gandy Boulevard to north of 4th Street North. All other segments of the Preferred Build Alternative (Segments A, B and Segment C Master Plan) will be advanced upon funding availability and addressed in subsequent reevaluations.

**c. Project Planning Consistency**

**Plan Consistency for Project: 424501-1 (PD&E) and 424501-2 (Design)  
Interstate 275 (SR 93) from south of Gandy Boulevard to north of 4th Street North (Segment C Starter Project)**

Currently Adopted L RTP	2040 Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization Long Range Transportation Plan Adopted December 10, 2014 showing committed funding for the project.					
Y/N		Yes				
Phase	L RTP \$	Currently Approved TIP	Currently Approved	TIP/STIP FY	TIP/STIP \$	Comments
PE (Final Design)	FY 2016 \$6,831,000	FY 2015/16 – FY 2019/20	STIP Approved 9/30/14	FY 2016	TIP/STIP \$6,831,000	SIS
ROW <sup>2</sup>	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	See note below
Construction	\$80,705.93 FY 2020 - FY 2025	FY 2015/16 – FY 2019/20	TIP Approved 6/10/15	FY 2020	TIP/STIP \$63,718,904	SIS

1. The Pinellas Metropolitan Organization (MPO) 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan (L RTP) includes the I-275 segment from south of 118<sup>th</sup> Avenue North to north of 4<sup>th</sup> Street North (Starter Project within Segment C) in the Cost Feasible Plan.

- Mainline right of way (ROW) acquisition for the Starter Project within Segment C is not required. ROW acquisition needs related to stormwater management facilities and floodplain compensation sites are not required for the Starter Project within Segment C.

**Plan Consistency for Project: 424501-1 (PD&E)  
Interstate 275 (SR 93) from south of 54th Avenue South to north of 4th Street North (Segment A, Segment B and Segment C Master Plan)**

Currently Adopted LRTP	2040 Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization Long Range Transportation Plan Adopted December 10, 2014 showing committed funding for the project.					
Y/N	No					
Phase	LRTP \$	Currently Approved TIP	Currently Approved	TIP/STIP FY	TIP/STIP \$	Comments
PE <sup>3</sup> (Final Design)	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	SIS
ROW <sup>2,3</sup>	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	See note below
Construction <sup>3</sup>	Na	Na	Na	Na	Na	SIS

- The portion of I-275 within the PD&E Study's limits (i.e., from south of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to north of 4<sup>th</sup> Street North) Segment A, Segment B and Segment C Master Plan, is not currently funded for design, right of way acquisition or construction.
- Mainline right of way (ROW) acquisition for Segment A, B & C is not required per the I-275 PD&E Study findings. However, the need for ROW acquisition needs related to stormwater management facilities and floodplain compensation sites has been identified in the I-275 PD&E Study for Segment A, Segment B & Segment C Master Plan.
- FDOT D7 is coordinating with the Pinellas County MPO to include Segment A and Segment B in the LRTP for the proposed improvements identified in the PD&E study documents.

**3. CLASS OF ACTION**

**a. Class of Action**

Type 2 Categorical Exclusion

**c. Other Actions**

- Section 4(f) Evaluation
- Section 106 Consultation
- Endangered Species Biological Assessment

**b. Public Involvement**

1.  A public hearing is not required, therefore, approval of this Type 2 Categorical Exclusion constitutes acceptance of the location and design concepts for this project
2.  A public hearing was held on September 29, 2015 and a transcript is included. Approval of this determination constitutes location and design concept acceptance for this project  
 An opportunity for a public hearing was afforded and a certification of opportunity is included. Approval of this determination constitutes acceptance of the location and design concepts for this project
3.  A public hearing will be held and the public hearing transcript will be provided at a later date. Approval of this determination DOES NOT constitute acceptance of the project's location and design concepts  
 An opportunity for a public hearing will be afforded and a certification of opportunity will be provided at a later date. Approval of this determination DOES NOT constitute acceptance of the project's location and design concepts.

**d. Cooperating Agency:**

ACOE  USCG  USFWS  EPA  NMFS  NONE

---

**4. REVIEWER'S SIGNATURES**

*Melissa Mason*

07/06/16

FDOT Project Manager

Date

*Ruth...*

7/6/16

FDOT Environmental Administrator or Designee

Date

**5. FHWA CONCURRENCE**

*P. Ball...*

7/15/2016

(For) FHWA Division Administrator or Designee

Date

Revised Copy received 5 7/15/2016

## 6. IMPACT EVALUATION

Topical Categories	Sig	NotSig	None	NoInv	Basis for Decision*
<b>A. SOCIAL &amp; ECONOMIC</b>					
1. Land Use Changes	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	See Attachment A-1
2. Community Cohesion	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	See Attachment A-2
3. Relocation Potential	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	See Attachment A-3
4. Community Services	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	See Attachment A-4
5. Nondiscrimination Considerations	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	See Attachment A-5
6. Controversy Potential	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	See Attachment A-6
7. Scenic Highways	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	
8. Farmlands	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	
<b>B. CULTURAL</b>					
1. Section 4(f)	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	See Attachment B-1
2. Historic Sites/Districts	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	See Attachment B-2
3. Archaeological Sites	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	See Attachment B-3
4. Recreation Areas	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	See Attachment B-4
<b>C. NATURAL</b>					
1. Wetlands	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	See Attachment C-1
2. Aquatic Preserves	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	See Attachment C-2
3. Water Quality	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	See Attachment C-3
4. Outstanding FL Waters	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	See Attachment C-4
5. Wild and Scenic Rivers	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	
6. Floodplains	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	See Attachment C-6
7. Coastal Zone Consistency	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	See Attachment C-7
8. Coastal Barrier Resources	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	
9. Wildlife and Habitat	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	See Attachment C-9
10. Essential Fish Habitat	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	See Attachment C-10
<b>D. PHYSICAL IMPACTS</b>					
1. Noise	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	See Attachment D-1
2. Air Quality	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	See Attachment D-2
3. Construction	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	See Attachment D-3
4. Contamination	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	See Attachment D-4
5. Aesthetic Effects	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	See Attachment D-5
6. Bicycles and Pedestrians	[ ]	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	
7. Utilities and Railroads	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	[ ]	See Attachment D-7
8. Navigation	[ ]	[ ]	[X]	[ ]	See Attachment D-8
a. [ ] FHWA has determined that a USCG Permit IS NOT required in accordance with 23 CFR 650, Subpart H.					
b. [X] FHWA has determined that a USCG Permit IS required in accordance with 23 CFR 650, Subpart H.					

**Impact Determination:** Sig = Significant; NotSig = Not significant; None = Issue present, no impact; NoInv = Issue absent, no involvement. Basis of decision is documented in the referenced attachments.

### E. PERMITS REQUIRED

PERMIT	ISSUING AGENCY
Section 404 Dredge/Fill Permit	USACE
Environmental Resource Permit (ERP)	SWFWMD
National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit	FDEP

## 7. COMMITMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

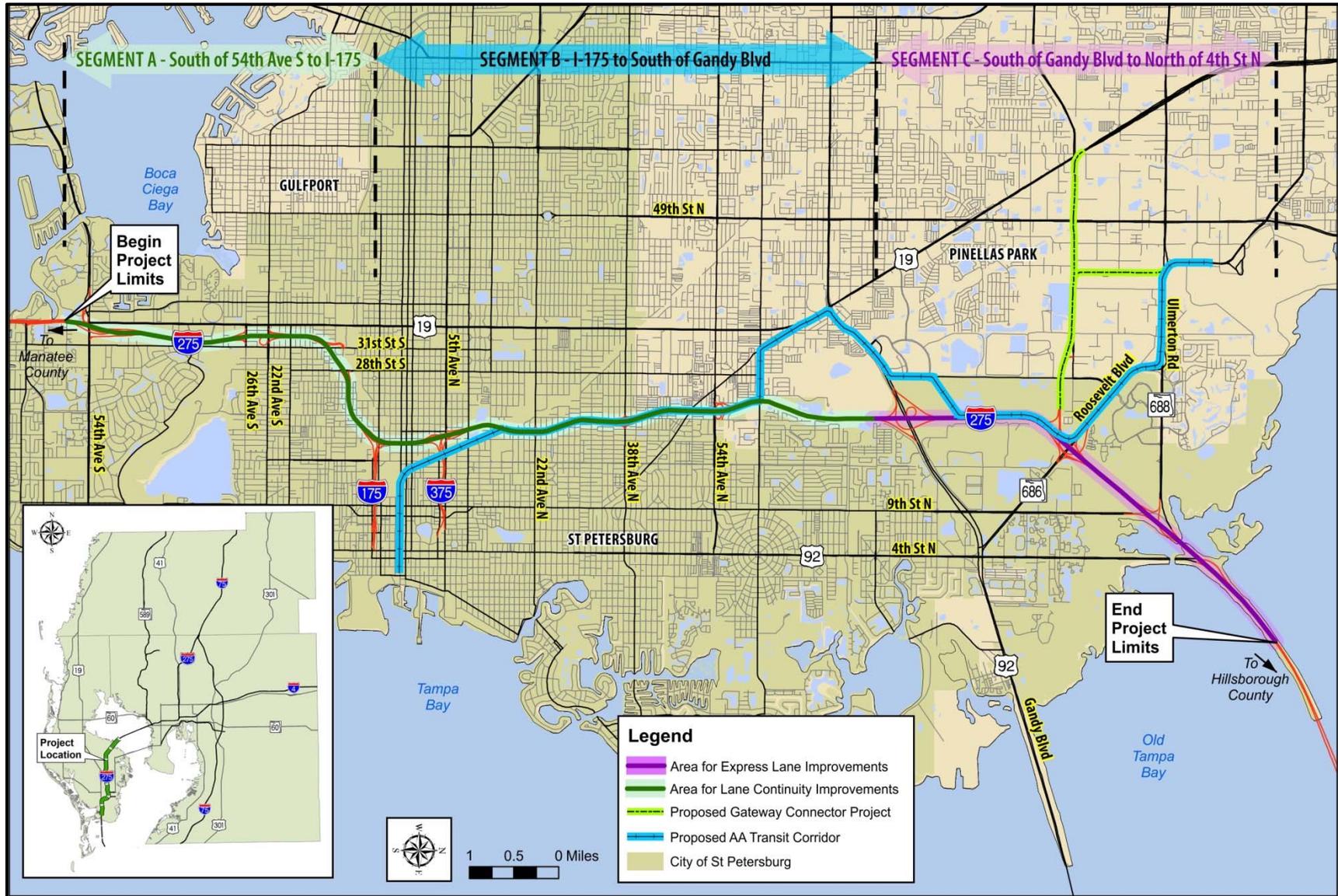
In order to assure that adverse environmental and sociocultural impacts will not occur within the vicinity of the project corridor, and the multimodal needs of the involved communities are sufficiently addressed, the FDOT will abide by standard protection measures and adhere to FDOT Procedure #700-011-035 for tracking the following commitments throughout the life of the project:

- Endangered Species Act Section 7 informal consultation will be re-initiated with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) for smalltooth sawfish and swimming sea turtles during the future project's design phase once more detailed information is known for this project. The FDOT will continue informal coordination with NMFS on potential impacts associated with any pile driving activities that could be required to widen the I-275 fixed vertical clearance bridge over Big Island Gap.
- The FDOT will adhere to the NMFS's *Sea Turtle and Smalltooth Sawfish Construction Conditions* during construction of the project's required widening of the I-275 Big Island Gap Bridge.
- The FDOT will continue informal Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultation with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) for the Gulf Sturgeon during the future project's design phase for the required widening of the I-275 Big Island Gap Bridge.
- FDOT will incorporate the *Construction Special Conditions for the protection of the Gulf Sturgeon* during the future construction of the I-275 Big Island Gap Bridge.
- To assure the protection of wildlife during construction of the I-275 Big Island Gap Bridge, the FDOT will implement a Marine Wildlife Watch Plan (MWWP), which includes the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FFWCC) *Standard Manatee Conditions for In-Water Work*. The FDOT will require the construction contractor to abide by these guidelines during the future construction of the I-275 Big Island Gap Bridge.
- Special conditions for manatees will be addressed during construction of the I-275 Big Island Gap Bridge and include the following:
  - No nighttime in water work will be performed. In-water work can be conducted from official sunrise until official sunset times;
  - Two dedicated (minimum one primary), experienced manatee observers will be present when in-water work is performed. Primary observers should have experience observing manatees in the wild on construction projects similar to this one;
  - All siltation barriers or coffer dams should be checked at least twice a day, in the morning and in the evening, for manatees that may become entangled or entrapped at the site;
  - Barges will be equipped with fender systems that provide a minimum standoff distance of four feet between wharves, bulkheads and vessels moored together to prevent crushing manatees. All existing slow speed or no wake zones will apply to all work boats and barges associated with construction; and
  - Although culverts are unlikely for the portion of the project in the vicinity of the Big Island Gap waterway, any culverts larger than eight inches and less than eight feet in diameter should be grated to prevent manatee entrapment. When the I-275 Big Island

Gap bridge is widened, the spacing (if feasible) between the new pilings will be at least 60 inches to allow for manatee movement in between the pilings. If a minimum of 60-inch spacing is not provided between the new piles, further coordination will be conducted with the USFWS. The existing bridge piling spacing will not need to be altered.

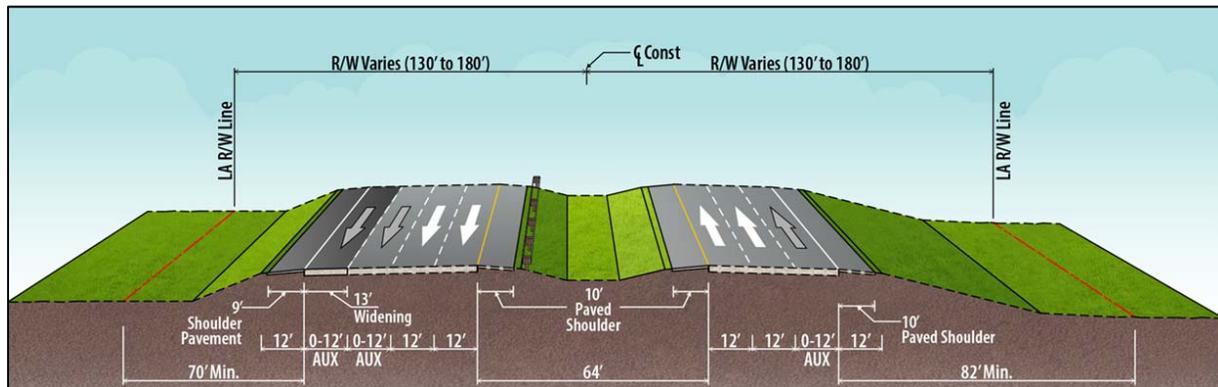
- No blasting is authorized for this project as part of this PD&E study. If blasting is required, informal Section 7 Consultation will be initiated with the USFWS for the manatee and with the NMFS for swimming sea turtles and the smalltooth sawfish. A blast plan and MWWP would be developed and submitted to the USFWS, NMFS and FFWCC for their approval prior to beginning blasting activities.
- No dredging is authorized for this project. If dredging is required, informal Section 7 Consultation will be re-initiated with the USFWS for the manatee.
- The FDOT is committed to the construction noise barriers contingent upon the following:
  - Detailed noise analysis during the final design process supports the need for, and the feasibility and reasonableness of providing the barriers as abatement;
  - The detailed analysis demonstrates that the cost of the noise barrier will not exceed the cost effective limit;
  - The residents/property owners benefitted by the noise barrier desire that a noise barrier be constructed; and
  - All safety and engineering conflicts or issues related to construction of a noise barrier are resolved.

Figure 1. Project Location Map



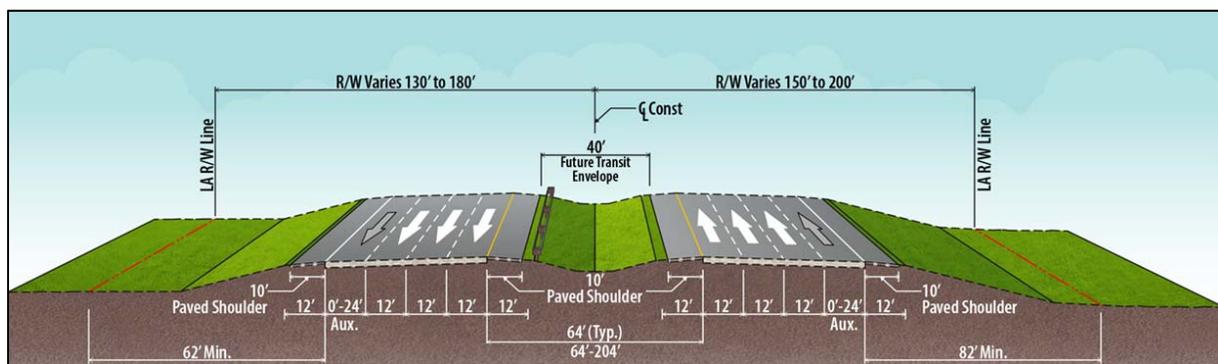
**Segment A Preferred Mainline Build Alternative:** The proposed lane continuity improvements mainly consists of providing intermittent widening that varies between 0 and 12 ft and restriping of the existing four-lane typical section with auxiliary lanes. The proposed I-275 mainline build alternative typical section in Segment A is shown on **Figure 2**. As seen in this graphic, widening of I-275 is only proposed to the outside in the southbound direction.

**Figure 2. I-275 Preferred Mainline Build Alternative Typical Section from south of 54th Avenue to I-175 (Segment A)**



**Segment B Preferred Mainline Build Alternative:** The proposed lane continuity improvements mainly consists of providing intermittent widening that varies between 0 and 24 ft and restriping of the existing six-lane typical section with auxiliary lanes. As previously mentioned in Section 2b, lane continuity improvements and accommodations for future light rail transit within the I-275 median as planned in the Pinellas Alternatives Analysis are provided. The proposed I-275 mainline build alternative typical section in Segment B is shown on **Figure 3**.

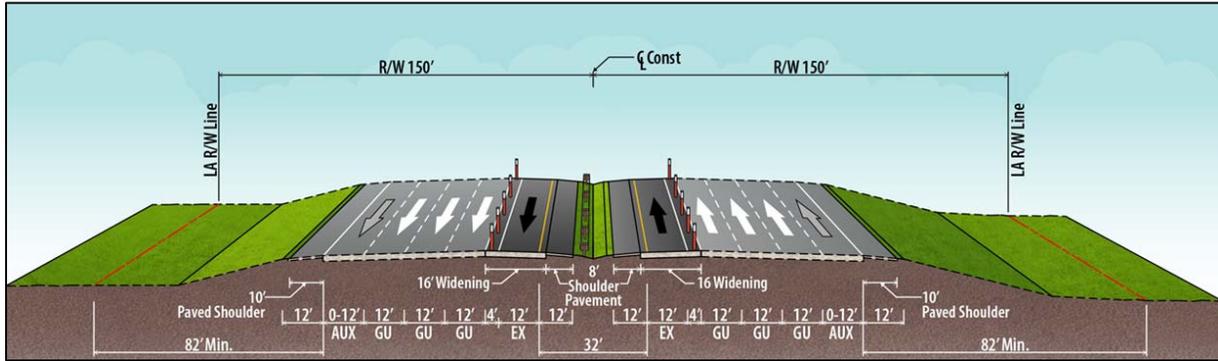
**Figure 3. I-275 Preferred Mainline Build Alternative Typical Section from I-175 to south of Gandy Boulevard (Segment B)**



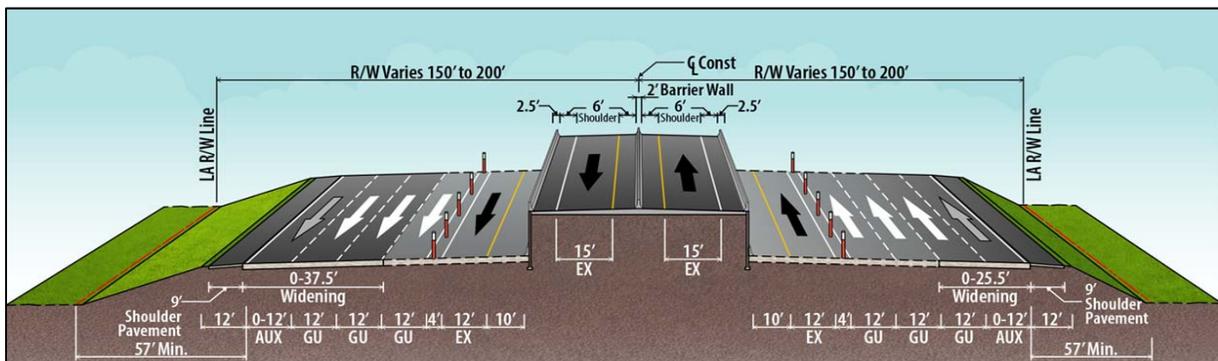
**Segment C Preferred Mainline Build Alternative:** The Master Plan proposes to widen the existing I-275 mainline towards the median in order to accommodate one EL in each direction from south of Gandy Boulevard to 118th Avenue North (see **Figure 4a**). The proposed ELs are to be separated from the GULs by a four-foot painted buffer that is to contain traffic delineators. Direct connections from the 118th Avenue North/Gateway corridor to I-275 are provided via new flyover ramps that enter and exit I-275 from the median. **Figure 4b** illustrates the use of Mechanically Stabilized Earth (MSE) wall to transition 118th Avenue North flyover ramps to the at-grade I-275 mainline. From 118th Avenue

North to 1.0 mile south of the Howard Frankland Bridge, two express lanes are provided in each direction of travel along I-275 (see **Figure 4c** and **Figure 4d**). In order to accommodate the proposed express lanes, the existing I-275 causeway extending into Tampa Bay will need to be widened and the existing sea wall replaced.

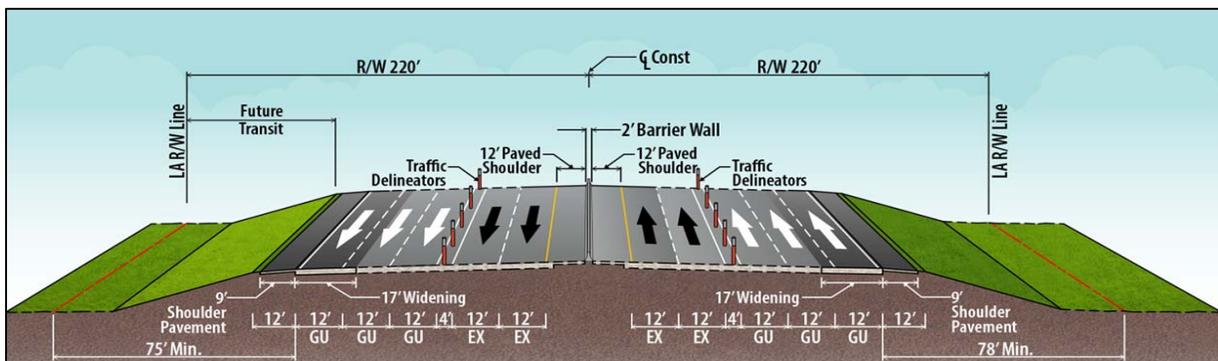
**Figure 4a. I-275 Preferred Mainline Master Plan Build Alternative Typical Section from south of Gandy Boulevard to Roosevelt Boulevard (Segment C-MP1)**



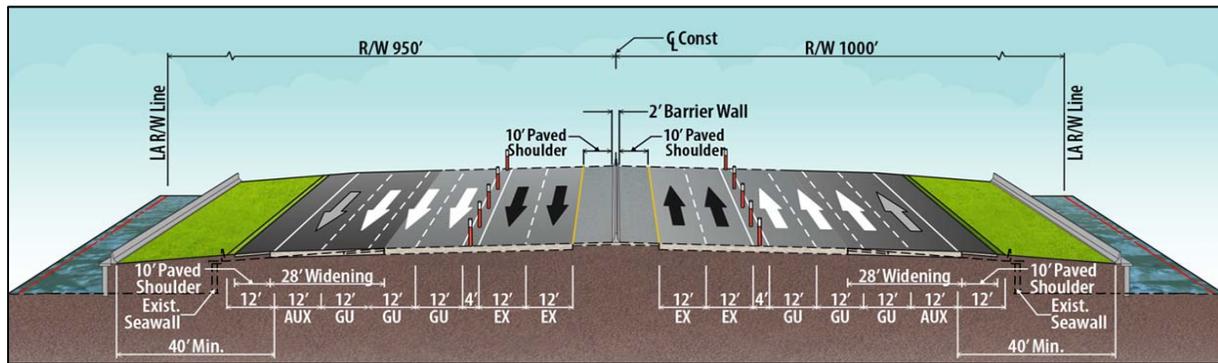
**Figure 4b. I-275 Preferred Mainline Master Plan Build Alternative Typical Section from Roosevelt Boulevard to south of 9th Street North (Segment C-MP2)**



**Figure 4c. I-275 Preferred Mainline Master Plan Build Alternative Typical Section from south of 9th Street North to north of 4th Street North (Segment C-MP3)**



**Figure 4d. I-275 Preferred Mainline Master Plan Build Alternative Typical Section from north of 4th Street North to 1.0 mile south of the Howard Frankland Bridge (Segment C-MP4)**



In order to evaluate the Build and No-Build Alternatives, a qualitative and quantitative evaluation matrix was prepared using criteria from a multitude of categories including socioeconomic, environmental, cultural, potential hazardous material/petroleum contamination, and costs (design, ROW, construction, operations and maintenance, and construction engineering inspection). The matrix data was developed utilizing raster-based aerial photography depicting the proposed ROW needs for each alternative. Additional details on the anticipated environmental effects are documented in the *Final Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR)*, *Final Noise Study Report*, *Final Cultural Resources Assessment Survey*, *Final Section 106 Case Study Report*, and the *Final Alternative Stormwater Management Facilities Technical Memorandum*. The traffic and engineering analyses are documented in the *Final Design Traffic Technical Memorandum* and *Final Preliminary Engineering Report*, respectively.

## ATTACHMENT A SOCIAL IMPACTS

### A-1. Land Use Changes

The project is within Pinellas County. The I-275 project corridor is one of the primary routes connecting Pinellas County with Hillsborough County. The need for improvement to I-275 is documented within the Pinellas County Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO) 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan adopted December 2014.

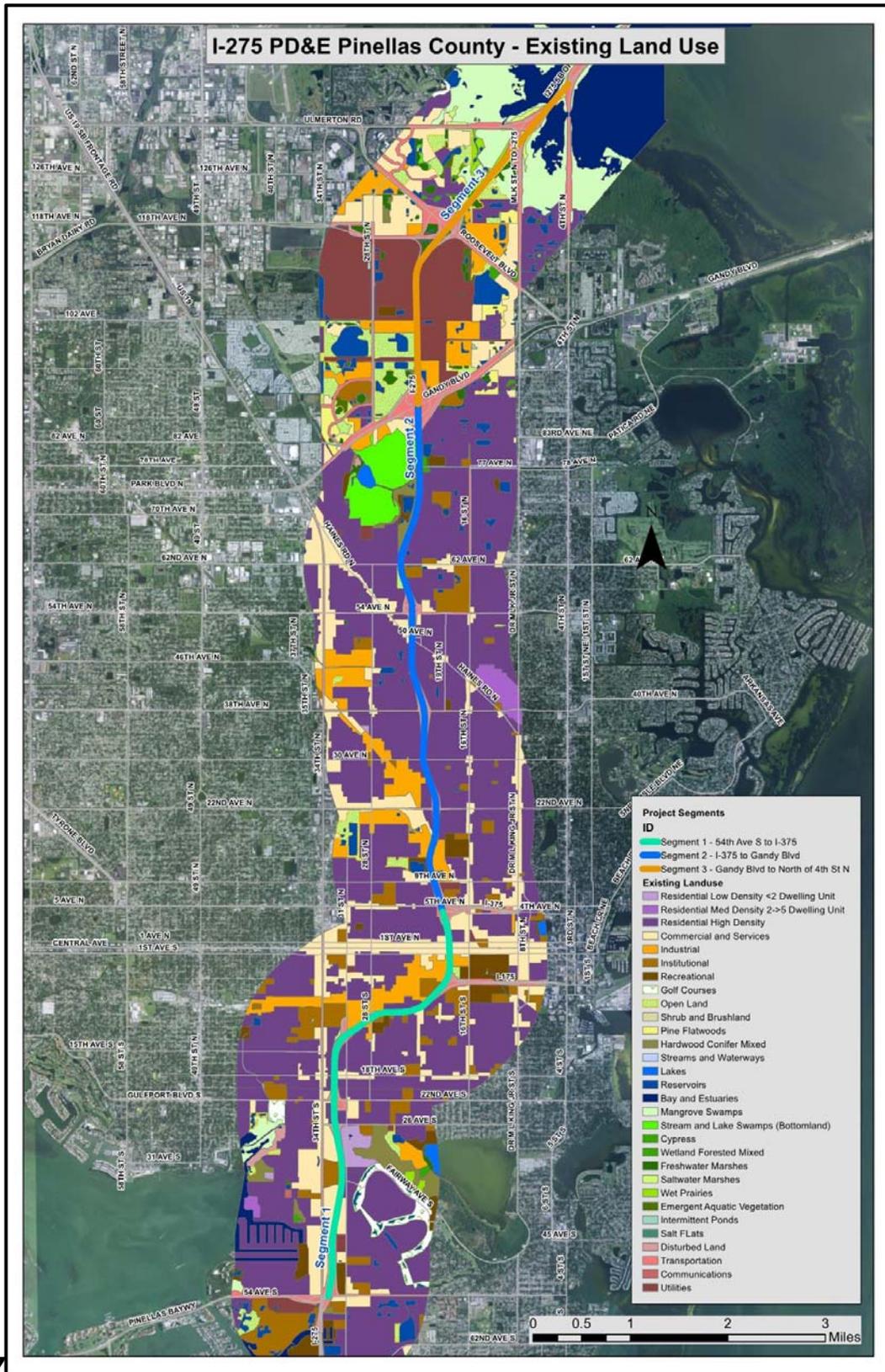
#### ***Existing Land Use***

At the time of review, existing land use within the project limits consisted mostly of residential, commercial and other land use. Through a Geographic Information Systems (GIS) analysis, a percentage for each type of land use within the three project segments was computed. Residential lands within the project limits comprised approximately 38 percent of the existing land use. Commercial land comprised roughly ten percent; wetlands approximately seven percent; and industrial lands represented five percent of existing land use. The additional 40 percent was designated as “Other Land Use” (See Figure 5).

#### ***Future Land Use***

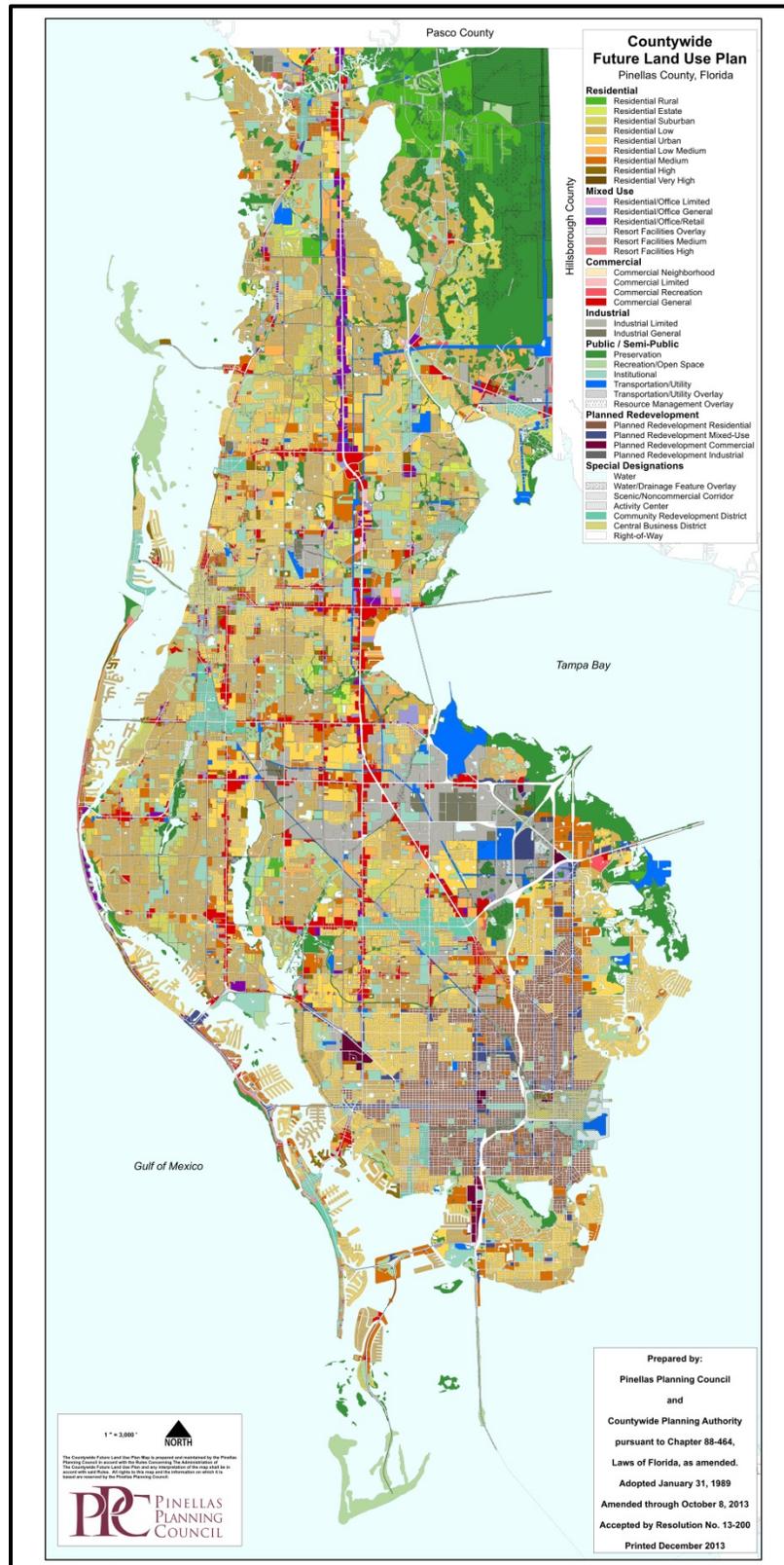
For the 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan, the forecast scenario assumed that no significant changes would be made to existing land use patterns or transportation infrastructure and services. This forecast estimated that approximately 64,000 additional people would live in Pinellas County and that 50,000 additional jobs would be added by 2040, which would increase the population by 7.1 percent and employment by 9.6 percent. The slightly higher growth in employment is anticipated to increase the employment-to-population ratio by 2.4 percent during this period. This increase would be due to a greater proportion of Pinellas County residents forecasted to work in the county as opposed to commuting to surrounding counties. This accounts for anticipated increases in commuting costs and local planning efforts to bring targeted industries to the county. Figure 6 depicts the Pinellas County future land use plan.

Figure 5. Pinellas County Existing Land Use Map



I-275 (SR 93) from south of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to north of 4<sup>th</sup> Street North  
 Work Program Item Segment Number: 424501-1  
 Type 2 Categorical Exclusion

Figure 6. Pinellas County Comprehensive Plan Future Land Use Map



## **A-2. Community Cohesion**

The proposed project involves widening an existing facility and it is not anticipated to adversely impact elderly persons, handicapped individuals, non-drivers and transit-dependent individuals, or minorities. It is anticipated that the project improvements will have no impact to community cohesiveness. This project is being developed to comply with Executive Order 12898, Environmental Justice, issued on February 11, 1994.

Existing neighborhoods will retain their integrity and residents of surrounding communities will benefit from improved traffic service in the corridor.

## **A-3. Relocation Potential**

Residential, commercial, and business relocations are not expected since the project will use the existing ROW. Additional ROW is anticipated only for offsite stormwater treatment facilities.

## **A-4. Community Services**

The following community services are located within the project study area, as shown in **Figure 7**.

### ***Cultural Centers***

There are two cultural centers within the study area. These include:

- The St. Petersburg Little Theater
- Dr. Carter G. Woodson African American History Museum

There will be no impacts to either of the cultural centers.

### ***Fire Stations***

There are no fire stations within the study area.

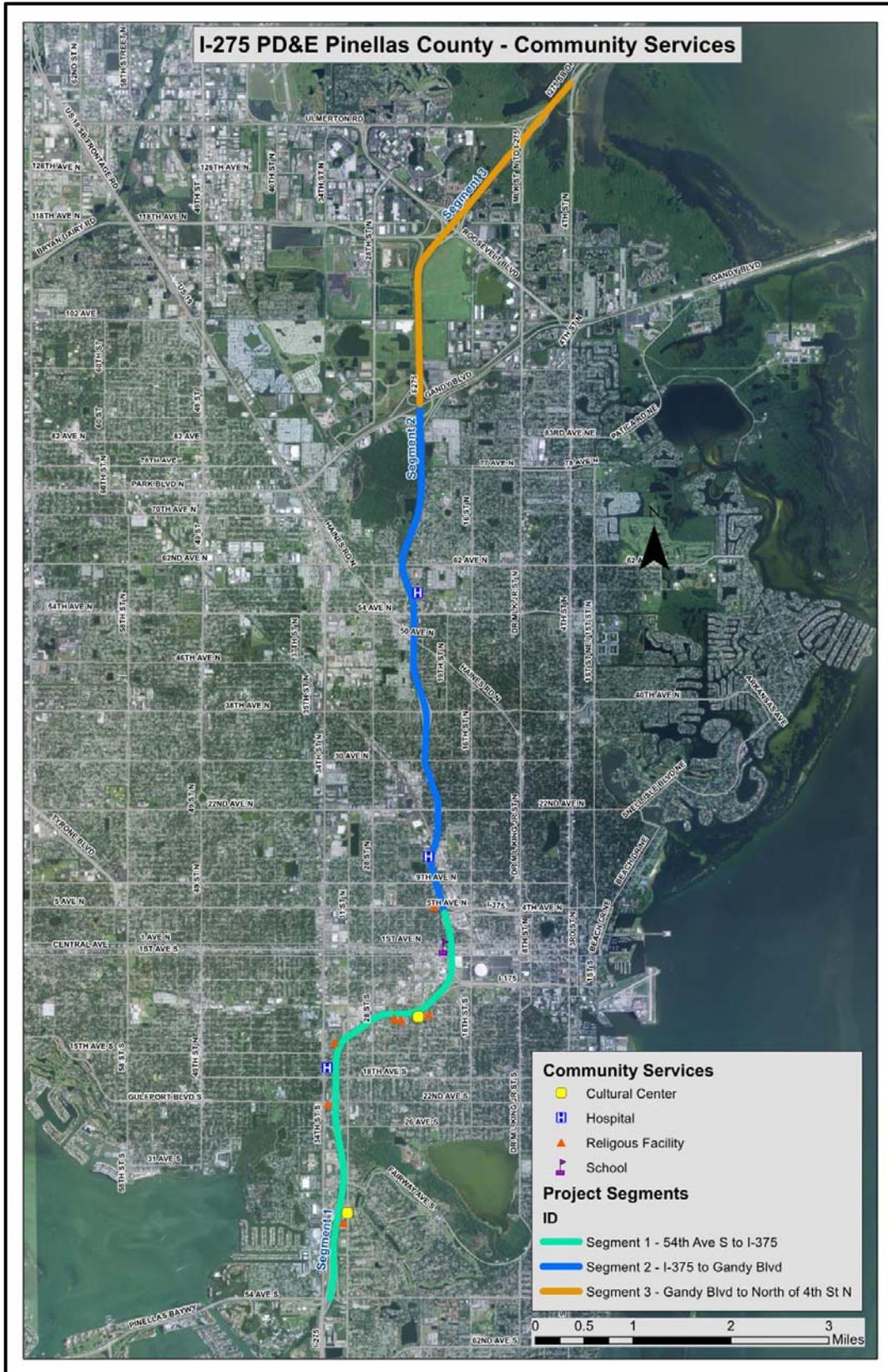
### ***Medical Facilities***

There are three hospitals within the study area. These include:

- Humana Hospital Northside
- Edward H. White Memorial Hospital
- Horizon Hospital

There will be no impacts to any hospital within the project limits.

Figure 7. Community Service Map



I-275 (SR 93) from south of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to north of 4<sup>th</sup> Street North  
 Work Program Item Segment Number: 424501-1  
 Type 2 Categorical Exclusion

### **Churches and Schools**

There are 7 churches within the project limits. These include:

- Church of God St. Petersburg
- Soka Gakkai International USA
- Jehovah's Witnesses
- New Mt. Sinai Missionary Baptist Church
- New Pleasant Grove Baptist Church
- New Faith Free Methodist Church
- People of Christ Church

There will be no impacts to any church within the project limits.

### **Schools**

There is 1 school within the project limits. This includes:

- Imagine Charter

There will be no impacts to any school within the project limits.

As the improvements address existing capacity deficiencies in the corridor, there will be minimal adverse impacts on community services from the proposed project segments. Vehicles using I-275 will benefit from the proposed improvements because of the increased capacity and enhanced level of service.

## **A-5. Title VI Consideration**

In February 1994, the President of the United States issued Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice) requiring federal agencies to analyze and address, as appropriate, disproportionately high adverse human health and environmental effects of federal actions on ethnic and cultural minority populations and low income populations, when such analysis is required by the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA). An adverse effect on minority and/or low-income populations occurs when:

- (1) the adverse effect occurs primarily to a minority and/or low-income population; or,
- (2) the adverse effect suffered by the minority and/or low-income population is more severe or greater in magnitude than the adverse effect suffered by the non-minority and/or non-low-income populations.

The 17 Environmental Justice criteria identified in Executive Order 12898 are: (1) air pollution; (2) noise; (3) water pollution; (4) soil contamination; (5) destruction of manmade resources; (6) destruction of natural resources; (7) diminution of aesthetic values; (8) detriment to community cohesion; (9) diminution of economic viability; (10) detriment to facilities access - public and private; (11) detriment to services access - public and private; (12) vibration; (13) diminution of employment opportunities; (14) displacement; (15) traffic congestion and impairment to mobility; (16) exclusion, isolation, or separation; and, (17) diminution of US Department of Transportation (USDOT) benefits.

In addition to compliance with Executive Order 12898, any proposed federal project must comply with the provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and other nondiscrimination laws and regulations which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin,

marital status, disability, or family composition relative to federal, state, or local government programs. Title VIII of the 1968 Civil rights Act guarantees each person equal opportunity in housing.

In August 2000, the President of the United States issued Executive Order 13166 (Improving Access to Service for Persons with Limited English Proficiency), to clarify Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Its purpose was to ensure accessibility to programs and services to eligible persons who are not proficient in the English language.

This project has been developed in accordance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Executive Order 12898 (Environmental Justice) and other nondiscrimination laws and regulations.

United States Census 2010 shows that there are twelve Census Blocks within the study area that have a majority percentage for minority populations. These include: 121030202061, 121030202012, 121030201012, 121030202013, 121030218002, 121030201011, 121030219005, 121030208003, 121030287002, 121030287001, 121030208006, and 121030207001.

United States Census 2010 shows that there are 42,846 people (80% percent of the total population within project area) over the age of 18 within the project limits. The remaining population within the project area, 10,805 (20% of the total population within the project area), is defined as under the age of 18. All census blocks within the project limits comprise a majority of English speaking people. There are 1334 people (2 percent) who speak English “not well” and 319 people (0.01 percent) that speak English “not at all.” Therefore, written translation obligations under “safe harbor” are expected for this project since the eligible Limited English Proficiency (LEP) language group threshold did constitute 5 percent or 1,000 persons. FDOT offers translation assistance if necessary.

The percentage of population in the study area over 65 years old is 13 percent. Many aspects of this project will be enhancements to the standard of living for all residents in the study area and users of the facility, minority or otherwise. The project will improve mobility throughout the area for all users. There will be no relocations nor isolation or splitting of neighborhoods as a result of the project. Therefore, FDOT does not anticipate that the proposed project will result in any disproportionately high and adverse effects on protected groups in any of the above-identified environmental justice criteria. Title VI information will be available at the Public Hearing.

## **A-6. Controversy Potential**

A comprehensive Public Involvement Program was undertaken and it is in compliance with the FDOT Project Development and Environment Manual, Section 339.155, Florida Statutes (F.S.); Executive Orders 11990 and 11988; Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for implementing the procedural provisions of the NEPA; and 23 CFR 771. The primary benefit to the motoring public as a result of the proposed project will be a safer and more reliable transportation facility. Similar to other managed lanes systems in effect within Florida and across the United States, travelers who choose to pay for the express lanes will do so because the value of the trips they choose exceeds the value of the in effect for that trip. The use of transit addresses the needs of low-income and other transportation-disadvantaged groups. The proposed express lane system will provide transportation alternatives for peak-period travelers. Moreover, former general purpose lane users that shift voluntarily to the express lanes will provide an overall degree of reduced congestion for users remaining in the general purpose lanes.

As a result of the coordination with the public and agencies to date, there has been no controversy associated with the proposed project.

## ATTACHMENT B CULTURAL IMPACTS

### **B-1. Section 4(f)**

Potential Section 4(f) resources were identified adjacent to the project corridor, as shown on **Figure 8**. There is no ROW acquisition required from any of these resources. All measures will be taken to develop avoidance alternatives and/or measures to minimize harm to these resources to the greatest extent practicable.

### **B-2. Historic Sites / Districts**

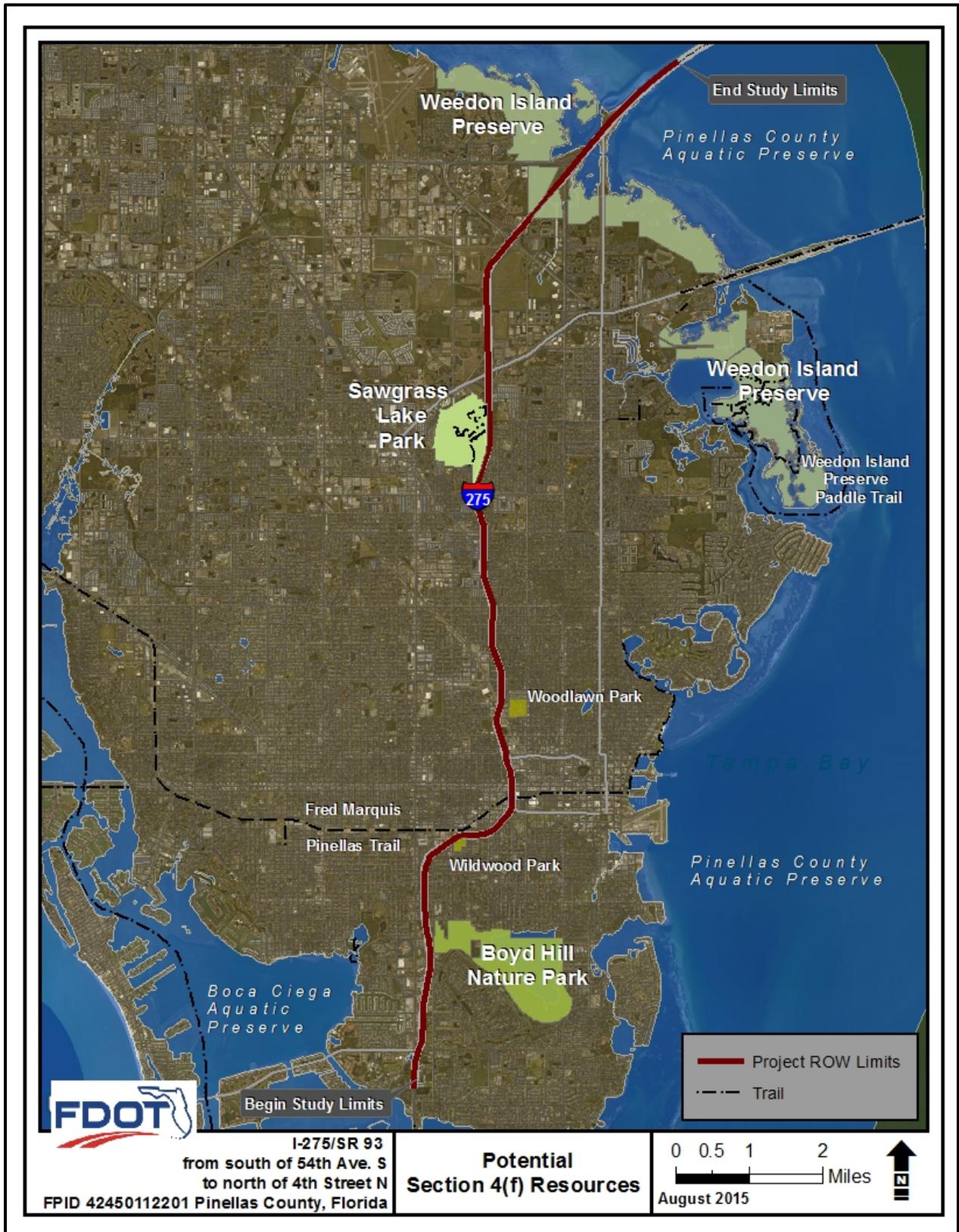
A Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS) was conducted to locate and identify cultural resources within the Area of Potential Effect (APE) and to assess their significance in terms of eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). This CRAS was conducted in accordance with the requirements set forth in the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, as amended, and Chapter 267, *Florida Statutes (F.S.)*. It was carried out in conformity with Part 2, Chapter 12 ("Archaeological and Historical Resources") of the FDOT's *PD&E Manual* (FDOT 1999) and the standards contained in the Florida Division of Historical Resources' (FDHR) *Cultural Resource Management Standards and Operational Manual* (FDHR 2003). In addition, the survey was conducted to meet the specifications set forth in Chapter 1A-46, *Florida Administrative Code*.

Between 1978 and 2012, several historical/architectural surveys were conducted within 500 feet of the I-275 project corridor. As part of this study, a historical/architectural field survey was conducted between July and October 2014. This included a review of the sites listed in the NRHP, the Florida Master Site File (FMSF), the ETDM Report (FDOT 2013), and materials on file at the City of St. Petersburg. The CRAS was intended to locate and identify historic resources within the project's Area of Potential Effect (APE) and to assess, to the extent possible, their significance as to eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). For this project, the APE for historic resources was defined as all properties adjacent to and located within 200 feet of the existing ROW.

Twenty-nine previously recorded historic resources are located within approximately 200 feet of the I-275 study corridor. These include 27 buildings, one cemetery, and one resource group - the NRHP listed Kenwood Historic District (8PI11176). The Kenwood Historic District contains more than 2,200 contributing resources, of which 10 are adjacent to the I-275 corridor. The NRHP-eligible Jordan Park Elementary School (8PI6901) is also within the APE.

Historical/architectural field survey resulted in the identification of 325 extant historic resources within the project APE, including 19 previously recorded and 306 newly identified. This total includes 309 structures, 13 building complex resource groups, one historic district, one railroad, and one cemetery. Of these, 16 are listed, eligible, or considered potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP. Field survey also revealed that 10 previously recorded historic resources are no longer extant.

Figure 8. Potential Section 4(f) Resources



Sixteen NRHP-listed, eligible, or potentially eligible historic resources were located within the I-275 PD&E Study APE. The Kenwood Historic District (8PI11176), which was listed in the NRHP in 2003, was considered significant under Criterion A in the area of Community Planning and Development and under criterion C in the area of Architecture. In addition, ten previously identified contributing resources within the historic district are contained within the I-275 project APE (8PI6929, 8PI7256, 8PI7272, 8PI7410, 8PI7502, 8PI7837, 8PI7839, 8PI7970, 8PI11102, and 8PI11108). One previously recorded historic resource (8PI6956) situated adjacent to the boundaries of the Kenwood Historic District, but not originally included, appears to be potentially eligible as a contributing resource to a revised Kenwood Historic District.

Three additional historic resources were considered potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP. The Norwood School (8PI714), which is a Mediterranean Revival style building constructed in 1925. It is considered significant under Criterion A in the areas of Education and Community Planning and Development, and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. Papa's Dream (8PI726) is a Mediterranean Revival style building constructed in 1925. It is considered potentially eligible under Criterion A in the area of Entertainment/Recreation and under Criterion C in the area of Architecture. The Manhattan Casino (8PI819) is a Masonry Vernacular style building constructed in 1925. It is considered significant under Criterion A in the area of Black Ethnic Heritage. The Jordan Park Elementary School (8PI6901) was determined NRHP eligible by the SHPO in 2005. This Masonry Vernacular style building, constructed in 1925, is considered significant under Criterion A in the area of Ethnic Heritage.

There are 293 ineligible historic structures located within the I-275 PD&E Study project APE. In addition to these structures, one previously recorded cemetery, the Garden of Peace Cemetery (8PI12010), is located within the project APE. The SHPO determined the cemetery ineligible for listing in the NRHP in 2012. Two newly identified historic resources have insufficient information for an evaluation of NRHP eligibility: the Mt. Moriah Primitive Baptist Church (8PI12276) and a segment of the Orange Belt Railway/CSX Railroad (8PI12273).

The FHWA approved the recommendations and findings of the April 8, 2015 CRAS on May 6, 2015 and the SHPO concurred on June 2, 2015. A Section 106 Consultation Case Study Report was submitted January 2016 to FHWA to evaluate the potential effects (primary and secondary) of the proposed project to the sixteen NRHP-listed historic resources. Through consultation with the SHPO and FHWA, FDOT, on behalf of the FHWA, applied the Criteria of Adverse Effect found in 36 CFR Part 800.5 and determined that the project will have **No Effect** on the **Jordan Park Elementary School** (8PI06901), the **Manhattan Casino** (8PI00819), and **Papa's Dream** (8PI00726). FDOT determined the project would have **No Adverse Effect** on the NRHP-eligible **Norwood School** (8PI00714). The case study analysis indicated that the project would result in noise levels of 50.9 dB(A) at the Norwood School, which does not meet or exceed the NAC of 51 dB(A) for a Category D property. Noise abatement measures do not need to be considered for this resource. However, noise barriers were recommended along this segment of the highway. FDOT determined the project would have **No Adverse Effect** the NRHP-listed **Kenwood Historic District** (8PI11176), including 11 contributing resources within the historic district (8PI06929, 8PI06956, 8PI07256, 8PI07272, 8PI07410, 8PI07502, 8PI07837, 8PI07839, 8PI07970, 8PI11102, and 8PI11108). However, the analysis indicated an increase of between 0.4 and 5.9 dB(A) in noise levels when compared to the existing condition, and an increase of more than 3 dB(A) at four of the 11 contributing resources. The study suggested that noise barriers would be the most feasible and prudent noise abatement

measures. The findings documented in the CSR submitted by FDOT on 1/20/16 were approved by the FHWA on 3/18/16 and the SHPO subsequently provided concurrence on 3/30/16.

### **B-3. Archaeological Sites**

Archaeological survey was conducted between July and October of 2014. The purpose of the CRAS was to locate and identify archaeological sites located within the project's Area of Potential Effect (APE) and to assess, to the extent possible, their eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP).

The APE for archaeological field survey focused on previously recorded sites within the existing ROW that had not been previously evaluated by the SHPO or that had insufficient information for evaluation. Formulation of an archaeological site location predictive model was not needed for this study, given the limited focus of investigation. Pond and floodplain compensation sites were not included as part of the CRAS since they were not located as part of the PD&E Study.

A FMSF search indicated five previously recorded archaeological sites located within 500 feet of the I-275 PD&E Study corridor. Four of the previously recorded archaeological sites, 8PI901, 8PI902, 8PI1212, and 8PI1258 were located within the APE; all were contained within study Segment B. Additional ROW was not proposed; therefore, a systematic archaeological field survey was not conducted. Archaeological field survey focused on the identification and evaluation of previously recorded and unevaluated sites within the existing ROW. Site reconnaissance indicated that the APE has been severely altered by roadway development and other impacts. No evidence of any of the four sites was found, and the portion of each site contained within the I-275 right-of-way was presumed destroyed by ground altering activities. Both 8PI1212 and 8PI1258, mostly contained within the project APE, were considered ineligible for listing in the NRHP due to the loss of physical integrity. The findings documented in the CRAS submitted by FDOT on 4/8/15 were approved by the FHWA on 5/6/15 and the SHPO subsequently provided concurrence on 6/2/15.

### **B-4. Recreation Areas**

Recreational lands are located proximal to the project corridor. None would be affected if the project would be implemented.

## ATTACHMENT C NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

### C-1. Wetlands

Pursuant to Presidential Executive Order 11990 entitled "Protection of Wetlands," the USDOT developed a policy, (DOT Order 5660.1A), Preservation of the Nation's Wetlands, dated August 24, 1978, which requires all federally funded highway projects to protect wetlands to the fullest extent possible. In accordance with this policy, as well as Part 2, Chapter 18 Wetlands of the FDOT PD&E Manual, the I-275 study area was evaluated for wetlands and surface waters with potential to be impacted by the proposed improvements.

In general, the project right-of-way boundary defined the study area. Wetlands were evaluated in accordance with the Florida Land Use, Cover and Forms Classification System (FLUCFCS) developed by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT, 1999/2000) and combined desktop analysis using the Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD) Land Use Land Cover (LULC) GIS mapping (2011), SWFWMD Seagrass Survey Data (2010), Pinellas County Aerial Images (2010), U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) soils data for Pinellas County (2006), and National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) data.

Field reconnaissance was conducted June 4, 2014 to locate and describe wetlands. Seagrass surveys were performed June 17, 2014. Wetland and surface water features, as well as the extent and density of seagrass habitats adjacent to the Howard Frankland Causeway, were mapped (1"=50") by ground-truthing 2010 aerial images. All habitats within the corridor were categorized using the most representative FLUCFCS designations and were evaluated consistent with Cowardin's *Classification of Wetlands and Deepwater Habitats of the United States* (1979). Formal wetland delineations were not conducted. More accurate wetland boundaries will be recorded during field efforts associated with the design of the Preferred Build Alternative.

Sixty-one surface waters and 37 wetlands were identified within or contiguous with the study area including both freshwater and saltwater systems and specifically freshwater palustrine, riverine, and estuarine wetlands, as well as freshwater and tidal surface waters. The location of the surface waters and wetlands were mapped on the Concept Plans and the Wetland and Surface Water Impact Sheets in the Final WEBAR. Wetland and surface waters mapped within or contiguous with the study area totaled approximately 112.43 ac.

The majority of surface waters were associated with roadside ditches (FLUCFCS, 5100). Some were hydric-cut, although most were associated with stormwater management facilities. Open water reservoirs (FLUCFCS, 5300) of various sizes were observed adjacent to the project corridor. A variety of freshwater and tidal wetlands were located beginning near Gandy Boulevard in the vicinity of Sawgrass Lake Park and further north near Weedon Island Preserve including creeks/canals with direct connection to tidally-influenced bays and estuaries. Forested wetlands were present along the project right-of-way north of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue South, adjacent to Sawgrass Lake Park, and between Gandy Boulevard and Roosevelt Boulevard. A tidal divide was observed at a weir between Roosevelt Boulevard and Ulmerton Road within a ditch along the I-275 right-of-way. Tidally-connected waters were observed along I-275 south of Gandy Boulevard. Mangrove habitat was present east and west of I-275 at the Weedon Island Preserve. This included one large canal connecting Riviera Bay to Sawgrass Lake Park near Tinny Creek.

The project corridor is an existing highway within an urbanized region with wetlands and surface

waters located within the ROW. Impacts to wetlands and surface waters were estimated based on preliminary design alternatives and estimated work space to complete construction. Measures to minimize and avoid impacts to the greatest extent practicable will be implemented. Stormwater treatment facilities and floodplain compensation sites have initially been determined during this project's PD&E study. The FDOT prepared a Preliminary Stormwater Management Facility Site Reconnaissance Survey Technical Memorandum to evaluate the proposed SMF sites located outside of the existing FDOT right of way. The proposed SMF locations inside the FDOT right of way have already been surveyed and addressed in other documents that are being prepared during the PD&E study. It has been determined that there will be a low potential for archaeological involvement and there will be no potential for historic resources involvement for all SMF sites except for SMFs 12 and 13 which do not appear to be significant. At this preliminary stage, none of the SMF sites need to be avoided due to cultural resource issues. Wetland involvement is only anticipated for SMF 18, and no protected species involvement is anticipated for any of the SMF facilities. Floodplain Compensation Sites (FPCs) are only anticipated in drainage basin 18 and will be provided in the infield areas of the Gandy Boulevard Interchange. This interchange is within the FDOT right of way. After a review of all available information, there is nothing to indicate contamination involvement is anticipated at any of the SMF sites. The findings documented in the Preliminary SMF Site Reconnaissance Survey Technical Memorandum submitted by FDOT on 1/20/2016 were approved by the FHWA on 3/18/2016

The Preferred "Build" Alternative for Segment A would provide lane continuity improvements in the form of pavement widening to the inside (median) of the northbound and southbound travel lanes. Impacts are not anticipated for Segment A. Constructing the Preferred "Build" Alternatives for Segments B and C would result in approximately 0.74 acres of impacts to freshwater wetlands including approximately 0.59 acres of freshwater forested wetlands and 0.15 acres of non-forested, freshwater wetlands. The project would result in 0.89 acres of impact to mangrove habitat including 0.73 acres around Big Island Gap and 0.16 acres to forested surface waters associated with the Weedon Island Preserve. Bay waters adjacent to the Howard Frankland Causeway contained seagrass habitats of varying density, quality and composition. Seagrasses were categorized as continuous or intermittent and patchy. Impacts to continuous seagrass habitat would total approximately 0.40 acres; impacts to intermittent and patchy seagrass habitat 0.34 acres. Impacts that would occur to surface waters total approximately 4.69 acres.

Mitigation for wetland and surface water impacts will be provided through the purchase of mitigation bank credits, if available at the time of permitting, or through the FDOT Mitigation Program in accordance with Chapter 373.4137 F.S Part IV, Chapter 373, F.S. and 33 U.S.C.s, 1344. [Program]. The project corridor is primarily within the SWFWMD-designated Tampa Bay and Coastal Areas Watershed (#13). Small portions of the project are within the Upper Coastal Watershed (#14).

At this time, all wetland impacts are anticipated to be within the service area for the Tampa Bay Mitigation Bank. Mitigation for unavoidable wetland impacts would be restricted to the basin of impact. Impacts to seagrass habitat will be evaluated during design and permitting as part of the Program.

## **C-2. Aquatic Preserves**

The northern portion of the project corridor crosses Old Tampa Bay within Pinellas County. The portion of the project within this region is within the Pinellas County Aquatic Preserve, which is an Outstanding Florida Water. The 4<sup>th</sup> Street North Bridge over Big Island Gap and a portion of the Howard Frankland Causeway are within the project area crossing the Preserve. The proposed project would involve

widening of the Big Island Gap Bridge and widening along the Howard Frankland Causeway within existing I-275 ROW. The Preserve would not be affected if the project were to be implemented.

### **C-3. Water Quality**

Degradation of water quality resulting from construction or excess loading of stormwater runoff from the project has the potential to adversely impact tidal habitats in and around Tampa Bay including seagrass habitats and benthic communities. A Water Quality Impact Evaluation (WQIE) has been prepared for this study and is available in the project files.

## C-4. Outstanding Florida Waters (OFWs)

The northern portion of the project corridor crosses Old Tampa Bay within Pinellas County. The portion of the project within this region is within the Pinellas County Aquatic Preserve, which is an Outstanding Florida Water. The 4<sup>th</sup> Street North Bridge over Big Island Gap and a portion of the Howard Frankland Causeway are within the project area that crosses the OFW. The proposed project would involve widening of the Big Island Gap Bridge and widening along the Howard Frankland Causeway within existing I-275 ROW. OFW resources would not be affected if the project were to be implemented.

## C-6. Floodplains

A *Final Location Hydraulics Memorandum* was prepared to assess highway encroachment impacts within the 100-year (base) floodplains and any regulatory floodways that are associated with the proposed action. The memorandum was prepared in compliance with the FDOT's *Project Development and Environmental (PD&E) Manual, Part 2, Chapter 24*; Executive Order 11988 "Floodplain Management", USDOT Order 5650.2, "Floodplain Management and Protection", and Federal-Aid Policy Guide 23 CFR 650A; Council on Environmental Quality Regulations for Implementing the Procedural Provision of the National Environmental Policy Act; and 23 Code of Federal Regulations 771.

This project lies within the 100-year base floodplain in three locations within the I-275 corridor: (1) from the beginning of the project to north of 46th Avenue South, (2) just south of 26th Avenue South, and (3) from south of the Gandy Boulevard Interchange to the end of the project. The remaining portion of the I-275 roadway and bridges are elevated above the 100-year base flood elevation.

No widening of the existing I-275 footprint is proposed within locations (1) and (2) above; therefore, there will be no impacts to the base floodplain in these areas. Location (3) was subdivided to evaluate potential impacts to the base floodplain as follows:

- Segment 3-1: South of Gandy Boulevard to the Gandy Boulevard Interchange
  - The widening of the roadway portion of the project will add embankment fill material upon the base floodplain within the existing right-of-way.
  - Floodplain Impact Locations have been identified as F-1, F-2 and F-3.
- Segment 3-2: Gandy Boulevard Interchange to Roosevelt Boulevard Interchange
  - The widening in this segment is to the inside (median) and is above the base floodplain elevation of 9.86 National Geodetic Vertical Datum (NGVD) (9.00 North American Vertical Datum (NAVD)).
  - There will be no impacts to the base floodplain in this segment.
- Segment 3-3: Roosevelt Boulevard Interchange to End Project
  - The widening in this segment is to the outside; however, this is an area of Tidal Swamp and floodplain compensation will not be required. This is supported by the availability of historical permits in the vicinity of this segment.
  - There will be no impacts to the base floodplain in this segment.

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM) show that the project bisects five (5) FEMA Flood Zones. These zones include: A, AE, VE, X, and X. As a result,

approximately 3.26 acre-feet of floodplain impacts are expected within location (3). In addition, the encroachments into the floodplain may be decreased (minimized) through adjustment to the typical section in the vicinity of the floodplain impact areas. Minimization and/or avoidance measures will be taken into consideration during the design phase to reduce any impacts to the 100-year floodplain by steepening the side slopes or adding retaining walls, if feasible. Because the proposed roadway widening occurs along the existing alignment, floodplain encroachments are considered minimal. Moreover, there are no regulatory floodways within the project limits.

## **C-7. Coastal Zone Consistency**

Florida State Clearinghouse (FSC) staff reviewed FDOT District Seven's USDOT funding proposal under the following authorities: Presidential Executive Order 12372; § 403.061(42), *F.S.*; the Coastal Zone Management Act, 16 U.S.C. §§ 1451-1464, as amended; and the National Environmental Policy Act, 42 U.S.C. §§ 4321-4347, as amended.

Based on the information contained in the submittal and the state agency comments received during the ETDM Programming Screen process, the state had no objections to allocation of federal funds for the subject project and, therefore, the funding award is consistent with the Florida Coastal Management Program (FCMP). To ensure the project's continued consistency with the FCMP, the concerns identified by the reviewing agencies must be addressed prior to project implementation. The state's continued concurrence will be based on the activity's compliance with FCMP authorities, including federal and state monitoring of the activity to ensure its continued conformance, and the adequate resolution of issues identified during this and subsequent regulatory reviews. The state's final concurrence of the project's consistency with the FCMP will be determined during the environmental permitting process, in accordance with Section 373.428, *F.S.*

## **C-9. Wildlife and Habitat**

The project corridor was evaluated for the presence of state and/or federally protected wildlife and habitat suitable to support protected wildlife in accordance with 50 Code of Federal Regulation (CFR) Part 402 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA) of 1973, as amended, Chapters 5B-40 and 68A-27 F.A.C., and Part 2, Chapter 27 – *Wildlife and Habitat Impacts* of the FDOT *PD&E Manual*. Coordination letters in response to the WEBAR were received from the USFWS and the FWC July 17, 2015 and April 15, 2015, respectively. They can be found in Appendix C of this document.

Agency database searches, literature reviews, and desktop analysis using geographic information system-based (GIS) searches were conducted in conjunction with cursory wildlife and habitat assessments that occurred during June 2014. The desktop analysis referenced the most recent databases to identify state and federally protected species and/or critical habitat occurring or potentially occurring within the project area. Field surveys were conducted by vehicle and pedestrian survey along the project corridor and in-water and shoreline surveys were conducted along the Howard Frankland Causeway. Habitat was mapped using high resolution aerial photography obtained from Pinellas County (2010). Information sources and databases used for the analyses included the following:

- Efficient Transportation Decision Making Summary Report (FDOT Project #12556, July 2013)
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) Eagle Nest database (FWC 2012)
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Manatee Synoptic Surveys ('91-'14)

- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Wildlife Research Institute Data (various)
- Florida Land Use, Cover and Forms Classification System (FLUCFCS) Handbook (1999)
- Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI) Biodiversity Matrix Query (April 2014)
- Florida Natural Areas Inventory Florida Conservation Lands (June 2014)
- Florida Natural Areas Inventory Element Occurrences Pinellas County (2007)
- NOAA Fisheries SE Regional Data Gulf of Mexico Fisheries (various)
- Soil Survey of Pinellas County, USDA, Natural Resources Conservation Service (2006)
- Southwest Florida Water Management District, Land Use Land Cover (2011)
- Southwest Florida Water Management District Seagrass Survey Data (2010)
- Wood Stork Core Foraging Areas (2010)
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Data (various data sets)

State and federally protected wildlife species occur or have the potential to occur within the study area. During the field verification, the presence of protected species was noted. However, species specific surveys were not conducted and the field review was limited to what could be observed in the ROW.

### **Potential Protected Plant Species**

The FNAI Biodiversity Matrix was queried to develop a list of plant species with the potential to occur within the project area (**Table 1**). According to the query, thirteen plant species protected by the Florida Department of Agricultural and Consumer Services (FDACS) potentially occur within the area: nine classified as endangered and four as threatened. One species, Florida goldenaster, is recognized as endangered by both federal and state rankings. Neither federal nor state listed plants species were observed within the project corridor during the PD&E surveys or during prior field reviews in 2012 and 2013.

**Table 1. Potentially Occurring Protected Plant Species**

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status
Nuttall's rayless goldenrod	Bigelowia nuttallii	N	E
Many-flowered grass-pink	Calopogon multiflorus	N	E
Sand butterfly pea	Centrosema arenicola	N	E
Hairy beach sunflower	Helianthus debilis ssp. vestitus	N	E
Nodding pineweed	Lechea cernua	N	T
Small's flax	Linum carteri var. smallii	N	E
Celestial lily	Nemastylis floridana	N	E
Florida beargrass	Nolina atopocarpa	N	T
Giant orchid	Pteroglossaspis ecristata	N	T

LEGEND: T = Threatened; E = Endangered; NL = Not Listed

## **Potential Protected Wildlife Species**

A list of protected fauna observed or potentially occurring within the project limits was compiled based on desktop research and field observations. **Table 2** lists federal and state protected fauna observed or potentially occurring within or adjacent to the project corridor. Each species was designated as having a low, moderate or high likelihood of occurrence based on factors such as species range and habitat type, location, patch size, and connectivity. For each species the likelihood of occurrence was ranked based on the following classifications:

- Low: Species documented within Pinellas County, but with a low likelihood to occur within the project corridor due to the limited presence of suitable habitat.
- Moderate: Species documented within Pinellas County or within nearby counties and for which suitable habitat is present within the project corridor; however, no documented occurrences exist.
- High: Species known to occur or with a high likelihood to occur within the project corridor based on known habitat ranges and the existence of suitable habitat within the project corridor.

### **Federally Listed Species**

Federally-protected fauna observed or which have the potential to occur within the project corridor include the Gulf sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*), small-toothed sawfish (*Pristis pectinata*), loggerhead sea turtle (*Caretta caretta*), green sea turtle (*Chelonia mydas*), hawksbill sea turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricate*), Kemp's Ridley (*Lepidochelys kempii*) sea turtle, the eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon corais couperi*), the wood stork (*Mycteria americana*), piping plover (*Charadrius melodus*), and the West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*).

The **Gulf sturgeon** is designated as threatened by the USFWS and the FWC. Non-breeding populations have been found in Tampa Bay and Charlotte Harbor; however, critical Habitat for the Gulf sturgeon is not designated within or adjacent to the project corridor. Impacts to spawning habitat would be unlikely during project construction, and impacts to potential foraging grounds for non-breeding individuals would be minimal but could consist of bridge embankment work at the Big Island Gap Bridge and construction at sea walled areas along the Howard Frankland Causeway. In project areas where the Gulf sturgeon might occur, the FDOT will incorporate the NMFS and USFWS **Construction Special Provisions Gulf Sturgeon Protection Guidelines** into construction contract documents. Therefore, it is anticipated that the project **may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect** the Gulf sturgeon.

The **small-toothed sawfish** is designated endangered by the USFWS. Historically, the sawfish was found throughout the Gulf of Mexico, but is now believed confined to peninsular Florida. The project corridor is not located in designated Critical Habitat for the small-toothed sawfish. Road improvements are anticipated to occur at Big Island Gap Bridge and along the Howard Frankland Causeway and in-water construction including temporary and/or permanent project impacts to resources may occur. Sandy bottom habitat, seagrasses and mangrove shoreline are present in these areas. The FDOT will incorporate the NMFS **Sea Turtle and Smalltoothed Sawfish Construction Conditions** during construction. Therefore, it is anticipated the project **may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect** the small-toothed sawfish.

**Table 2. Potentially Occurring Protected Wildlife Species**

Scientific Name	Common Name	Federal Status	State Status	Preferred Habitat	Probability of Involvement
<b>Fish</b>					
<i>Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi</i>	Gulf Sturgeon	T	T	Freshwater streams; coastal waters and estuaries	Low
<i>Kryptolebias marmoratus</i>	Mangrove rivulus		SSC	Mangrove forests; rotten wet logs	Low
<i>Pristis pectinata</i>	Small-toothed sawfish	E		Coastal waters; estuarine habitats (e.g. seagrass, mangroves)	Low
<b>Reptiles and Amphibians</b>					
<i>Caretta caretta</i>	Loggerhead sea turtle	T	T	Marine water, coastal bays and estuaries, beaches	Moderate
<i>Chelonia mydas</i>	Green sea turtle	E	E	Bays & estuaries, shorelines, seagrass habitats, beaches	Low
<i>Drymarchon corais couperi</i>	Eastern indigo snake	T	T	Forested uplands & wetlands, open fields	Low
<i>Eretmochelys imbricata</i>	Hawksbill sea turtle	E	E	Coastal reefs, estuaries and lagoons, nesting on beaches	Low
<i>Gopherus polyphemus</i>	Gopher tortoise	C	T	Upland habitat with well-drained sandy soil & herbaceous forage	Low
<i>Lithobates capito</i>	Gopher frog		SSC	Xeric uplands	Low
<i>Lampropeltis extenuata</i>	Short-tailed snake		T	Sandy upland habitats	Low
<i>Lepidochelys kempii</i>	Kemp's Ridley sea turtle	E	E	Shallow waters w/sandy or muddy bottoms, nest on beaches	Low
<b>Birds</b>					
<i>Ajaja ajaja</i>	Roseate spoonbill		SSC	Coastal marshes, wetlands, and mangrove forest	Moderate
<i>Athene cunicularia Florida</i>	Florida burrowing owl		SSC	Upland fields	Low
<i>Charadrius melodus</i>	Piping plover	T	T	Open, sandy and gravel shorelines and tidal flats	Moderate
<i>Charadrius alexandrinus</i>	Snowy plover		T	Dry, sandy beaches and mud/salt flats	Moderate
<i>Egretta caerulea</i>	Little blue heron		SSC	Marine and freshwater marsh, creeks and rivers	<b>Observed</b>
<i>Egretta rufescens</i>	Reddish egret		SSC	Tidal marsh, mangrove forest, salt/mud flats, estuarine habitat	Moderate
<i>Egretta thula</i>	Snowy egret		SSC	Marine and freshwater marsh, creeks and rivers	<b>Observed</b>
<i>Egretta tricolor</i>	Tricolored heron		SSC	Marine and freshwater marsh, creeks and rivers	Moderate
<i>Eudocimus albus</i>	White ibis		SSC	Marine and freshwater marsh, creeks and rivers	Moderate
<i>Falco sparverius paulus</i>	SE American kestrel		T	Open land with perch sites, diverse prey, and snags for nesting	Low
<i>Grus canadensis pratensis</i>	Florida sandhill crane		T	Wet prairie, lake edges, improved pasture, marshes	Moderate
<i>Haematopus palliatus</i>	American oystercatcher		SSC	Barren beaches, sandbars, shell rakes, salt marsh, sand flats	Moderate
<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	Bald eagle	*		Gulf coast, bays, inland lakes, rivers, forested habitat, marshes	Moderate
<i>Mycteria americana</i>	Wood stork	T	T	Estuarine/tidal water, marshes, streams, ponds, ditches	<b>Observed</b>
<i>Pandion haliaetus</i>	Osprey	**	SSC	Gulf coast, bays, inland lakes, rivers, marshes	<b>Observed</b>
<i>Pelecanus occidentalis</i>	Brown pelican		SSC	Marine, estuarine, and mangrove forest	<b>Observed</b>
<i>Rynchops niger</i>	Black skimmer		SSC	Estuaries, bays, tidal pools, creeks; sandy beaches, sandbars, islands, shell banks, dredge, salt marsh	Moderate
<i>Sternula antillarum</i>	Least tern		T	Sandy beaches, dunes, coastal open lands, tidal marsh	<b>Observed</b>
<b>Mammals</b>					
<i>Trichechus manatus latirostris</i>	West Indian manatee	E	E	Bays and estuaries, rivers, streams, springs	High

\* The bald eagle is no longer protected by the Endangered Species Act (ESA), but receives protection through the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the state Bald Eagle Statue. The osprey also receives protection through the MBTA (not the ESA).

LEGEND: E= Endangered; T= Threatened; C = Candidate for federal listing; N = Not Listed. Florida SSC= Species of Special Concern.

\* Protected - Bald & Golden Eagle Protection Act and Migratory Bird Treaty Act • \*\* Protected - Migratory Bird Treaty Act

Sea turtles utilize marine waters and estuarine environments in and around Tampa Bay, surrounding beaches, canals and estuaries including the loggerhead, green, hawksbill, and Kemp's Ridley sea turtles. Sea turtle nesting habitat is not present within the project limits. The narrow beach zones along the Howard Frankland Causeway are tidally-dynamic and do not provide suitable refuge for nesting sea turtles. However, sea turtles, in particular juvenile sea turtles, may be present in the waters within and abutting the project corridor. The FDOT will require implementation of the protocol outlined in the **Sea Turtle and Smalltoothed Sawfish Construction Conditions** during construction. Therefore, it is anticipated that the project **may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect** sea turtles.

The eastern indigo snake is designated threatened by the USFWS. The Boyd Hill Nature Park was historically known to support a population of the eastern indigo snake (1990s); however, the population is believed to be in decline likely due to urbanization and habitat fragmentation. A second historic record exists near Weedon Island Preserve (pre-1970). Potential, low-quality, fragmented indigo snake habitat was observed along the project corridor; however, no snakes were observed. The FDOT will implement the USFWS **Standard Protection Measures for the Eastern Indigo Snake** during construction; therefore, the project will have **no effect** on the Eastern indigo snake.

The wood stork is designated as threatened by the USFWS. The USFWS recognizes a 15-mile Core Foraging Area (CFA) radius around wood stork rookeries in Central Florida. The portion of the project corridor north of Roosevelt Boulevard falls within the CFA of two wood stork rookeries: Sheldon Road Colony and colony #615113. Suitable foraging habitat (SFH) exists within the project corridor including freshwater and tidal marshes, herbaceous ditches, and existing stormwater management areas; however, nesting colonies were not documented within the project limits. Construction of the project will impact wetlands and surface waters. Therefore, provisions to reduce or minimize impacts to SFH will be implemented. If necessary, these measures will include provisions for wetland mitigation pursuant to Part IV, Chapter 373, F.S. and 33 U.S.C. 1344. Impacts to SFH within the project corridor will be reevaluated during permitting. Therefore, it is anticipated that the project **may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect** the wood stork.

The piping plover is designated as threatened by the USFWS. The piping plover is found along the Gulf Coast and is present in Pinellas County. The project is also within the USFWS Consultation Area for the piping plover. However, no USFWS Critical Habitat is designated within the project limits. Minimal project impacts may occur to a narrow, tidally-dynamic beach zone present near the Howard Frankland Causeway near the terminus of the seawall. However, due to the proximity of this unprotected area from the highway, utilization of the area by nesting piping plovers is unlikely. A small area of tidal mud flat is also present near Big Island Gap Bridge. However, the area is adjacent to the highway and frequented by people. Temporary or permanent impacts may occur to beach and/or tidal areas within the project limits; however, it is unlikely that habitat used by the piping plover for nesting, foraging or shelter will be impacted. Therefore, it is anticipated that the project **may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect** the piping plover.

The West Indian manatee is designated endangered by the USFWS and is protected under the Marine Mammal Protection Act. The project corridor is located in the USFWS Consultation Area for the West Indian manatee, although no federal sanctuaries, refuges, or critical manatee habitats exist within or adjacent to the project corridor. The area surrounding the Howard Frankland Causeway is considered a marine mammal region and mortality locations and synoptic data (1991-2014) were obtained from the FWC Fish and Wildlife Research Institute showing manatee utilization in this area. No individuals were observed during in water field surveys. Stormwater outfall pipes and structures constructed within potential manatee waters, below the mean high water line, and measuring eight inches or greater in

diameter will require manatee grates to prevent manatee entrapment. Seagrasses are present in these areas and temporary and/or permanent project impacts to seagrass resources may occur. The *Standard Manatee Conditions for In-Water Work* will be implemented during construction. Therefore, it is anticipated that the project **may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect** the West Indian manatee.

### **State Listed Species**

State-protected species known to utilize or have the potential to utilize habitat within the project corridor include Mangrove rivulus (*Kryptolebias marmoratus*), Gopher Tortoise (*Gopherus polyphemus*), short-tailed snake (*Lampropeltis extenuata*), Florida Burrowing Owl (*Athene cunicularia Florida*) Southeastern American kestrel (*Falco sparverius paulus*).

The mangrove rivulus is a Florida Species of Special Concern. This species utilizes mangrove forests and stagnant tidal pools and has been found in Tampa Bay. A small area of tidal flat and mangrove fringe is present near Big Island Gap Bridge and tidally-influenced waters occur between Roosevelt Boulevard N and Ulmerton Road. Minimal temporary or permanent impacts may occur to tidal areas near Big Island Gap Bridge. Therefore, it is anticipated that the project **may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect** the mangrove rivulus.

The gopher tortoise is designated as threatened by the FWC, but is not federally listed. Low-quality, fragmented habitat with the potential to support the gopher tortoise was observed; however, due to dense urbanization along the project corridor, presence is unlikely. If the gopher tortoise or tortoise burrows are located during construction, the FDOT will apply for a relocation permit from the FWC. Therefore, it is anticipated that the project will have **no effect** on the gopher tortoise. The gopher frog is occasionally found in association with gopher tortoise burrows. Suitable habitat conditions were not observed within the project limits. Therefore, it is anticipated that the project will have **no effect** on the gopher frog. The short-tailed snake is designated as threatened by the FWC. However, suitable habitat was not observed within the project limits. Therefore, it is anticipated that the project will have **no effect** on the short-tailed snake.

Several wading birds are listed by the FWC as threatened or species of special concern, but are not federally listed. The state-threatened piping plover and the endangered wood stork may occur along the corridor. Both species also receive federal protection status. Other state-threatened avian species with the potential to utilize the project corridor include the snowy plover (*Charadrius alexandrinus*), least tern (*Sternula antillarum*), and the Florida sandhill crane (*Grus canadensis pratensis*). Both the snowy plover and the least tern utilize sandy beaches and tidal flats, similar to those found along the Howard Frankland Causeway. Minimal project impacts may occur to a narrow, tidally-dynamic beach zone near the Howard Frankland Causeway near the terminus of the seawall. However, due to proximity to the highway, utilization of this area by nesting birds is unlikely. Tidal flats are present near Big Island Gap Bridge. However, the area is adjacent to the highway and frequented by people. Temporary or permanent impacts may occur to beach and/or tidal areas within the project limits; however, it is unlikely that these areas are used for nesting, foraging or shelter. Therefore, it is anticipated that the project **may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect** the snowy plover or the least tern. Sandhill cranes habitat is present in the area. However, due to the dense urbanization, high volume traffic, and fragmented habitat throughout this area, it is anticipated that the project will have **no effect** on the Florida sandhill crane.

The remaining species are designated as Species of Special Concern and include the roseate spoonbill (*Ajaja ajaja*), little blue heron (*Egretta caerulea*), reddish egret (*Egretta rufescens*), snowy

egret (*Egretta thula*), tri-colored heron (*Egretta tricolor*), white ibis (*Eudocimus albus*), American oystercatcher (*Haematopus palliatus*), the brown pelican (*Pandion haliaetus*), and the black skimmer (*Rynchops niger*). Several species of wading birds were observed during field surveys in June 2014. Species included the great blue heron (*Ardea Herodias*), snowy egret, and little blue heron near Big Island Gap Bridge and the double-crested cormorant (*Phalacrocorax auritus*) along the Howard Frankland Causeway. Since impacts to wetland habitat will be minimized and mitigated, it is anticipated that the project **may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect** these species.

The Florida burrowing owl is considered a Species of Special Concern by the FWC. Although the burrowing owl has been found in Pinellas County, suitable habitat was not observed within the project limits and field surveys did not identify any individuals or burrows. Therefore, it is anticipated that the project will have **no effect** on the Florida burrowing owl.

The southeastern American kestrel is listed as threatened by the FWC. Nesting snags were not observed and suboptimal foraging habitat exists between Gandy Boulevard and Roosevelt Boulevard. Given the mobility of this species and the absence of suitable nesting habitat, it is anticipated that the project will have **no effect** on the southeastern American kestrel.

### **Non-Listed Species**

Two non-listed, federally protected avian species may utilize the project area including the bald eagle bald Eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) and the Osprey (*Pandion haliaetus*). The bald eagle continues to receive protections through the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) (16 U.S.C. 668-668d), as amended, and the MBTA (16 U.S.C. 703-712). Construction activities are restricted within 330 feet of an active nest tree. In addition, the FWC requires adherence to USFWS Eagle Management Guidelines should construction activities occur within 660 feet of an active eagle nest during the nesting season (October 1 - May 15). Bald eagles are particularly common along Florida's Gulf coast and nesting territories are present throughout Pinellas County. Bald eagle nests have been documented within the vicinity of the project though according to the FWC Eagle Nest Locator none fall within 660 feet of the project limits. The FDOT will resurvey the project corridor prior to constructing the proposed project. Because this project will be consistent with the BGEPA and MBTA and will adhere to the USFWS Eagle Management Guidelines, it is anticipated that the project will have **no effect** on the bald eagle. The osprey is federally protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA). Removal of active nests is restricted and removal of inactive nests is authorized via FWC Migratory Bird Nest Removal Permits. An osprey was observed near the Howard Frankland Causeway; however, no osprey nests were observed within the project limits. The FDOT will resurvey the project corridor prior to constructing the proposed project. Because this project will be consistent with federal regulations, it is anticipated that the project will have **no effect** on the osprey.

## C-10. Essential Fish Habitat

An Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Assessment was incorporated into the Final Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR) (January 2016). Pursuant to section 305(b)(2) of the Magnuson-Stevens Act, federal agencies must consult with NMFS regarding any of its actions authorized, funded, or undertaken, or proposed to be authorized, funded, or undertaken that may adversely affect EFH. The EFH Assessment was conducted in accordance with Part 2, Chapter 11 – Essential Fish Habitat – of the FDOT PD&E Manual and the requirements of the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSFCMA) of 1996.

The intent of the EFH Assessment was to evaluate how the proposed actions associated with the I-275 widening between Gandy Boulevard and Ulmerton Road, at the Big Island Gap Bridge, and along the Howard Frankland Causeway could affect EFH designated by the NMFS and the Gulf of Mexico FMC within Old Tampa Bay and associated estuarine habitats.

Estuarine habitats exist within Old Tampa Bay and are crossed by the I-275 project. Based on field reviews conducted June 4th and 17th, 2014, the project crosses five EFH types including ditches/canals with direct connection to tidally-influenced bays, two estuarine intertidal habitats (*i.e.* scrub/shrub mangrove and unconsolidated sand shoreline), and two estuarine subtidal habitats (*i.e.* submerged aquatic vegetation and bay bottoms). Predominant habitat types observed along the project corridor included the following:

Tidally-connected canals - A freshwater, but tidally connected canal was present along I-275 south of Gandy Boulevard. This canal connects Riviera Bay to Sawgrass Lake Park near Tinny Creek. Further north, mangroves were observed east and west of I-275 within the canal located between Roosevelt Boulevard and Ulmerton Road at the Weedon Island Preserve. Construction impacts are anticipated within the I-275 right-of-way at both canal crossings.

Mangrove habitat was observed at the Weedon Island Preserve, at Big Island Gap on both natural substrate and riprap and along the Howard Frankland Causeway. Mangrove habitat included red mangrove (*Rhizophora mangle*), black mangrove (*Avicennia germinans*), and white mangrove (*Laguncularia racemosa*). The eastern oyster (*Crassostrea virginica*) was observed on prop roots of red mangrove near Big Island Gap. Construction impacts are anticipated to mangrove habitats at Big Island Gap and near the Weedon Island Preserve.

Hardened seawall and natural shoreline were present along the Howard Frankland Causeway within Old Tampa Bay. The natural shoreline contained sandy unconsolidated substrate along the supratidal, intertidal, and subtidal zones. Seagrass habitats of varying density, quality and composition were observed including shoal grass (*Halodule wrightii*) and manatee grass (*Syringodium filiforme*).

Estuarine subtidal habitats exist within the I-275 construction limits. Seagrasses were either absent or intermittent and patchy near the seawall, probably due to reflected wave energy, substrate disruption, and shading from floating organic debris. Shoal grass was found throughout areas of continuous and discontinuous seagrass. Manatee grass was observed primarily within the continuous shoal grass beds, which tended to be away from the shore in slightly deeper waters and predominantly on the eastern side of the causeway. Macroalgal epiphytes and drift algae were common within the seagrass habitats and along the shoreline.

Fisheries known to exist in Tampa Bay include the red drum (*Sciaenops ocellatus*), coastal migratory pelagics, and reef fish, pink shrimp (*Farfantepenaeus duorarum*), stone crab (*Minippe mercenaria*), and spiny lobster (*Panulirus argus*).

**Red Drum (*Sciaenops ocellatus*)** is found in Tampa Bay. **Reef Fish** include various species of snappers, groupers, triggerfishes, jacks, tilefishes, and wrasses. Gray (mangrove) snapper (*Lutjanus griseus*) is abundant in Tampa Bay. Due to the FDOT's commitment to use BMPs during construction and due to the ability of these species to utilize nearby habitats, long-term impacts are not anticipated to red drum or reef fish. **Coastal Migratory Pelagics** such as Spanish mackerel is known to occur in Tampa Bay; however, due to the infrequent occurrence of this species, impacts from construction are not anticipated. **Pink shrimp** juveniles inhabit almost every estuary around the Gulf and adults and juveniles are present in Tampa Bay. Some impacts will occur in seagrass habitats; however, due to the productivity of shrimp and the ability of shrimp populations to rebound quickly from one year to the next, long-term impacts to this species are not anticipated. **Spiny lobster (*Panulirus argus*)** have been found offshore from Tampa Bay. The project is not expected to impact this species. There are two species of **Stone crabs** found in Florida: the Florida stone crab (*Menippe mercenaria*) and the Gulf stone crab (*M. adina*). The Florida stone crab occurs extensively in Tampa Bay and is harvested for food. Due to the mobility of the species, the project is not expected to have detrimental impacts to this species.

Construction of portions of Segment C would impact seagrass and mangrove habitats. Specifically, the project would result in 0.89 acres of impact to mangrove habitat including 0.73 acres around Big Island Gap and 0.16 acres to surface waters associated with the Weedon Island Preserve. Seagrasses were categorized as continuous or intermittent and patchy. Impacts to continuous seagrass habitat would total approximately 0.40 acres; impacts to intermittent and patchy seagrass habitat 0.34 acres. Impacts to seagrass habitat will be avoided and minimized; however, it is anticipated that unavoidable impacts will occur as a result of the proposed project. Final seagrass impacts will be determined during the project permitting activities.

Final NMFS comments in response to information provided in the WEBAR were received May 4, 2015. The NMFS was unable to provide concurrence or non-concurrence since detailed project information was unavailable to conduct an analysis as part of the informal ESA Section 7 consultation process. However, NMFS stated it believed it could provide reasonable assurance that Section 7 consultation could remain informal in nature. NMFS stated that if appropriate compensatory mitigation was provided for unavoidable wetland impacts, the project would not have an adverse impact on EFH. Further coordination with NMFS will be required during the proposed project's future design phase in order to identify appropriate mitigation, especially for seagrasses and mangroves.

## ATTACHMENT D PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

### D-1. Noise

A Final Noise Study Report (NSR) was prepared as required by 335.17 F.S. The Final NSR was prepared in accordance with Title 23, Part 772 of the Code of Federal Regulations (23 CFR 772), *Procedures for Abatement of Highway Traffic Noise and Construction Noise* (July 13, 2010) and with all applicable guidelines as stated within both 23 CFR 772 and Part 2, Chapter 17 of the FDOT PD&E Manual (May 4, 2011). The predicted traffic noise levels presented with the report were expressed in decibels on the “A”-weighted scale (dB(A)). All traffic noise levels are reported as equivalent levels (Leq(h)). Levels reported as Leq(h) are equivalent steady-state sound levels that contain the same acoustic energy as time-varying sound levels over a period of one hour. Use of these noise metrics is consistent with 23 CFR 772. Detailed information on the noise analysis performed for each alternative is documented in the *Final Noise Study Report*.

Noise levels at which abatement must be considered for various types of noise sensitive sites are established in 23 CFR 772. These noise levels are referred to as the Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC). As shown in **Table 3**, the NAC vary by Activity Category. Noise Abatement measures must be considered when predicted traffic noise levels for Design Year (2040) Proposed Build Alternative conditions approach or exceed the NAC. Following FDOT procedure, an “approach” is defined as within 1 dB(A) of the FHWA criteria.

FHWA regulations also state that a traffic noise impact is predicted to occur when predicted traffic noise levels with a proposed improvement are considered substantial when compared to existing levels. The FDOT considers a substantial increase to be when traffic noise levels are predicted to increase 15 dB(A) or more above existing conditions as a direct result of a transportation improvement project.

**Table 3. FHWA/FDOT Noise Abatement Criteria**

Activity Category	Description of Activity Category	Activity Leq(h) <sup>1</sup>	
		FHWA	FDOT
A	Lands on which serenity and quiet are of extraordinary significance and serve an important public need and where the preservation of those qualities is essential if the area is to continue to serve its intended purpose.	57 (Exterior)	56 (Exterior)
B <sup>2</sup>	Residential	67 (Exterior)	66 (Exterior)
C <sup>2</sup>	Active sports areas, amphitheaters, auditoriums, campgrounds, cemeteries, day care centers, hospitals, libraries, medical facilities, parks, picnic areas, places of worship, playgrounds, public meeting rooms, public or nonprofit institutional structures, radio studios, recording studios, recreational areas, Section 4(f) sites, schools, television studios, trails and trail crossings.	67 (Exterior)	66 (Exterior)
D	Auditoriums, day care centers, hospitals, libraries, medical facilities, places of worship, public meeting rooms, public or nonprofit institutional structures, radio studios, recording studios, schools and television studios.	52 (Interior)	51 (Interior)
E <sup>2</sup>	Hotels, motels, offices, restaurants/bars and other developed lands, properties or activities not included in A-D or F.	72 (Exterior)	71 (Exterior)
F	Agriculture, airports, bus yards, emergency services, industrial, logging, maintenance facilities, manufacturing, mining, rail yards, retail facilities, shipyards, utilities (water resources, water treatment, electrical) and warehousing.	--	--
G	Undeveloped lands that are not permitted.	--	--

Sources: Table 1 of 23 CFR Part 772 and Table 17.1 of Chapter 17 of the FDOT's PD&E Manual (dated 5-24-11).

<sup>1</sup> The Leq(h) activity criteria values are for impact determination only, and are not design standards for noise abatement measures.

<sup>2</sup> Includes undeveloped lands permitted for this activity category.

*Note:* Noise abatement considerations are also warranted when a substantial noise increase is predicted to occur (i.e., when the predicted future traffic noise level with an improvement project is equal to or greater than 15 dB(A) when compared to the existing traffic noise level.

Two-thousand one hundred and eighty noise sensitive receptors (i.e., discrete representative locations on a property that has a noise sensitive land use) were evaluated within 72 noise sensitive areas (NSAs). Two thousand one hundred and thirty two receptors were evaluated on residential properties, three in active sports areas, one at a cemetery, two at day care centers, one for an exterior use at a medical facility, six at parks, three for exterior uses at places of worship, one at a public institutional structure, five in public recreational areas, two in residential recreational areas, and five for exterior uses at schools. Because there are no exterior uses identified, interior traffic noise levels were evaluated at one medical facility, a nonprofit institutional structure, seven places of worship, one public institutional structure, and one public meeting room. Finally, three receptors were evaluated at hotel/motels, two at properties designated as "other developed properties" (i.e., a for-profit theater and a private lodge) and two for the outdoor dining areas of restaurants.

Of the evaluated receptors, 1,017 are predicted to be impacted by traffic noise with existing conditions. In the future without the proposed improvements 993 of the 2,180 receptors are predicted to be impacted (forecast changes in the future number of heavy trucks and buses on I-275 result in a decrease in the number of impacted properties). Finally, with the proposed improvements, 1,321 receptors are predicted to be impacted by traffic noise. Of these receptors, 1,299 were evaluated on residential properties (Activity Category B), 22 were evaluated for exterior uses at active sports areas,

a cemetery, day care centers, institutional structures, medical facilities, parks, and schools (Activity Category C), and one was evaluated for the exterior dining area at a restaurant (Activity Category E).

Following FHWA/FDOT guidance, the residences were evaluated as Activity Category "B" (i.e. abatement considered at a predicted traffic noise of 66 dB(A)) and the active sports areas, cemetery, day care centers, parks, and recreational areas were evaluated as Activity Category "C": (i.e., abatement considered at predicted traffic noise of 66 dB(A)). Where exterior areas of use exist the medical facilities, the places of worship the public institutional structures and the schools were also evaluated as Activity Category "C". Where exterior uses do not exist, the property uses were evaluated as Activity Category "D" (i.e., abatement considered at predicted interior traffic noise of 51 dB(A)). Finally, the hotel/motels, other developed properties and the outdoor dining areas of the restaurants were evaluated as Activity Category "E".

Notably, within the project study limits, there is one existing noise barrier. The barrier parallels I-275 from 26th Street South to 22nd Street South. This barrier was considered in the evaluation of traffic noise for the noise sensitive sites adjacent to I-275.

When traffic noise impacts are predicted, noise abatement measures are considered for the impacted properties. Traffic management measures, modifications to the roadway alignment, buffer zones and noise barriers were considered as abatement measures. With the exception of the proposed noise barriers for the impacted properties within the following Noise Sensitive Areas (NSAs), the noise abatement measures were not determined to be both feasible and reasonable.

- NSA 10: Residences in the Lakewood Gateway and Country Club subdivisions;
- NSA 17: Residences in the Highland Terrace Park subdivision;
- NSA 20: Residences in the Highland Terrace Park and Gateway subdivisions;
- NSA 21: Residences in Tangerine Terrace subdivision;
- NSA 23: Residences in Tangerine Terrace subdivision;
- NSA 25: Residences in the Tangerine Terrace, Grand Central, Revere, Rosa E. Royal's, Prather's 31st Acreage, Don's, William's, and E.C. Fishers subdivisions;
- NSA 37: Residences in the S.V. Smith's and H.A. Murphy's subdivisions;
- NSA 45: Residences in the Fuller's Gough's and Bronx subdivisions and the Northside Apartments;
- NSAs 54 and 59: Residences in the Reisset, Bunson's Woodlawn Estates, Pine City, Townsend's R.I. Williamson's, Herkimer Heights, Shelton Heights, Clearview Park, Flemings, Harris School Park, Tetreault, Cross Corners, Larry's Bryan Heights, and Thrumstons Bilmar subdivisions;
- NSAs 55 and 57: Residences in the Brunsun's Woodlawn, Pine City, Herkimer Heights, Bengers, Rochester Heights, D.C. White, Coolidge Park, Lynndale, Mar-Mick, and Lakeside subdivisions, Silver Lake Mobile Home Resort, and North Ridge Mobile Home Park;
- NSA 61: Residences in the Heinz subdivision and a mobile home park in the southwest quadrant of I-275 and 54th Avenue interchange.

- NSAs 63 and 67: Residences in the Erle Renwick and Fairview Estates subdivisions and the Southern Mobile Home Park;
- NSA 66: Residences in the Chateaux Versailles, Oaks at Meadowlawn, and Meadowlawn Cardinal subdivisions;
- NSA 69: Residences in the Village Green Mobile Home Park;
- NSA 70: Residences in Bay Isle Townhomes; and
- NSA 71: Residences in the Azure Apartments.

The location and limits of the PD&E-evaluated noise barriers for the above NSAs are illustrated on aerials in Appendix B of the Final NSR. The estimated total cost to construct the barriers is \$30 million depending on barrier length and height.

The FDOT is committed to construct noise barriers at the locations above, contingent upon the following:

- Detailed noise analysis during the final design process supports the need for, and the feasibility and reasonableness of providing the barriers as abatement;
- The detailed analysis demonstrates that the cost of the noise barrier will not exceed the cost effective limit;
- The residents/property owners benefitted by the noise barrier desire that a noise barrier be constructed; and
- All safety and engineering conflicts or issues related to construction of a noise barrier are resolved.

Some land uses adjacent I-275 are identified on the FDOT listing of noise- and vibration-sensitive sites (e.g., residential use). Application of the **FDOT Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction** may minimize or eliminate potential issues should they arise during the construction process.

To reduce the possibility of additional traffic noise related impacts, noise level contours were developed for the future improved roadway facility. These noise contours delineate the distance from the improved roadway's edge-of-travel lane where exterior traffic noise is predicted to meet the Noise Abatement Criteria (NAC). Notably, these distances do not consider any reduction in traffic noise due to shielding from structures and vary depending on the segment of I-275.

- Activity Category "A" (land uses for which serenity and quiet are of extraordinary significance) – From 1,070 to 1,700 feet.
- Activity Categories "B" and "C" (includes residential land uses, places of worship, and day care centers) – From 360 to 720 feet.
- Activity Category "E" (includes land uses such as hotels/motels and the outdoor dining areas of restaurants) – From 220 to 390 feet.

## D-2. Air

The project is in an area that has been designated as attainment for all of the National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) established by the Clean Air Act and subsequent amendments. Therefore, the Clean Air Act conformity requirements do not apply to this project. An air quality analysis, specifically an analysis of carbon monoxide (CO) concentrations, was performed using methodology established in the FDOT *Project Development and Environment Manual*, Part 2, Chapter 16. CO levels were predicted using FDOT's screening test *CO Florida 2004*. All predicted CO concentrations for the No-Build and Build conditions in the opening year and design year were below the NAAQS.

## D-3. Construction

Construction activities for this proposed project will have minimal, temporary, yet unavoidable, air, noise, water quality, traffic flow, and visual impacts for those residents and travelers within the immediate vicinity of the project.

The air quality effect will be temporary and will primarily be in the form of emissions from diesel-powered construction equipment and dust from construction activities. Air pollution associated with the creation of airborne particles will be effectively controlled through the use of watering or the application of other controlled materials in accordance with FDOT's *Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction*.

Water quality effects resulting from erosion and sedimentation during construction will be controlled in accordance with FDOT's *Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction* and through the use of best management practices (BMPs).

Short term construction related wetland impacts will be minimized by adherence to FDOT's *Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction*. These specifications include measures known as BMPs, which include the use of siltation barriers, dewatering structures, and containment devices that will be implemented for controlling turbid water discharges outside of construction limits.

MOT and sequence of construction will be planned and scheduled to minimize traffic delays throughout the project. Signs will be used to provide notice of road closures and other pertinent information to the traveling public. The local news media will be notified in advance of construction-related activities so that motorists, residents, and business persons can make accommodations. All provisions of FDOT's *Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction* will be followed.

Construction of the roadway and bridges may require excavation of unsuitable material (muck), placement of embankments, and use of materials, such as limerock, asphaltic concrete, and Portland cement concrete. Demucking will be controlled by Section 120 of FDOT's *Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction*. The removal of structures and debris will be in accordance with state regulatory agencies permitting this operation. The contractor is responsible for his methods of controlling pollution on haul roads and in areas used for disposal of waste materials from the project.

Temporary erosion control features, as specified in FDOT's *Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction*, could consist of temporary grassing, sodding, mulching, sandbagging, slope drains, sediment basins, sediment checks, artificial coverings, and berms.

For the residents living in the project area, some of the materials stored for the project may be displeasing visually; however, this will be a temporary condition and should pose no substantial, long term problem.

#### **D-4. Contamination**

A Final Contamination Screening Evaluation Report (CSER) was prepared in accordance with FDOT PD&E Manual, Part 2, Chapter 22 reporting format and standard environmental assessment practices.

The Final CSER's project study area includes the corridor within the existing right of way (ROW) limits and extending outward approximately 300 feet from the existing I-275 ROW limits. Site visits were conducted in December 2014 and in January 2016 for the proposed SMF and FPC locations. The contamination evaluation included the following tasks:

- Document review using Pinellas County Property Appraiser's website;
- A regulatory review of governmental databases for permits and or violations associated with environmental issues;
- Obtaining and evaluating historical aerial photographs, topographic maps and soil surveys in an effort to determine potential contamination problem areas;
- Conducting site visits to verify information provided and to identify other potential concerns within the vicinity of the project;
- Determining the contamination potential
- Assigning a risk rating for each property within the proposed project limits.

The contamination rating system is divided into four degrees of risk: No, Low, Medium, and High. This system expresses the degree of concern for potential contamination problems. Sites were rated in accordance with Part 2, Chapter 22 of the FDOT *Project Development and Environment Manual*.

Fifteen (15) mainline locations were investigated for sites that may present the potential for finding petroleum contamination, hazardous materials or landfill leachate, and therefore may impact construction of the proposed project. Of the 15 mainline sites investigated, the following risk ratings were applied: 4 "High" rating sites, 9 "Medium" rating sites, 2 "Low" rating sites, and 0 sites rated "No" for potential contamination concerns. A summary of the Medium and High rating sites is presented in **Table 4**.

If construction activities are to occur in an area with contamination concerns, then a site assessment would be performed to the degree necessary during final design to determine levels of contamination and evaluate clean-up options and associated costs.

**Table 4. Potential Contamination Sites with Medium and High Risk Ratings**

Site No.	Edm Map ID#	Site Name And Address	Facility ID#	Distance From I-275	Contamination Concern	Preliminary Rating
1		5301 34th Street South, St. Petersburg, FL 33711	FDEP# 528623694	Non-Adjoining ROW: Approximately 120 feet west of I-275 at 54th Ave. South	Petroleum Products	Medium
2		5100 34th Street South, St. Petersburg, FL 33711	FDEP# 528943544	Adjoining ROW: Approximately 700 feet north of 54th Avenue South	Petroleum Products	Medium
3		3320 22nd Avenue South, St. Petersburg, FL 33712	FDEP# 292328	Adjoining ROW: west and south of I-275 at 22nd Avenue South	Hazardous Waste, chlorinated hydrocarbon dry cleaning solvents	Medium
4		1020 31st Street South, St. Petersburg, FL 33712	FDEP#: 529201432	Adjoining ROW: at 30th and 31st Streets South	Petroleum Products	High
5		855 28th Street South, St. Petersburg, FL 33712	FDEP#: 528944292	Adjoining ROW: west of intersection with 28th Street South	Petroleum Products	Medium
6		1839 Central Avenue, St. Petersburg, FL 33713	FDEP#: 529814263	Adjoining ROW: at Central Avenue and UST present in FDOT ROW	Petroleum Products	High
7		1190 20th Street North, St. Petersburg, FL 33713	FDEP#: COM_320501	Adjoining ROW: 300 feet south of intersection with 13th Avenue North	Hazardous Waste, chlorinated hydrocarbon solvents	High
8		Intersects ROW approximately 600 feet north of 13th Ave. North		Intersects ROW approximately 600 feet north of 13th Ave. North	Arsenic, Pesticides/ Herbicides & Petroleum Products	High
9		5001 Haines Road North, St. Petersburg, FL 33714	FDEP#: 528840837	Adjoining ROW: at intersection with Haines Road	Petroleum Products	Medium
11		I-275 & Roosevelt Blvd, west of 16th Street North and north of 102nd, St. Petersburg, FL 33716	WACS#: 47036	Adjoining ROW: South of intersection with Roosevelt Boulevard	Landfill leachate including petroleum, solvents, pesticides, metals and secondary water quality standards	Medium
12		10901 28th Street North, St. Petersburg, FL 33716	WACS#: 46742	Adjoining ROW: southwest of intersection with 118th Street North	Landfill leachate including petroleum, solvents, pesticides, metals and secondary water quality standards	Medium
14		1615 118th Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL 33716	FDEP#: COM_136839	Adjoining ROW: east of intersection with Roosevelt Boulevard	Dissolved metals	Medium
15		Northwest ROW of the southbound entrance ramp from I-275 to Gandy Boulevard	FDEP#: STCM_9801820	In ROW	Petroleum	Medium

Specific recommendations for the sites rated 'Medium' or 'High' are included in the Final CSER.

Procedures specifying the contractor's responsibilities in regards to encountering petroleum-contaminated soil and/or groundwater are set forth in FDOT's *Standard Specifications for Road and Bridge Construction*. Special provisions to the aforementioned standard specifications may be necessary if the presence of contamination is confirmed, which could impact construction.

FDOT has evaluated the existing and proposed ROW and has identified potentially contaminated sites that could affect the proposed project's construction activities. Resolution of problems associated with contamination will be coordinated as necessary during any final design activities associated with implementing the proposed project.

## **D-5. Aesthetic Effects**

FDOT may consider context sensitive solutions such as aesthetic features and landscaping during the design phase so that the project is in harmony with the community and preserves and/or enhances the natural, environmental, scenic, and aesthetic values of the area.

## **D-7. Utilities and Railroads**

Several utilities are located within the study area. In order to evaluate potential surface and subsurface utility conflicts associated with the proposed project, information was collected concerning the location and characteristics of the existing utilities within the I-275 corridor. A list of the utility providers in the vicinity of the project was obtained and base maps were sent to utility providers in accordance with Part 2, Chapter 10 of the FDOT *Project Development and Environment Manual* with a request to provide information on the location and type of any facilities owned, leased, maintained, or planned. Utility providers and contacts are included in the *Final PER*. Maps that were returned by each utility provider, showing specific locations of each utility, are included in the project files. Existing utilities will likely be impacted by the project. Depending on the location and depth of the utilities, implementation of the recommended improvements for the project may require adjustment of some of these facilities. Utility relocation costs are not included in the total estimated project costs and will be determined during the design phase of the project. Utility relocation costs are expected to be borne by the respective Utility Agencies/Owners (UAO's).

In addition, there is currently full Intelligent Transportation Systems (ITS) coverage in the project corridor. This includes dynamic message signs (DMS), closed-circuit television (CCTV) and detectors, and related conduit, fiber and power. CCTVs are installed at approximately one-mile intervals, DMS at every interchange and detectors at ½-mile intervals. In addition, "highway advisory radio (HAR) is to be installed in the next two or more years", according to the ITS Operations Manager for FDOT District Seven.

There is one active railroad within the project limits: CSX Railroad located north of 5<sup>th</sup> Street North. There will be no impacts to any railroad within the project limits.

## **D-8. Navigation**

A Bridge Project Questionnaire was completed for the existing bridge structure spanning Big Island Gap. This questionnaire was used to determine that a USCG Bridge Permit is required for the project.

***Appendix A***  
***TIP/STIP/LRTP PAGES***

# 2040 Long Range Transportation Plan



projects. Pinellas County has been very successful leveraging TRIP funds for Intelligent Transportation System and other management and operational projects, through the prioritization process developed by the CCC. The CCC is currently in the process of merging with TBARTA to streamline regional planning activities.

The **Tampa Bay Transportation Management Area (TMA) Leadership Group** convened to develop regional consensus on transportation priorities for the urbanized area that is composed of Pinellas, Hillsborough, and Pasco counties. The group is composed of elected officials from each MPO Board and provides the forum for the Tampa Bay metropolitan area to speak with one voice in discussions about transportation projects and funding resources. The group has identified the I-275/SR 60 interchange as the number one priority for the region, recognizing that without improvements at that location, other regional priorities would not achieve the desired outcomes. The Tampa Bay TMA also recognized the replacement of the Howard Frankland Bridge to accommodate transit and the Gateway Expressway as top priorities for the region.

### Highlights of Major Regional Projects

In addition to the aforementioned I-275/SR 60 interchange project, the projects described below were top priorities for both the TMA Leadership Group and TBARTA.

- **Gateway Expressway** – The funding for this project was advanced in 2014 and is now scheduled for construction within the next five years. Once complete, north and mid county residents will have improved access to the Gateway area, a major employment center, and to I-275, with decreasing travel times to downtown St. Petersburg and the Westshore business district.
- **Howard Frankland Bridge Replacement** – The replacement of the northbound structure of the Howard Frankland Bridge is funded for construction. However, the premium transit component remains unfunded.
- **Interstate Express Lanes** – Tolled interstate express



Figure 4-21: CCC Meeting—The West Central Florida Chairs Coordinating Committee (CCC) is comprised elected officials from each of the MPOs representing eight counties throughout the Tampa Bay area. This group allows for collaboration on transportation planning across the broader region (CCC meeting in Polk County in 2014).

lanes are cost feasible in both the Pinellas and Hillsborough LRTPs. Once the reconstruction of the I-275/SR 60 interchange is complete (cost feasible in the Hillsborough LRTP), these toll lanes will improve connectivity to and from the Gateway area, Westshore, and downtown Tampa. Buses will also be able to use the express lanes, improving travel time for regional transit trips.

As many Tampa Bay area residents travel to the Gateway area for employment, these regional projects provide vital links with Pinellas County for providing access to local connections for the regional travel. Additionally, two other regional projects are critical for the future of Pinellas County's transportation system. US 19 is a high priority for the Pinellas MPO in providing for regional travel. Many portions of US 19 have already been converted to a partially controlled access facility, including overpasses, interchanges and frontage roads, and all but one of the remaining segments from SR580 north to the Pinellas Trail underpass are currently programmed for construction or are identified as Cost Feasible projects in the 2040 LRTP. The other project is the construction of the Westshore Multimodal Center in Hillsborough County. This center, once constructed, will serve as a connection point for several local and regional transit routes. The potential also exists to connect with the proposed people mover at the Tampa International Airport. Map 4-2 illustrates the regional priority projects within and important to Pinellas County

**Table 5-8**  
**2040 Roadway Projects: State Roads**

Map Number	Project Name and Limits	Improvement Type	Committed	Project Phase and Cost (YOE)	Timeframe
25	SR 694 (Gandy Blvd) from US 19 (SR 55) to E of I-275 (SR 93)	6D to 6D +E	PE: Committed ROW: Committed	CST: \$25,740,000 (OA)	2020-2025
26	US 19 (SR 55) from Northside Dr to N of CR 95 (Curlew Rd Interchange)	6D + 2Aux to 6P	PE: Committed ROW: n/a	CST: \$223,532 (SIS)	2020-2025
27	SR 686 (Roosevelt Blvd) Stage 3 of 6, W of I-275 Interchange to SR 686 (Roosevelt Blvd) W of 9th St	NA to 4P	PE: Committed ROW: n/a	CST: \$142,315,045 (TMA/OA)	2020-2025
28	US 19 (SR 55) from N of CR 95 to N of Nebraska Ave (Tampa & Nebraska Interchange)	6D + 2Aux to 6P	PE: Committed ROW: n/a	CST: \$202,400,000 (SIS)	2031-2040
29	US 19 (SR 55) from N of Nebraska Ave to S of Timberlane Rd (Alderman Interchange)	6D + 2Aux to 6P	PE: Committed	CST: \$125,942,593 (OA) CST: \$112,455,830 (TMA/OA)	2026-2030 2031-2040
30	US 19 (SR 55) from S of Timberlane Rd to S of Lake Street (Klosterman Interchange)	6D + 2Aux to 6P	ROW: n/a	PE: \$15,741,000 (SIS) \$207,677,400 (TMA/OA)	2026-2030 2031-2040
31	I-275 Express Lanes from 118th St to 4th St/W end of Howard Frankland Bridge	6/8F to 6/8F + 2Aux	PE: Committed ROW: n/a	CST \$80,705,938 (SIS)	2020-2025
32	US 19 (SR 55) from S of Lake Street to Pinellas Trail (Tarpon Interchange)	6D + 2Aux to 6P	ROW: N/A	PE: \$12,641,000 (SIS) CST: \$169,042,700 (OA)	2026-2030 2031-2040
33	SR 694 (Gandy Blvd) from E end of 4th St North to West end of Gandy Bridge (Brighton Bay Interchange)	4D to 4P	PE: Committed	CST: \$57,750,000 (TMA) CST: \$24,625,000 (OA)	2026-2030 2031-2040
34	SR 686 at 49th St	N/A to 2 lane bridge	PE: Committed ROW: Committed	CST: \$64,888,000 (SIS)	2026-2030
35 (un-mapped)	I-275 study, from 54th Ave S to N of 4th St N	Study		Study: \$13,992,000 (SIS)	2026-2030

Note: Scope for all I-275 projects may be adjusted as a result of the PD&E currently underway .

<sup>1</sup>Includes the widening of the Howard Frankland Bridge northbound structure to accommodate a dedicated transit facility. Phasing of auxiliary lanes dependent upon the modification of the SR 60/I-275 Interchange, and may come before the transit improvements on the structure.

PE = Preliminary Engineering, ROW = Right of Way Acquisition, CST = Construction

'P' = Access controlled by ramps from frontage roads with interchanges at some intersections

'U' = Undivided; 'D' = Divided; 'P' = Partially Controlled Access; 'F' = Freeway; 'AUX' = Auxiliary Lanes; 'O' = One Way;

'E' = Enhancements. Enhancements may include any or all of the following: adding sidewalks; adding bike lanes; the provision of turning lanes at intersections; frontage roads; bringing the existing facility to urban section standards by providing the required lane widths, set-backs, drainage, curb and gutter



# TRANSPORTATION

Web Application

- Home
- About FDOT
- Contact Us
- Offices
- Maps & Data
- Performance
- Projects

**Federal Aid Management Office** [James Jobe - Manager](#)

## STIP Report

Selection Criteria	
<b>Current STIP</b>	<b>Detail Report</b>
County/MPO Area:(Select a County)	Financial Project:424501 1

HIGHWAYS								
<b>Item Number:</b> 424501 1 <b>Project Description:</b> I-275 (SR 93) FROM 54TH AVE S TO N OF 4TH ST NORTH								
<b>District:</b> 07		<b>County:</b> PINELLAS		<b>Type of Work:</b> PD&E/EMO STUDY		<b>Project Length:</b> 13.796MI		
<b>Extra Description:</b> CREATE ADDITIONAL/EXPRESS LANES/MANAGED LANES								
						Fiscal Year		
Phase / Responsible Agency		<2016	2016	2017	2018	2019	>2019	All Years
<b>P D &amp; E / MANAGED BY FDOT</b>								
<b>Fund Code:</b>	DDR - DISTRICT DEDICATED REVENUE	2,220,299						2,220,299
	DIH - STATE IN-HOUSE PRODUCT SUPPORT	57,665	449					58,114
	DS - STATE PRIMARY HIGHWAYS & PTO	421,390						421,390
<b>Phase: P D &amp; E Totals</b>		<b>2,699,354</b>	<b>449</b>					<b>2,699,803</b>
<b>Item: 424501 1 Totals</b>		<b>2,699,354</b>	<b>449</b>					<b>2,699,803</b>
<b>Project Totals</b>		<b>2,699,354</b>	<b>449</b>					<b>2,699,803</b>
<b>HIGHWAYS Totals</b>		<b>2,699,354</b>	<b>449</b>					<b>2,699,803</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>2,699,354</b>	<b>449</b>					<b>2,699,803</b>



# TRANSPORTATION

Web Application

- Home
- About FDOT
- Contact Us
- Offices
- Maps & Data
- Performance
- Projects

**Federal Aid Management Office** James Jobe - Manager

## STIP Report

Selection Criteria	
<b>Current STIP</b>	<b>Detail Report</b>
<b>County/MPO Area:</b> (Select a County)	<b>Financial Project:</b> 424501 2

HIGHWAYS							
<b>Item Number:</b> 424501 2 <b>Project Description:</b> I-275 (SR 93) FROM S OF 118TH AVENUE N TO S OF 4TH ST N							
<b>District:</b> 07 <b>County:</b> PINELLAS <b>Type of Work:</b> ADD LANES & RECONSTRUCT <b>Project Length:</b> 2.288MI							
<b>Extra Description:</b> EXPRESS LANES STARTER PROJECT							
		Fiscal Year					
Phase / Responsible Agency	<2016	2016	2017	2018	2019	>2019	All Years
<b>CONSTRUCTION / MANAGED BY FDOT</b>							
<b>Fund Code:</b> ACNP - ADVANCE CONSTRUCTION NHPP						52,205,990	<b>52,205,990</b>
DI - ST. - S/W INTER/INTRASTATE HWY						11,513,914	<b>11,513,914</b>
<b>Phase: CONSTRUCTION Totals</b>						<b>63,719,904</b>	<b>63,719,904</b>
<b>PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING / MANAGED BY FDOT</b>							
<b>Fund Code:</b> DI - ST. - S/W INTER/INTRASTATE HWY		6,831,000					<b>6,831,000</b>
DIH - STATE IN-HOUSE PRODUCT SUPPORT		50,000					<b>50,000</b>
<b>Phase: PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING Totals</b>		<b>6,881,000</b>					<b>6,881,000</b>
<b>Item: 424501 2 Totals</b>		<b>6,881,000</b>				<b>63,719,904</b>	<b>70,600,904</b>
<b>Project Totals</b>		<b>6,881,000</b>				<b>63,719,904</b>	<b>70,600,904</b>
<b>HIGHWAYS Totals</b>		<b>6,881,000</b>				<b>63,719,904</b>	<b>70,600,904</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>		<b>6,881,000</b>				<b>63,719,904</b>	<b>70,600,904</b>



**Transportation  
Improvement Program (TIP)**  
**Fiscal Years 2015/16 through 2019/20**  
**Pinellas County  
Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO)**  
**Adopted June 10, 2015**  
**Prepared by the MPO for the Pinellas Area Transportation Study**



## SURFACE TRANSPORTATION PROGRAM (STP) HIGHWAY PROJECT PRIORITIES

**STP POLICY STATEMENT:** It is the policy of the MPO that STP funds shall be provided for the following prioritized list of projects in the most expeditious manner possible, emphasizing that improvements be done on an incremental basis.

10	SR 686/Roosevelt Boulevard	I-275/SR 93	West of 9 <sup>th</sup> Street North/Dr Martin Luther King Jr Street North	DGN underway, FPN 2569981	Corridor priority since FY 1988/89
11	I-275/SR 93/Howard Frankland Bridge Replacement	over Tampa Bay	over Tampa Bay	DSB scheduled in the TIP for FY 2018/19, FPN 4229041 and 4229042	FY 1984/85
12	22 <sup>nd</sup> Avenue North Interchange Improvement	22 <sup>nd</sup> Street North	19 <sup>th</sup> Street North	CST underway, FPN 4331111	FY 2012/13
13	US 19/SR 55 (including Tampa and Nebraska Interchanges)	North of CR 95	North of Nebraska Avenue	DGN scheduled in the TIP for FY 2016/17, FPN 4337991. CST planned in the Cost Feasible LRTP for FY 2031-2040	FY 2014/15
14	US 19/SR 55 (including Alderman Interchange)	North of Nebraska Avenue	South of Timberlane Road	DGN scheduled in the TIP for FY 2015/16, FPN 4337971. CST planned in the Cost Feasible LRTP for FY 2031-2040	FY 2014/15 Corridor priority since FY 1988/89
15	US 19/SR 55 (including Klosterman Interchange)	South of Timberlane Road	South of Lake Street	DGN scheduled in the TIP for FY 2015/16, FPN 4337961. CST planned in the Cost Feasible LRTP for FY 2031-2040	FY 2014/15 FY 1995/96 (CMAQ priority for intersection improvements) Corridor priority since FY 1988/89
16	I-275 Express Lanes	Pinellas County Line	SR 694/Gandy Boulevard	Public Workshops Scheduled; CST planned in the Cost Feasible LRTP for FY FY 2020-25	FY 2014/15

Effective Date: 02/05/2015 Florida Department of Transportation Run: 04/07/2015 16.52.24

## 5 Year TIP

### View 5 Year TIP Phase Grouping Crosswalk DISTRICT 7

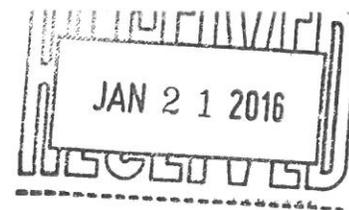
Fund	<2016	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	>2020	All Years
Item Number: 424501 2 Project Description: <b>I-275 (SR 93) FROM S OF 118TH AVENUE N TO S OF 4TH ST N *SIS*</b>								
District: 07 County: PINELLAS Type of Work: ADD LANES & RECONSTRUCT Project Length: 2.288								
Extra Description: EXPRESS LANES STARTER PROJECT								
PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING / MANAGED BY FDOT <a href="#">Long Range Transportation Plan: Map 5-6, Table 5-6, #31</a>								
DI -ST. - S/W INTER/INTRASTATE HWY	0	6,831,000	0	0	0	0	0	6,831,000
DIH -STATE IN-HOUSE PRODUCT SUPPORT	0	50,000	0	0	0	0	0	50,000
CONSTRUCTION / MANAGED BY FDOT								
ACNP -ADVANCE CONSTRUCTION NHPP	0	0	0	0	0	52,205,990	0	52,205,990
DI -ST. - S/W INTER/INTRASTATE HWY	0	0	0	0	0	11,513,914	0	11,513,914
Item 424501 2 Totals:	0	6,881,000	0	0	0	63,719,904	0	70,600,904
Project Total:	2,621,682	6,881,000	0	0	0	63,719,904	0	73,222,586
Item Number: 424507 3 Project Description: <b>SR 60 (COURTNEY CAMPBELL CWY) FM MCMULLEN BOOTH RD TO HILLSBOROUGH COUNTY LINE *NON-SIS*</b>								
District: 07 County: PINELLAS Type of Work: ITS FREEWAY MANAGEMENT Project Length: 3.717								
Extra Description: TAMPA BAY SUNGUIDE PH IV								
PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING / MANAGED BY FDOT <a href="#">Long Range Transportation Plan: Objective 4.1</a>								
DDR -DISTRICT DEDICATED REVENUE	12,638	0	0	0	0	0	0	12,638
DIH -STATE IN-HOUSE PRODUCT SUPPORT	12,000	0	0	0	0	0	0	12,000
DITS -STATEWIDE ITS - STATE 100%.	0	0	0	110,000	0	0	0	110,000
DESIGN BUILD / MANAGED BY FDOT								
DDR -DISTRICT DEDICATED REVENUE	0	0	0	1,684,576	0	0	0	1,684,576
DIH -STATE IN-HOUSE PRODUCT SUPPORT	0	0	0	300,789	0	0	0	300,789
DITS -STATEWIDE ITS - STATE 100%.	0	0	0	2,226,892	0	0	0	2,226,892
DS -STATE PRIMARY HIGHWAYS & PTO	0	0	0	1,232,340	0	0	0	1,232,340
Item 424507 3 Totals:	24,638	0	0	5,554,597	0	0	0	5,579,235
Project Total:	24,638	0	0	5,554,597	0	0	0	5,579,235

***Appendix B***  
***SHPO / FHWA CONCURRENCE***



RECEIVED  
BUREAU OF  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION

*Florida Department of Transportation*



RICK SCOTT  
GOVERNOR

2016 MAR 22 P 1:41 11201 N. McKinley Drive  
Tampa, FL 33612-6456

JIM BOXOLD  
SECRETARY

January 20, 2016

Ms. Cathy Kendall  
Environmental Protection Specialist  
Federal Highway Administration  
Florida Division  
3500 Financial Plaza, Suite 400  
Tallahassee, FL 32312

RE: Section 106 Consultation Case Study Report  
I-275/SR 93 from South of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to North of 4<sup>th</sup> Street North  
Financial Project ID No.: 424501-1  
FAP No.: TBD  
Pinellas County, Florida

Dear Ms. Kendall:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District Seven, is conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study to evaluate the need for capacity and operational improvements along 16.3 miles of Interstate 275 (I-275) (State Road (SR) 93) from south of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to north of 4<sup>th</sup> Street North in Pinellas County, Florida. This study will document the need for the improvements, as well as the procedures utilized to develop and evaluate various improvements, including elements such as proposed typical sections, special designation of travel lanes, preliminary horizontal alignments, and interchange enhancement alternatives.

Enclosed are two copies of the Section 106 Consultation Case Study Report (December 2015) for the above referenced project. A Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS) was prepared and submitted to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) and State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) earlier this year. As a result of the CRAS coordination, it was determined that 16 historic resources were listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). These include the Kenwood Historic District (8PI11176), which was listed in the NRHP in 2003, and 11 contributing resources (one newly identified in the CRAS). It also includes the following four NRHP-eligible resource: the Jordan Park Elementary School (8PI6901) at 2390 9th Avenue South, the Norwood School (8PI714) at 2154 27th Avenue North, Papa's Dream (8PI726) at 1850 Central Avenue, and The Manhattan Casino (8PI819) at 642 22nd Street. FHWA and SHPO concurred on May 6, 2015, and June 2, 2015, respectively. Therefore, as per

Ms. Cathy Kendall  
I-275/SR 93 from South of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to North of 4<sup>th</sup> Street North  
Financial Project ID No.: 424501-1; FAP No.: TBD  
January 20, 2016  
Page 2 of 3

36 CFR Part 800.5, the project must be evaluated to determine if it would have an effect on these significant historic resource.

The enclosed Section 106 Consultation Case Study Report has been prepared to evaluate potential effects (primary and secondary) of the proposed undertaking (Recommended Built Alternative) to these resources. As documented in the enclosed report, FDOT has applied the Criteria of Adverse Effect found in 36 CFR Part 800.5 and is presenting a finding of *No Adverse Effect* for the Kenwood Historic District (8PI11176) and the 11 contributing resources within the project APE, as well as the Norwood School (8PI00714), and a finding of *No Effect* to the Jordan Park Elementary School (8PI06901), Manhattan Casino (8PI00819), and Papa's Dream (8PI00726).

This information is being provided in accordance with the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended), which are implemented by the procedures contained in 36 CFR, Part 800, as well as the provisions contained in the revised Chapter 267, Florida Statutes.

Provided you approve the recommendations and findings in the enclosed Case Study Report, please coordinate with the SHPO for concurrence. One copy of the document and CD is for the SHPO. The other copy of the document and CD is for your files.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (813) 975-6456 or [todd.bogner@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:todd.bogner@dot.state.fl.us) or Rebecca Spain Schwarz at (813) 281- 8308 or [rebecca.spain-schwarz@atkinsglobal.com](mailto:rebecca.spain-schwarz@atkinsglobal.com).

Sincerely,



Todd L. Bogner  
Environmental Specialist III  
District Seven Cultural Resource Coordinator

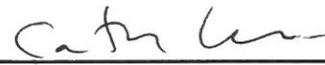
Enclosure

cc: Phillip Bello (FHWA)                      Marvin Williams (FHWA)                      Roy Jackson (FDOT SEMO)  
Robin Rhinesmith (FDOT)                      Menna Yassin (FDOT)                      Kent McWaters (HDR)  
Rebecca Spain Schwarz (Atkins/GEC)

The FHWA finds the Section 106 Consultation Case Study Report provided with this letter to be complete and sufficient and  approves /  does not approve the above recommendations and findings. Or, the FHWA finds the attached Report contains  insufficient information.

The FHWA requests the SHPO's opinion on the sufficiency of the report provided with the letter and the SHPO's opinion on the recommendations and findings contained in this letter and in the comment block below.

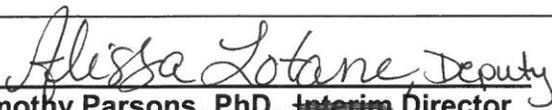
**FHWA Comments:**


*for* /s/   
**James Christian**  
Division Administrator  
Florida Division  
Federal Highway Administration

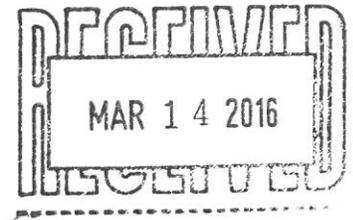
3/18/16  
**Date**

The Florida State Historic Preservation Officer finds the attached Section 106 Consultation Case Study Report complete and sufficient and concurs with the recommendations and findings provided in this cover letter for SHPO/DHR Project File Number 2015-2223B. Or, the SHPO finds the attached Report contains  insufficient information.

**SHPO Comments:**


*for* /s/  Deputy SHPO  
**Timothy Parsons, PhD., Interim Director**  
Division of Historical Resources  
and State Historic Preservation Officer

3/30/16  
**Date**



*Florida Department of Transportation*

**RICK SCOTT**  
GOVERNOR

11201 N. McKinley Drive  
Tampa, FL 33612-6456

**JIM BOXOLD**  
SECRETARY

March 11, 2016

Ms. Cathy Kendall  
Environmental Protection Specialist  
Federal Highway Administration  
Florida Division  
545 John Knox Road, Suite 200  
Tallahassee, Florida 32303

RE: Cultural Resource Assessment Survey Technical Memorandum Addendum for Stormwater Management Facility (SMF) Sites  
I-275/S.R. 93 from South of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to North of 4<sup>th</sup> Street North  
Work Program Item Segment No.: 424501-1  
FAP No.: TBD  
Pinellas County, Florida

Dear Ms. Kendall:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District Seven, is conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study to evaluate the need for capacity and operational improvements along 16.3 miles of Interstate 275 (I-275) (State Road (SR) 93) from south of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to north of 4<sup>th</sup> Street North in Pinellas County, Florida. This study will document the need for the improvements, as well as the procedures utilized to develop and evaluate various improvements, including elements such as proposed typical sections, special designation of travel lanes, preliminary horizontal alignments, and interchange enhancement alternatives.

Enclosed is one (1) copy of the Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS) Technical Memorandum Addendum for Stormwater Management Facility (SMF) sites and a CD containing a PDF copy of this document. By copy of this letter, one (1) copy of the CRAS, three (3) original Florida Master Site File (FMSF) forms (8PI12710, 8PI12723, and 8PI12724), a Survey Log Sheet, and one (1) CD (containing PDF files of the CRAS, FMSF forms, and Survey Log Sheet, plus jpg files of the FMSF photos) are also being submitted to the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO) for concurrent review. This CRAS is an addendum to the PD&E Study CRAS Report that was prepared in 2015 for the proposed roadway improvements. That CRAS Report was

Ms. Cathy Kendall  
I-275/S.R. 93 from South of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to North of 4<sup>th</sup> Street North  
Work Program Item Segment No.: 424501-1; FAP No.: TBD  
March 11, 2016  
Page 2 of 4

submitted on April 8, 2015, to the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) for review and coordination with the SHPO. The FHWA approved the recommendations and findings in the CRAS on May 6, 2015, and the SHPO concurred on June 2, 2015. Since then, six (6) SMF site locations have been identified during the project's PD&E Study in order to determine right of way (ROW) cost estimates. These SMF locations may change during later project implementation phases. If they do, they will be reevaluated accordingly.

This CRAS Technical Memorandum Addendum analyzed the SMF sites (SMF 2, 7, 12, 13, 18 and 20) that are located outside of the FDOT ROW and not the SMF locations within the existing I-275 ROW. SMF locations inside the FDOT ROW have already been surveyed and addressed in the 2015 CRAS prepared for this proposed project. Also, only one (1) Floodplain Compensation site (FPC) is anticipated to be required for the proposed project. This FPC is in basin 18 and it would be within the existing ROW of the I-275/Gandy Interchange.

As a result of desktop analysis and limited field survey of these proposed SMF locations, it has been determined that there will be a low potential for archaeological impacts for all six (6) offsite SMF sites. For historic resources, there will be no involvement with historic resources for four (4) SMF sites (SMF 2, 7, 18 and 20). SMFs 12 and 13 have several historic resources within them. SMF 12 includes three historic structures (previously recorded 8PI12337 and 8PI12339 plus newly recorded 8PI12710). SMF 12 includes two (2) historic structures (previously recorded 8PI12343 and newly recorded 8PI12723) plus one (1) newly recorded resource group (8PI12724) consisting of both historic structures. All resources are typical frame vernacular style residences. The previously recorded resources have been determined not eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) by the SHPO. The newly recorded resources also do not appear to meet the criteria for listing in the NRHP.

At this PD&E study stage, none of the SMF sites needs to be avoided due to cultural resource issues. If SMF sites change during the design phase, a CRAS Update, including archaeological and historic resource fieldwork, will be prepared for any SMF sites that are planned to be located outside of the existing I-275 ROW. The CRAS Update will be submitted to the FHWA and SHPO for review and concurrence. The coordination will be documented in a future Reevaluation of the project's PD&E study.

Also enclosed are three (3) revised pages for the Section 106 Case Study Report (CSR) to reflect the updated information for the SMF sites that is being provided with this letter. The CSR (dated December 2015) was submitted to your office on January 20, 2016. Revised pages include the cover, inside title sheet, and page 62. A full copy of the PDF file for the updated CSR is included on the CD.

This information is being provided in accordance with the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended), which are implemented by the

Ms. Cathy Kendall  
I-275/S.R. 93 from South of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to North of 4<sup>th</sup> Street North  
Work Program Item Segment No.: 424501-1; FAP No.: TBD  
March 11, 2016  
Page 3 of 4

procedures contained in 36 CFR, Part 800, as well as the provisions contained in the revised Chapter 267, Florida Statutes.

Provided you approve the recommendations and findings in the enclosed document, please coordinate with the SHPO for concurrence. Although a copy of this document and related FMSF forms are being submitted to the SHPO concurrently, they understand that they will not provide a finding or concurrence until after receiving a finding from FHWA.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (813) 975-6456 or [todd.bogner@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:todd.bogner@dot.state.fl.us) or Rebecca Spain Schwarz at (813) 281-8308 or [rebecca.spain-schwarz@atkinsglobal.com](mailto:rebecca.spain-schwarz@atkinsglobal.com). For the Environmental Administrator please contact Robin Rhinesmith at (813) 975-6469 or [robin.rhinesmith@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:robin.rhinesmith@dot.state.fl.us).

Sincerely,



Todd L. Bogner  
Environmental Specialist III  
Cultural Resource Coordinator

TB/RSS  
Enclosure

cc: Phillip Bello (FHWA)  
Roy Jackson (FDOT SEMO)  
Robin Rhinesmith (FDOT)  
Kent McWaters (HDR)

Timothy Parsons (SHPO)  
Alyssa McManus (SHPO) (*w/ enclosures*)  
Menna Yassin (FDOT)  
Rebecca Spain Schwarz (Atkins/GEC)

The FHWA finds the Cultural Resource Assessment Survey Technical Memorandum Addendum provided with this letter to be complete and sufficient and  approves /  does not approve the above recommendations and findings. Or, the FHWA finds the attached Technical Memorandum contains  insufficient information.

The FHWA requests the SHPO's opinion on the sufficiency of Technical Memorandum provided with the letter and the SHPO's opinion on the recommendations and findings contained in this letter and in the comment block below.

FHWA Comments:

*for* James Christian  
Division Administrator  
Florida Division  
Federal Highway Administration

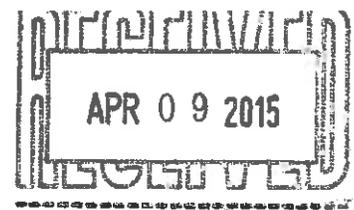
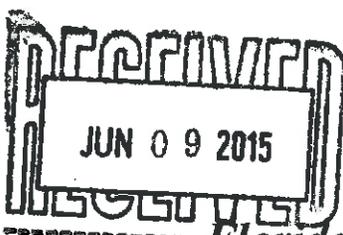
3/18/16  
Date

The Florida State Historic Preservation Officer finds the attached Cultural Resource Assessment Survey Technical Memorandum Addendum complete and sufficient and concurs with the recommendations and findings provided in this cover letter for SHPO/DHR Project File Number **2015-2223(C)** Or, the SHPO finds the attached Technical Memorandum contains  insufficient information. *→ 2015-2223(C)*

SHPO Comments:

*for* Timothy Parsons, PhD., ~~Interim~~ Director  
Division of Historical Resources  
and State Historic Preservation Officer

3/30/16  
Date



Florida Department of Transportation

2015-2223

RICK SCOTT  
GOVERNOR

11201 N. McKinley Drive  
Tampa, FL 33612-6456

JIM BOXOLD  
SECRETARY

April 8, 2015

Ms. Cathy Kendall  
Environmental Protection Specialist  
Federal Highway Administration  
Florida Division  
545 John Knox Road, Suite 200  
Tallahassee, Florida 32303

RE: Cultural Resource Assessment Survey  
I-275/SR 93 from South of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to North of 4<sup>th</sup> Street North  
Financial Project ID No.: 424501-1  
FAP No.: TBD  
Pinellas County, Florida

~~RECEIVED  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
2015 APR 30 P 2:23~~  
RECEIVED  
STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
2015 MAY -8 P 2:24

Dear Ms. Kendall:

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT), District Seven, is conducting a Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study to evaluate the need for capacity and operational improvements along 16.3 miles of Interstate 275 (I-275) (State Road (SR) 93) from south of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to north of 4<sup>th</sup> Street North in Pinellas County, Florida. This study will document the need for the improvements as well as the procedures utilized to develop and evaluate various improvements including elements such as proposed typical sections, special designation of travel lanes, preliminary horizontal alignments, and interchange enhancement alternatives.

Enclosed are two copies of the Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS) (March 2015) that was prepared for the above referenced project. Also enclosed are 327 Florida Master Site File (FMSF) forms (8PI901, 8PI902, 8PI1212, 8PI1258, 8PI714, 8PI726, 8PI819, 8PI6956, 8PI7256, 8PI7272, 8PI7410, 8PI7502, 8PI7837, 8PI7839, 8PI7970, 8PI10191, 8PI11102, 8PI11108, 8PI11113, 8PI11176, 8PI12172 through 8PI12477); a CD containing the FMSF photographs and pdf files of the FMSF forms and CRAS (for the State Historic Preservation Officer [SHPO]); a CD containing a pdf file of the CRAS and FMSF forms (for FHWA); and a Survey Log Sheet. As agreed, the FMSF forms for FHWA are all contained on the CD and not provided as hard copies since there are so many forms.

The CRAS included background research and a field survey. The purpose was to locate and identify any archaeological sites and historic resources located within the

project area of potential effect (APE) and to assess their significance in terms of eligibility for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP). The archaeological Area of Potential Effect (APE) was defined as the existing right of way; the historical APE includes the existing right of way as well as immediately adjacent properties within 200 feet. Proposed pond and floodplain compensation sites were not identified in the PD&E Study and will be evaluated later during design.

The background research suggested a Moderate Degree of Effect for archaeological resources. Background research indicated that five previously recorded archaeological sites are located within a 500 foot buffer, four of which are adjacent to the I-275 corridor within the proposed project APE (8PI901, 8P902, 8PI1212, 8PI1258). As a result of surface reconnaissance and limited archaeological testing, all four sites, as contained within the project APE, are presumed destroyed. There is insufficient information to determine the potential NRHP eligibility of 8PI901 and 8PI902, since most of each site area is situated outside the project APE. Both 8PI1212 and 8PI1258, mostly contained within the project APE, are considered ineligible for listing in the NRHP due to the loss of physical integrity. Systematic survey of the entire project corridor was not required since additional ROW is not being proposed, the existing ROW has been severely altered by roadway development and other impacts, and work within the ROW posed a safety issue for the field team.

The background research suggested a Moderate Degree of Effect for historical resources. Historical/architectural field survey resulted in the identification and evaluation of 325 historic resources within the I-275 project APE. This includes 19 that were previously recorded and 306 that are newly identified. This total includes 309 structures, 13 building complex resource groups, one historic district, one railroad, and one cemetery. Of these, 16 are listed, eligible, or considered potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP. Field survey also revealed that 10 previously recorded historic resources are no longer extant.

Based on the results of background research and field surveys, the significant historic resources located within the I-275 project APE include the Kenwood Historic District (8PI11176), which was listed in the NRHP in 2003, and some contributing resources. Ten previously identified contributing resources (8PI6929, 8PI7256, 8PI7272, 8PI7410, 8PI7502, 8PI7837, 8PI7839, 8PI7970, 8PI11102, and 8PI11108) are located within the I-275 project APE. Field survey indicated that one previously recorded historic resource (8PI6956) situated adjacent to the boundaries of the Kenwood Historic District, but not originally included, appears to be potentially eligible as a contributing resource to a revised Kenwood Historic District. It is not, however, considered individually NRHP-eligible. The Jordan Park Elementary School (8PI6901) at 2390 9th Avenue South was determined NRHP eligible by the SHPO in 2005. Finally, three historic resources are considered potentially eligible for listing in the NRHP: the Norwood School (8PI714) at 2154 27th Avenue North, Papa's Dream (8PI726) at 1850 Central Avenue, and The Manhattan Casino (8PI819) at 642 22nd Street. There is insufficient information to

Ms. Cathy Kendall  
I-275/SR 93 from South of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to North of 4<sup>th</sup> Street North  
Financial Project ID No.: 424501-1; FAP No.: TBD  
April 8, 2015  
Page 3 of 4

determine the eligibility of two historic resources: the Mt. Moriah Primitive Baptist Church (8PI12276) and the Orange Belt Railway/CSX Railroad (8PI12273).

This information is being provided in accordance with the provisions of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (as amended), which are implemented by the procedures contained in 36 CFR, Part 800, as well as the provisions contained in the revised Chapter 267, Florida Statutes.

Provided you approve the recommendations and findings in the enclosed cultural resource document, please coordinate with the SHPO for concurrence. The unbound copy of the document; the original FMSF forms; CD with FMSF photos, forms, and CRAS; and Survey Log Sheet are for the SHPO. The bound copy of the document and the CD with the CRAS and FMSF pdf file is for your files.

If you have any questions, please contact me at (813) 975-6456 or [todd.bogner@dot.state.fl.us](mailto:todd.bogner@dot.state.fl.us) or Rebecca Spain Schwarz at (813) 281- 8308 or [rebecca.spain-schwarz@atkinsglobal.com](mailto:rebecca.spain-schwarz@atkinsglobal.com).

Sincerely,



Todd L. Bogner  
Environmental Specialist III  
District Seven Cultural Resource Coordinator

Enclosure

cc: Phillip Bello (FHWA) Roy Jackson (FDOT CEMO) Robin Rhinesmith (FDOT)  
Sara Hall-Wagner (FDOT) Matthew Wey (HDR)  
Rebecca Spain Schwarz (Atkins/GEC)

---

The FHWA finds the Cultural Resource Assessment Survey provided with this letter to be complete and sufficient and  approves /  does not approve the above recommendations and findings. Or, the FHWA finds the attached Technical Memorandum contains  insufficient information.

The FHWA requests the SHPO's opinion on the sufficiency of the report provided with the letter and the SHPO's opinion on the recommendations and findings contained in this letter and in the comment block below.

**FHWA Comments:**

This finding does not include stormwater facility and floodplain compensation areas needed to address project impacts.

*for* /s/ [Signature]  
James Christian  
Division Administrator  
Florida Division  
Federal Highway Administration

5/6/15  
Date

The Florida State Historic Preservation Officer finds the attached Cultural Resource Assessment Survey complete and sufficient and concurs with the recommendations and findings provided in this cover letter for SHPO/DHR Project File Number 15-2223. Or, the SHPO finds the attached Technical Memorandum contains  insufficient information.

**SHPO Comments:**

*[Signature]*

*for* /s/ [Signature]  
Robert F. Bendus, Director  
Division of Historical Resources  
and State Historic Preservation Officer

6/2/15  
Date

***Appendix C***  
***USFWS/FFWCC/NMFS COORDINATION***



# United States Department of the Interior

## U. S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

7915 BAYMEADOWS WAY, SUITE 200  
JACKSONVILLE, FLORIDA 32256-7517

IN REPLY REFER TO:

FWS Log No. 41910- 2015-I-0297

July 17, 2015

Nicole Selly  
District 7 Environmental Administrator  
Florida Department of Transportation  
11201 N. McKinley Drive  
Tampa, Florida 33612-6456

RE: PD&E Study (I-275/SR 93)  
FDOT Work Program Number: 424501-1  
Pinellas County, Florida

Dear Ms. Selly:

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has completed its review of the final draft Project Development and Environment Study (PD&E) and Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR). The PD&E Study evaluates the need for capacity and operational improvements along 16.3 miles of Interstate 275 (I-275) (State Road (SR) 93) from south of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to north of 4th Street North in Pinellas County, Florida and satisfies all applicable federal and state requirements, including the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), in order for this project to qualify for federal-aid funding of subsequent development phases (design, right of way acquisition, and construction). The Service provides the following comments in accordance with section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (Act), as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

The Service received a request from the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) for informal consultation on March 24, 2015, to review the WEBAR dated March 2015. It is our understanding that the FDOT intends continue informal consultation for the project's effects on the listed species during its future permitting process. In compliance with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, FDOT agrees not to begin construction on the project as described in the WEBAR, or otherwise make any irreversible or irretrievable commitment of resources that precludes the implementation of any reasonable and prudent measures until informal consultation with the Service is completed. The Commitments and Recommendations Section of the final FHWA approved NEPA document for the project will include a commitment to continue informal Section 7 consultation with this agency during the project's future permitting process. Given this commitment and based on the current project development and environment study phase information for the proposed project, we are providing the following review of the project's potential to affect species listed under the Endangered Species Act.

*Wood stork (Mycteria americana)*

Wood storks depend on wetlands for foraging and nesting. In Florida, wood storks have been documented foraging in forested wetlands, cypress domes, fresh water marshes, retention ponds and roadside ditches. Two active nesting colonies and their associated core foraging areas are found within 15 miles of the proposed road improvement project. The FDOT is committed to reducing the direct and indirect impacts of this project on wetlands throughout the planning, design, and permitting phase of this proposal. In addition, the agency has committed to providing the appropriate mitigation to compensate for any loss of suitable wood stork foraging habitat. Based on this commitment and our review of the information available in the WEBAR the Service could concur with a 'may affect, but not likely to adversely affect' determination for the wood stork.

*Florida Manatee (Trichechus manatus latirostris)*

The WEBAR concluded a 'may affect, not likely to adversely affect' determination for the Florida manatee and FDOT listed several action items in the WEBAR to protect manatees for the duration of the project. No critical habitat has been designated within this area known as Old Tampa Bay. The level of manatee use in the area is considered high. The Service appreciates the inclusion of the action items noted in the WEBAR and could support a determination of 'may affect but not likely to adversely affect'. We understand that the following special conditions will be implemented:

- 2011 In-Water Construction Conditions will be followed.
- A Manatee Protection Plan will be developed and submitted to the Service at least 60 days prior to the start of construction with manatee observer names and qualifications listed. Agency approval is contingent on our concurrence with FDOT's determination of may affect but not likely to adversely affect.
- Dedicated, experienced, manatee observers will be present if in-water work is being performed. All siltation barriers or coffer dams should be checked at least twice a day for manatees that may become entangled or entrapped at the site.
- FDOT will conduct a seagrass survey during the growing season within two years prior to the start of construction.
- Any culverts larger than eight inches in diameter below mean high water should be grated to prevent manatee entrapment. The spacing between the bridge pilings will be at least 60 inches apart to allow for manatee movement in between the pilings.

- Barges will be equipped with fender systems that provide a minimum standoff distance of four feet between wharves, bulkheads and vessels moored together to prevent crushing manatees between the barges or between the barge and work site. All existing slow speed or no wake zones will apply to all work boats and barges associated with the construction.
- No dredging is proposed at this time. If dredging is needed, consultation should be reinitiated.
- FDOT understands that blasting will result in a 'may affect' determination and FDOT would initiate formal ESA consultation.

#### Piping Plover (*Charadrius melodus*)

Temporary or permanent impacts may occur at the beach and or tidal areas within the project limits. FDOT has determined that it is unlikely that piping plovers use the proposed project area for foraging or shelter. Based on the description of the habitat and our site visit to the project area on July 15, 2015, the Service could concur with a 'may affect but not likely to adversely affect' determination for this species.

#### Gulf Sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*)

FDOT has committed to follow the *Special Construction Conditions for the Gulf Sturgeon* and to ensure that observers watch for this species. Because there is suitable habitat for this species within the action area and the special conditions will reduce the risk of take, the Service could concur with a 'may affect but not likely to adversely affect' determination for this species.

#### Sea Turtles

FDOT has determined that sea turtle nesting habitat is not present within the project limits. However, sea turtles, in particular juvenile sea turtles, may be present in the waters within and abutting the project corridor. The FDOT will require implementation of the protocol outlined in the *Sea Turtle and Smalltoothed Sawfish Construction Conditions* during construction. Given the FDOT's commitment to adhere these special conditions, the Service could concur with the determination of 'may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect' for these species.

This letter does not represent a biological opinion as described in Section 7 of the ESA nor a final concurrence with project effects on listed species as determined by the FDOT. New information regarding species status, presence, changes to and refinement of the proposed project, and potential adverse effects not initially considered may increase the risk of adverse effects to a level at which take is reasonably certain to occur. All additional information available will be evaluated when ESA consultation is reinitiated.

### Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act

The FDOT is statutorily obligated to mitigate all wetland impacts according to the Clean Water Act and the Section 404 permitting process through the Army Corps of Engineers. In addition, the State of Florida also requires the demonstration of avoidance, minimization and mitigation of wetland impacts. During the design and permitting phase the FDOT has committed to avoiding and minimizing the direct and indirect effects of this project on wetland ecosystems.

If you have any questions, please contact Lourdes Mena at (904)731-3119. Thank you for considering the effects of your proposal on fish and wildlife, and the ecosystems upon which they depend.

Sincerely,



 Jay B. Herrington  
Field Supervisor



April 15, 2015

Florida Fish  
and Wildlife  
Conservation  
Commission

Commissioners

**Richard A. Corbett**  
Chairman  
Tampa

**Brian Yablonski**  
Vice Chairman  
Tallahassee

**Ronald M. Bergeron**  
Fort Lauderdale

**Richard Hanas**  
Oviedo

**Aliese P. "Liesa" Priddy**  
Immokalee

**Bo Rivard**  
Panama City

**Charles W. Roberts III**  
Tallahassee

Executive Staff

**Nick Wiley**  
Executive Director

**Eric Sutton**  
Assistant Executive Director

**Jennifer Fitzwater**  
Chief of Staff

Office of the  
Executive Director

**Nick Wiley**  
Executive Director

(850) 487-3796  
(850) 921-5786 FAX

*Managing fish and wildlife  
resources for their long-term  
well-being and the benefit  
of people.*

620 South Meridian Street  
Tallahassee, Florida  
32399-1600  
Voice: (850) 488-4676

Hearing/speech-impaired:  
(800) 955-8771 (T)  
(800) 955-8770 (V)

MyFWC.com

Ms. Nicolle Selly  
Environmental Specialist  
Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) District Seven  
11201 North McKinley Drive  
Tampa, FL 33612  
[Nicolle.Selly@DOT.state.fl.us](mailto:Nicolle.Selly@DOT.state.fl.us)

Re: I-275 from South of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue S. to North of 4<sup>th</sup> Street N., PD&E Study, Pinellas County, Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report

Dear Ms. Selly:

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) staff has reviewed the Draft Final Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report (WEBAR) for the above-referenced project, prepared as part of the PD&E Study. We reviewed the south portion of this project (south of Gandy Boulevard) in 2009 and 2010 through FDOT's Efficient Transportation Decision Making (ETDM) process (ETDM 12556). It is notable that ETDM 12556 did not include the current project's right-of-way expansion into Old Tampa Bay at the west end of the Howard Frankland Causeway. We provide the following comments and recommendations for your consideration in accordance with Chapter 379, Florida Statutes, and Rule 68A-27, Florida Administrative Code (F.A.C.).

The project involves an evaluation of capacity and operational improvements along 16.3 miles of I-275 from south of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to north of 4<sup>th</sup> Street North in Pinellas County. In general, the section of I-275 south of Gandy Boulevard would have an additional auxiliary lane in each direction, while the section north of Gandy would have two additional lanes in each direction. The project would result in approximately 0.59 acres of impact to freshwater forested wetlands, 0.15 acres of impact to herbaceous freshwater wetlands, 0.89 acres of impact to mangrove wetlands, and 0.74 acres of impact to seagrass habitat. The project vicinity consists of mostly urbanized lands with some remnant pine/hardwood mix landcover, along with freshwater and estuarine wetlands increasing in coverage along the northern portion of the project.

To determine the required mitigation, the wetland impacts of the project would be assessed during the permitting phase using the Uniform Mitigation Assessment Method. All impacts are anticipated to be within the service area of the Tampa Bay Mitigation Bank. Mitigation for seagrass impacts, presumably a seagrass planting project, will be determined via interagency coordination. Seagrass planting projects frequently yield less than the desired results, often because of avoidable problems with project design. The FWC's Fish and Wildlife Research Institute has evaluated seagrass restoration techniques in Tampa Bay, and can provide technical assistance in the design of a mitigation project. The Seagrass Research Team in St. Petersburg can be contacted at (727) 896-8626 or technical assistance can be coordinated through the staff identified at the close of this letter.

The WEBAR evaluated potential project impacts to 29 wildlife species classified under the Endangered Species Act as Federally Endangered (FE) or Threatened (FT), or by the State of Florida as Threatened (ST) or Species of Special Concern (SSC). Listed species were evaluated based on range and potential appropriate habitat or because the project is within a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Consultation Area. Included were: Gulf sturgeon (FT), smalltooth sawfish (FE), eastern indigo snake (FT), loggerhead sea turtle (FT), green sea turtle (FE),

hawksbill sea turtle (FE), Kemp's ridley sea turtle (FE), piping plover (FT), wood stork (FT), Florida manatee (FE), rivulus (SSC), gopher frog (SSC), gopher tortoise (ST), short-tailed snake (ST), Florida sandhill crane (ST), southeastern American kestrel (ST), brown pelican (SSC), least tern (ST), Florida burrowing owl (SSC), snowy plover (ST), American oystercatcher (SSC), black skimmer (SSC), osprey (SSC), reddish egret (SSC), snowy egret (SSC), little blue heron (SSC), tricolored heron (SSC), white ibis (SSC), and roseate spoonbill (SSC). The osprey should be removed from this list since only the Monroe County population is classified as SSC. Four additional state-listed species have been documented in this general area of Pinellas County, although they would have a low probability of occurrence in the project work site. They are the pine snake (SSC), limpkin (SSC), Sherman's fox squirrel (SSC), and Florida mouse (SSC).

Also evaluated was the bald eagle, which has been removed from state and federal listing but is still governed by the state bald eagle rule and the federal Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act. The FWC has developed a bald eagle management plan to further guide eagle conservation in Florida.

Project biologists made a finding of "no effect" for the eastern indigo snake, short-tailed snake, gopher tortoise, gopher frog, Florida sandhill crane, burrowing owl, and southeastern American kestrel, due to a lack of suitable habitat for these species within the project area. We agree with these findings. A finding of "no effect" was also made for the bald eagle and osprey, however, this would only apply to the nests of these raptors. For all the other listed species, their findings were "may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect", and we agree with these determinations provided that appropriate wetland and seagrass mitigation replaces any lost habitat value.

We support the project commitments for protected species, which include the following:

1. The FDOT will resurvey the project corridor for bald eagle nests during the permitting and design phase of the project. Should a bald eagle nest be built prior to or during construction within 660 feet of the construction limits, precautions will be followed based on the USFWS *Bald Eagle Management Guidelines*.
2. The standard FDOT *Construction Precautions for the Eastern Indigo Snake* will be followed during construction.
3. In the unlikely event that a gopher tortoise or burrow is discovered in the project corridor, the FDOT will secure a relocation permit from the FWC.

Please reference the FWC's Gopher Tortoise Permitting Guidelines (Revised April 2013 at <http://www.myfwc.com/media/1410274/GTPermittingGuidelines.pdf>) for survey methodology and permitting guidance prior to any construction activity. Specific guidance in the permitting guidelines includes methods for avoiding permitting as well as options and state requirements for minimizing, mitigating, and permitting potential impacts of the proposed activities. Any commensal species observed during the burrow excavations should be handled in accordance with Appendix of the Gopher Tortoise Permitting Guidelines. To the maximum extent possible, the FWC also recommends that all staging and storage areas be sited to avoid impacts to gopher tortoise burrows and their habitat.

4. The *Standard Manatee Conditions for In-Water Work* will be implemented during construction to eliminate the possibility of construction-related manatee injury or death, and these guidelines will be incorporated as part of the final project design. Stormwater outfall pipes and structures constructed within potential manatee waters, below the mean high water line, and measuring eight inches or greater in diameter will be required to have manatee grates to prevent manatee entrapment.

5. Wetland impacts will result in loss of wood stork foraging habitat, thus requiring mitigation acceptable to the USFWS. This mitigation should also help compensate for habitat loss for the other potentially affected wading birds.
6. The FDOT will require implementation of the protocol outlined in the *Sea Turtle and Smalltoothed Sawfish Construction Conditions* during construction.

Thank you for the opportunity to review the WEBAR for the I-275 project in Pinellas County. If you need further assistance, please do not hesitate to contact Jane Chabre either by phone at (850) 410-5367 or at [FWCConservationPlanningServices@MyFWC.com](mailto:FWCConservationPlanningServices@MyFWC.com). If you have specific technical questions regarding the content of this letter, please contact Brian Barnett at (772) 579-9746 or email [brian.barnett@MyFWC.com](mailto:brian.barnett@MyFWC.com).

Sincerely,



Jennifer Goff  
Land Use Planning Program Administrator  
Office of Conservation Planning Services

jdg/bb

ENV 1-13-2

I-275 from South of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue S to North of 4<sup>th</sup> Street N\_20895\_041515

cc: Dr. Margaret Hall, FWC, [Penny.Hall@MyFWC.com](mailto:Penny.Hall@MyFWC.com)  
Mr. Kent Smith, FWC, [Kent.Smith@MyFWC.com](mailto:Kent.Smith@MyFWC.com)



**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
**NATIONAL MARINE FISHERIES SERVICE**  
Southeast Regional Office  
263 13th Avenue South  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701-5505  
<http://sero.nmfs.noaa.gov>

May 4, 2015

F/SER46:DR

Ms. Nicole Selly  
Environmental Specialist  
Florida Department of Transportation  
11201 North McKinley Drive  
Tampa, Florida 33612-6456

Ref.: WPI Segment Number 424501-1, Florida Department of Transportation District 7, I-275 (SR 93) widening from south of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to north of 4<sup>th</sup> Street North, Pinellas County, Florida

Dear Ms. Selly:

NOAA's National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has reviewed the information you have provided regarding the I-275 widening PD&E study. This letter responds to your conclusions regarding Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed species under NMFS's purview and Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act Essential Fish Habitat (EFH), as part of the reasonable assurance process required by the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA). You have requested that NMFS review the Draft Final Wetland Evaluation and Biological Assessment Report and provide support for moving the project forward toward determining a finding under the National Environmental Policy Act. Our comments are provided in accordance with provisions of Section 7 of the ESA of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*) and the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Reauthorization Act of 2006. NMFS believes that, to the extent practicable at this stage of the project, FDOT has addressed NMFS's previous comments in relation to the project.

The Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) proposes widening I-275 (SR 93) from south of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to north of 4<sup>th</sup> Street North in Pinellas County, Florida.

FDOT has determined that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect (NLAA) Gulf sturgeon (*Acipenser oxyrinchus desotoi*), smalltooth sawfish (*Pristis pectinata*), and swimming sea turtles including loggerhead (*Caretta caretta*), green (*Chelonia mydas*), Kemp's ridley (*Lepidochelys kempii*), and hawksbill (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) sea turtles. NMFS cannot provide concurrence or non-concurrence with these NLAA determinations at this time because sufficiently detailed project information is not yet available for NMFS to conduct an analysis as part of the ESA Section 7 consultation process. In addition, uncertainty remains regarding how construction impacts to ESA-listed species will be minimized. However, NMFS believes it can provide reasonable assurance that the Section 7 consultation can be completed as an informal consultation as the project moves forward and project details and commitments are finalized.

NMFS has reviewed the information regarding impacts to wetlands due to the project. It appears that the preliminary assessment of impacts to estuarine wetlands and other NMFS trust resources



comprising Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) is accurate. NMFS believes that if appropriate compensatory mitigation is provided for those unavoidable wetland impacts that do occur, the project will not have an adverse impact on EFH. Further coordination with NMFS will be required to identify appropriate mitigation, especially for seagrasses and mangroves.

If you have any questions regarding this letter, please contact me at (727) 824-5379, or by email at [David.Rydene@noaa.gov](mailto:David.Rydene@noaa.gov).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "David Rydene". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "D" and "R".

David Rydene, Ph.D.  
Fishery Biologist

***Appendix D***  
***Public Hearing Transcript***

**PUBLIC HEARING TRANSCRIPT CERTIFICATION**

I hereby certify that on September 29, 2015, beginning at 5:30 p.m., I presided over a Public Hearing for the following project:

**I-275/SR 93**

**Project Development and Environment (PD&E) Study  
From south of 54<sup>th</sup> Avenue South to north of 4<sup>th</sup> Street North  
Pinellas County, Florida**

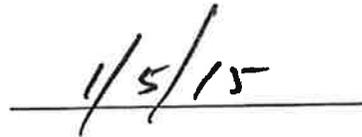
**Work Program Item (WPI) Segment #424501-1**

I further certify that the subject public hearing was conducted relative to the economic and social effects of the location and design concept for the subject project and its impact on the environment, that a transcript was made and the document attached herein is a full, true, and complete transcript of what was said at the hearing, and that the Florida Department of Transportation has considered the social, economic, and environmental effects of the proposed improvement and is of the opinion that it is properly located and should be constructed.

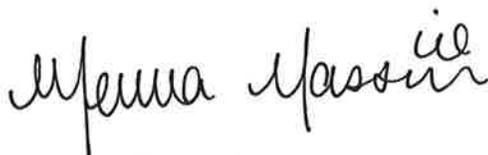


Ming Gao

FDOT Intermodal Systems Development Manager



Date



MENNA YASSIN

FDOT SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER

07/06/16

IN THE MATTER OF:  
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION HEARING

---

HEARING  
September 29, 2015

---

Executive Reporting Service  
Suntrust Building  
300 1st Avenue South, Suite 402  
St. Petersburg, Florida 33701  
Phone: (727) 823-4155/(800) 337-7740  
Fax: (800) 621-9077  
[www.executivereporting.com](http://www.executivereporting.com)

1 September 29, 2015

7:33 p.m.

2

- - -

3 MR. GAO: Good evening. My name is Ming Gao.  
4 I am the Intermodal Systems Development manager  
5 for District 7 of the Florida Department of  
6 Transportation. Welcome to the public hearing. I  
7 see a big turnout here. That's great.

8 Can you hear me?

9 ATTENDEES: (Collectively) Yes.

10 MR. GAO: Okay. So this public hearing is for  
11 the Project Development and Environment or PD&E  
12 Study for Interstate 275 in Pinellas County,  
13 Florida. This public hearing concerns the  
14 proposed operational and congestion relief  
15 improvements for I-275 from the south of 54th  
16 Avenue South to north of 4th Street North, a  
17 distance of approximately 16.3 miles. The Work  
18 Program Item or WPI segment number is 424501-1.

19 Today is Tuesday, September 29, 2015, and it's  
20 approximately 6:31 p.m. We are assembled in the  
21 Heritage Hall of the First Baptist Church, 1900  
22 Gandy Boulevard North in St. Petersburg, Florida.

23 This public hearing is being held to give all  
24 interested persons the right to understand the  
25 project and comment on their concerns to the FDOT.

1 Public participation at this hearing is encouraged  
2 and solicited without regard to race, color,  
3 creed, religion, sex, age, national origin,  
4 disability, or family status. This public hearing  
5 is being held in accordance with applicable  
6 federal and state laws. Those citations are  
7 listed on the board next to the sign-in table.

8 This public hearing was advertised consistent  
9 with federal and state requirements and is being  
10 conducted consistent with the Americans with  
11 Disabilities Act of 1990. This information is  
12 also provided in the project brochure.

13 This is your opportunity to receive  
14 information on the project, officially comment on  
15 the recommended alternative for I-275, and review  
16 project documents available here this evening.  
17 The recommended alternative is based on  
18 engineering and environmental analyses completed  
19 to date, as well as on public comments that we  
20 have received.

21 Now I'm going to provide a short description  
22 of the transportation improvements proposed for  
23 I-275. To effectively describe these  
24 improvements, the I-275 study corridor is  
25 separated into three segments. I will describe

1           these segments starting from the southern end of  
2           the project closest to the Sunshine Skyway Bridge  
3           and move northward towards the northern end of the  
4           project closest to the Howard Frankland Bridge.

5           Segment A is from south of 54th Avenue South  
6           to I-175; Segment B is from I-175 to south of  
7           Gandy Boulevard; and lastly, Segment C is from  
8           south of Gandy Boulevard to north of 4th Street  
9           North.

10           In Segment A, the recommended alternative  
11           consists of providing lane continuity improvements  
12           to enhance operations on I-275 by reducing the  
13           number of lane-changing maneuvers for motorists.  
14           For this study, "lane continuity" refers to the  
15           ability for motorists to remain in one travel lane  
16           while traversing a portion of I-275 without being  
17           forced to change lanes so as to avoid exiting the  
18           highway.

19           Today there are no continuous lanes on I-275  
20           in the southbound direction and one continuous  
21           lane in the northbound direction. The proposed  
22           lane continuity improvement will provide two  
23           continuous lanes in each direction of I-275.

24           For Segment B, the recommended alternative  
25           consists of providing operational improvements and

1 accommodations for enhanced multimodal  
2 opportunities along I-275. The operational  
3 improvements proposed for I-275 are intended to  
4 enhance lane continuity, but they would not  
5 increase the number of through travel lanes on  
6 I-275. The multimodal opportunities include:  
7 preservation of the existing 64-foot median on  
8 I-275, of which 40 foot can be used for future  
9 transit services.

10 The last segment, Segment C, is part of Tampa  
11 Bay Express or "TBX" for short. TBX is a regional  
12 master plan being developed by the Department to  
13 implement tolled express lanes on interstate  
14 facilities within Tampa Bay. These proposed  
15 express lanes can be built next to existing  
16 nontolled lanes and are demonstrated as a solution  
17 to urban traffic congestion.

18 The recommended alternative for Segment C  
19 consists of the TBX Master Plan improvements,  
20 which include providing a single express lane in  
21 each direction of I-275 from Gandy Boulevard to  
22 118th Avenue North and two express lanes in each  
23 direction from 118th Avenue North to north of 4th  
24 Street North. Access between the tolled and  
25 nontolled lanes will be provided south of Gandy

1 Boulevard at 118th Avenue North and between 4th  
2 Street North and the Howard Frankland Bridge. A  
3 marked four-foot buffer containing traffic  
4 delineators -- these are flexible vertical posts  
5 mounted into the roadway -- will be used to  
6 separate the tolled and nontolled lanes.

7 The FDOT has also developed lower-cost tolled  
8 lane projects that can be funded in the near  
9 future. These initial projects could be built in  
10 the near future and then later be incorporated  
11 into the master plan projects at minimum  
12 additional cost.

13 The short-term, lower-cost improvements are  
14 considered the starter projects. The starter  
15 project improvements in Segment C consist of  
16 redesignating the existing auxiliary lane in each  
17 direction of I-275 between Roosevelt Boulevard in  
18 Pinellas County and State Road 60 in Hillsborough  
19 County to form a single tolled lane in each  
20 direction from south of Gandy Boulevard to the  
21 Howard Frankland Bridge, while also maintaining  
22 the same access points between tolled and  
23 nontolled lanes as the TBX Master Plan Project.

24 One of the unavoidable consequences of  
25 transportation projects is the necessary

1 acquisition of privately-owned land and the  
2 subsequent relocation of families or businesses  
3 displaced by such acquisition. For this project,  
4 we do not anticipate the need to acquire  
5 right-of-way to construct the proposed roadway  
6 improvements associated with the recommended build  
7 alternative.

8 However, right-of-way acquisition may be  
9 needed to construct stormwater management  
10 facilities and floodplain compensation sites. The  
11 location of these facilities will be identified  
12 during the design phase of the project.

13 If all or part of your property is being  
14 acquired, you will be provided a written  
15 explanation of your legal rights in eminent  
16 domain. You will be contacted by an appraiser who  
17 will inspect your property to become familiar with  
18 its unique characteristics. We encourage you to  
19 be present during the inspection and provide  
20 information about your property which would be  
21 helpful in determining its value. After the  
22 appraisal is complete, a right-of-way specialist  
23 will meet with you to negotiate in good faith and  
24 serve as a point of contact throughout the  
25 process.

1           If you are required to move as a result of an  
2           FDOT project, you will be treated in a fair and  
3           helpful manner and in compliance with the Uniform  
4           Relocation Assistance Act. You will be eligible  
5           for relocation advisory services, and you may also  
6           be eligible for relocation payments including  
7           moving expenses, replacement housing costs, or  
8           business-reestablish expenses. A relocation  
9           specialist will be assigned to assist you  
10          throughout the relocation process.

11          If you're not satisfied with the Department's  
12          determination of your eligibility for payment or  
13          the amount of that payment, you may appeal that  
14          determination. You will be furnished any  
15          necessary forms and notified of the procedures to  
16          follow in making that appeal.

17          A special word of caution. If you move before  
18          the property you occupy is acquired or before you  
19          receive notification of the relocation benefits  
20          that you might be entitled to, your benefits may  
21          be jeopardized.

22          The right-of-way specialists who are familiar  
23          with this process are available this evening and  
24          will be happy to answer your questions. They will  
25          provide you with copies of the acquisition and

1 relocation assistance brochures.

2 Dave Eaton and Andrew Nappi, please stand --  
3 they are back there -- so that you know who to see  
4 regarding these types of issues. Thanks.

5 We hope you have watched the short PowerPoint  
6 presentation created to describe the  
7 transportation improvements proposed for the I-275  
8 study corridor and features of the enhanced  
9 highway in greater detail.

10 The FDOT Work Program includes funding for  
11 design of the TBX Starter Project improvements in  
12 fiscal year 2016 and construction in fiscal year  
13 2020. The lane continuity improvements in  
14 Segments A and B and the TBX Master Plan Project  
15 in Segment C are not currently funded.

16 That was a brief summary of the proposed  
17 transportation improvements. Now I will explain  
18 the FDOT public hearing process.

19 When you arrived this evening you should have  
20 received an information packet containing an  
21 informational handout and a comment form. If you  
22 weren't able to sign in or did not receive an  
23 information packet, please stop by our sign-in  
24 table before leaving this evening. You should  
25 have also had the opportunity to view the

1           audiovisual presentation that is continuously  
2           running throughout the public hearing.

3           Those who wish to provide comments during this  
4           formal portion of the public hearing should  
5           complete a speaker's card and submit it to a  
6           Department representative. If you did not receive  
7           a card and would like to make a public comment,  
8           please raise your hand and a Department  
9           representative will be happy to provide you with  
10          one.

11          In addition to making an oral statement during  
12          this portion of the hearing, you can also make a  
13          comment after this presentation to the court  
14          reporter who is here tonight. You can also submit  
15          your comments to the Department in writing.  
16          Comment forms can be placed in one of the comment  
17          boxes this evening, or you can complete the form  
18          at a later date and mail it to us at the  
19          preprinted address on the back of the sheet. You  
20          can also email comments to us at the project  
21          website found on the front of the handout. Please  
22          keep in mind that comments must be postmarked or  
23          emailed no later than Friday, October 9, 2015, to  
24          be included in the official public hearing record.

25          Before I continue, I would like to recognize

1 any elected officials or their representatives who  
2 are here tonight. Please stand and introduce  
3 yourselves.

4 MR. KORNEILL: Steve Kornell, St. Pete City  
5 Councilman.

6 MR. GAO: Welcome. Thank you.

7 MR. RICE: Darden Rice, St. Pete City Council,  
8 MPO, and PSTA.

9 MR. GAO: Thanks for coming.

10 Anyone else?

11 ATTENDEES: (No response.)

12 MR. GAO: Well, thank you.

13 So at this time we will begin the public  
14 comments. I will call each speaker in the order  
15 in which their request was received. In an effort  
16 to accommodate all requests to speak, we ask that  
17 each speaker keep their comments to three minutes.  
18 Those who wish to provide additional comments may  
19 return to the microphone following the last  
20 speaker, or you may present your additional  
21 comments directly to the court reporter at the end  
22 of tonight's hearing.

23 As I call your name, please step to the  
24 microphone and state your name and address before  
25 making your comment. If you have questions,

1 please see one of the Department representatives  
2 following this portion of the hearing.

3 The first speaker I have is Ernest Starkey.

4 MR. STARKEY: My name is Ernest Starkey. I  
5 live at 527 84th Avenue North, St. Petersburg.

6 First of all, I would like to say I appreciate  
7 FDOT trying to do improvements in this county.  
8 With that being said, I'd appreciate that FDOT  
9 would complete the current ones that they are  
10 on -- the ones that are on our major roadways: US  
11 19, Ulmerton Road, and now the Gandy Boulevard  
12 exit. This is getting a little bit out of hand.

13 I can't speak for everyone here, but I can say  
14 that as a current resident for 26 years here in  
15 Pinellas County, construction is way out of hand.  
16 If the FDOT wants to start another major project  
17 on another major roadway, let's finish the ones we  
18 have. Let's not start another major project until  
19 we know that those are completed or at least to  
20 the end.

21 Also, the other thing that I have with the  
22 FDOT currently is I understand that they do  
23 construction bids to different companies -- one's  
24 like in a time bid and the other is like you have  
25 this much time. Maybe that is something the FDOT

1 needs to consider changing as well. This putting  
2 a bid out there -- Ulmerton Road has been under  
3 construction for the 26 years that I've lived  
4 here. Never have I ever seen it not under any  
5 construction. When is it going to end? That's  
6 crazy. That's a major artery. Okay?

7 That being said, that's probably a  
8 construction company that's been given multiple  
9 years to do whatever they want. That has got to  
10 change. The FDOT needs to start contracting  
11 people that are under certain time constraints:  
12 "You have this much time to finish it or we're  
13 going to fine you or you're not going to get your  
14 money."

15 So please take that into consideration when  
16 you're talking about starting another major  
17 roadway project in this county. Let's finish the  
18 ones that we have before we start another one.  
19 Okay?

20 Thank you.

21 MR. GAO: Thank you.

22 Next I have Jay Lee.

23 MR. LEE: Good evening, FDOT. Good evening,  
24 community.

25 My name is Jay Lee. I reside at 9934 56th

1 Avenue North, St. Pete. I have some concerns for  
2 the community in terms of being notified for  
3 appraisals to their property and things like that.  
4 My main concern is if there is a blueprint  
5 available to the public where people can access on  
6 the Web, go to your office and grab this  
7 information so that they wouldn't have to rely on  
8 someone calling them and saying, "Hey, your  
9 property is going to be used by a project that we  
10 are putting in place."

11 I also want to piggyback on the gentleman,  
12 Ernest, before me who stated the roads that are  
13 being worked on and they're not being completed or  
14 there is a long period. You know, I'm looking at  
15 275 in Hillsborough County. People have been  
16 telling me that has been going on for almost ten  
17 years. They stopped and restarted again. The  
18 traffic is terrible. I wouldn't want to see that  
19 in Pinellas County as well having developers to  
20 come here -- we call it "milking the clock" and  
21 "milking your money."

22 So we want to make sure that you guys are  
23 going to stay on top of that and fine them just  
24 like he said.

25 And, also, I'm looking at a transcript being

1 typed up here, where a transcript of this hearing  
2 will be available to the public as well.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. GAO: Thank you.

5 Annmarie Connor?

6 MS. CONNOR: I decline.

7 MR. GAO: Okay. Thank you.

8 John Shuster?

9 MR. SHUSTER: For those of you who aren't  
10 familiar on how this works generally or how it  
11 worked last time, when it was around the last time  
12 when the interstate went through, we were promised  
13 a noise abatement law, which we never received. A  
14 number of my neighbors tried to get that done.  
15 DOT was never responsive to that. So if this  
16 project does go forward, don't hold your breath as  
17 far as a noise abatement law goes. I'm predicting  
18 they will run out of money.

19 My grandfather, being like I, wanted to know  
20 what was going on with anything around his  
21 property. When the interstate went through  
22 originally, he noticed that the city was running a  
23 water main right up next to the interstate fence  
24 through his yard. He wanted to know what was  
25 going on with this.

1 Well, apparently the city had made some sort  
2 of a deal, lien, lease, or who knows with the city  
3 to accommodate them because water mains were being  
4 cut off. So this right-of-way was provided by DOT  
5 for the city to run its water mains through.

6 Well, this spring the city came out and  
7 decided that they had to replace all of the water  
8 mains on the avenues, on mine and the next one  
9 down. And the reason they needed to do that is  
10 because it was old cast-iron lines that needed to  
11 be replaced -- you know, bad-tasting water and all  
12 that -- plastic pipe would be better.

13 Well, the net effect of what they did was they  
14 eliminated those lines that ran right along the  
15 fence. So it's obvious to me those lines are  
16 being vacated for a reason. My way of thinking is  
17 that the reason they're being eliminated is  
18 because the city plans to take that land.

19 Now, we're told right now that there is no  
20 plans as far as these ponds, where the placement  
21 is going to be on these ponds. Well, it just so  
22 happens that my avenue and the two adjacent happen  
23 to be right next to an existing pond, right next  
24 to where there is another lane being added on 22nd  
25 Avenue entrance ramp. So obviously we're going to

1           need to expand that pond. We're being told "We  
2           don't know where we're going to put these ponds.  
3           That's going to be in the plan. We don't know  
4           yet."

5           Now, if there's anyone else here that believes  
6           that the city came out and vacated those lines so  
7           I can get -- me and my neighbors on either avenue  
8           next to the interstate can have the plastic lines,  
9           better-tasting water rather than these  
10          plastic-upgraded lines that the city put in when  
11          the interstate was built originally -- those were  
12          plastic-upgraded lines. So the city is upgrading  
13          by getting rid of upgraded lines. You can either  
14          believe that or you can believe this is a done  
15          deal and that pond is going to be expanded and  
16          it's going to take part of my property.

17          You know, the President told me I could keep  
18          my doctor, I could keep my plan, I'll pay \$2,500  
19          less a year. Well, I think the city did the same  
20          thing to me when they told me they were upgrading  
21          my lines so I would have better-tasting water.

22          I think I can see what's going on. This is a  
23          done deal and there are people here who are going  
24          to lose property and I think I'm probably one of  
25          them. Obviously FDOT has an agenda and they don't

1 want to tell us that this is already a done deal  
2 and they have already decided where the ponds are  
3 going.

4 Thank you.

5 MR. GAO: Thank you.

6 Tom Rask?

7 MR. RASK: Thank you. Tom Rask, 13565

8 Heritage Drive, Seminole, Florida. I'm

9 incorporated in Pinellas County.

10 I only found out about this meeting today. I  
11 know there is a great turnout, but there were  
12 other people who only found out today, and perhaps  
13 better notice can be given.

14 One FDOT staffer said that you've met all of  
15 the requirements, but you can always go beyond the  
16 requirements. You are advertising in the paper.  
17 Newspaper circulation is dropping. A lot of  
18 people don't have newspapers. So just as a  
19 general comment, I know this is a great turnout,  
20 but the more turnout the better so we get better  
21 outcomes.

22 On Ulmerton I understand there were  
23 right-of-way issues for people that build things  
24 in the right-of-way. That's part of the delay,  
25 but I would like to -- I hope that FDOT is

1 studying some of the delays on Ulmerton and  
2 elsewhere because, as you can hear from the  
3 previous comments, it creates resistance. I think  
4 that some of this mistrust is because of local  
5 government, frankly, more so than FDOT.

6 I wanted to say to the gentleman who just  
7 spoke that if he thinks it's a done deal, he can  
8 find out by making a public records request.  
9 Maybe it is a done deal and maybe it isn't. I  
10 don't know.

11 This project looks pretty good to me based on  
12 what I see, but I only learned about this hearing  
13 today. I just wanted to encourage him to make  
14 those public records request because they have to  
15 hand over those records to you if they exist. If  
16 there are records that show that they plan to put  
17 the pond there, they would have to give those  
18 records to you.

19 MR. SHUSTER: No. It's in Winks (phonetic).

20 MR. RASK: Well, it could be. Public records  
21 requests are pretty good for turning up  
22 information, but there is a distrust. I bring  
23 that up not to make a political point, but because  
24 it's something FDOT is going to have to deal with.  
25 In fact, this was not going to be part of my

1 comment today. It was only going to be that on  
2 the surface, this project looks good.

3 Please give a little more notice and try to  
4 improve the notice process, but it is clearly  
5 something FDOT is going to have to deal with.

6 We have in St. Pete right now a situation I'm  
7 sure you've all heard of. It's reported in the  
8 news about school zones not meeting FDOT  
9 requirements. And why was that? So they could  
10 write more speeding tickets. That's terrible to  
11 jeopardize the safety of children to write more  
12 speeding tickets. And that's not on FDOT; that's  
13 on the City of St. Pete.

14 We have a sheriff's department investigation  
15 over in Hillsborough, what they call "Hillsborough  
16 Effort." So I'm just bringing that up actually in  
17 a constructive way that FDOT needs to be aware  
18 that there is a lot of distrust. Not so much --  
19 recognizing his comments, not so much of FDOT, but  
20 the other public agencies that will be involved.

21 So I look forward to learning more about this  
22 project as it goes along. I don't really have an  
23 opinion now. I do recognize that some people will  
24 lose their property, and that's a serious issue.

25 Thank you.

1 MR. GAO: Thank you.

2 Next I have Ted Fahrenedorf.

3 MR. FAHRENDORF: My question was already  
4 answered.

5 MR. GAO: Okay. Thank you.

6 Lou Ellis?

7 MR. ELLIS: My name is Lou Ellis. I live off  
8 of 54th Avenue on 25th Street.

9 I was hoping to get an answer, but it don't  
10 look like I'm going to get one tonight from  
11 anybody. What is going to happen to 54th Avenue  
12 and some of the other roads going east and west  
13 where you have to rebuild a bridge? Like I said,  
14 I expected to get an answer, but you can't give me  
15 the answer.

16 MR. GAO: One of our representatives can  
17 answer --

18 MR. ELLIS: They're going to have to widen  
19 that bridge out, and there is a couple more on  
20 down the line the same way. But I'm concerned  
21 because I live next to that road.

22 MR. GAO: Okay. I'm sure one of our folks can  
23 show you the location and explain to you how we  
24 construct bridge-widening projects.

25 MR. ELLIS: Okay. Thank you very much.

1 MR. GAO: Thank you.

2 Edward Ringwald?

3 MR. RINGWALD: Good evening. My name is  
4 Edward Ringwald. I'm in Tampa, Florida. I'm the  
5 webmaster of interstate275florida.com, the website  
6 of "all things Interstate 275 in the Tampa Bay  
7 region."

8 The reason why I'm here tonight is that I am  
9 against the Tampa Bay Express component that's  
10 being presented in Segment C of the PD&E Study  
11 that's being proposed for I-275, and there are  
12 some reasons. I'll try to be brief.

13 First of all, the present lack of commuter  
14 choices that face Tampa Bay residents every day.  
15 Right now we have no real based mass transit, and  
16 uneven bus mass transit makes car ownership a  
17 must.

18 Second, commuter rail, of which the Tampa Bay  
19 region lacks now, is the viable alternative. It  
20 can take a lot of commuter traffic off of 275 and  
21 is preferred over TBX.

22 Miami already has 95 Express on I-95, but it  
23 was constructed way after the Tri-Rail -- their  
24 commuter railroad down there -- was implemented.  
25 Why is FDOT wanting to build TBX before other

1 alternatives such as commuter rail first?

2 I agree 275 needs to be realigned for traffic  
3 movement through St. Petersburg due to the weaving  
4 movements that now exist. And when I-275 was  
5 built, it was originally I-75 until the decision  
6 was made by FDOT to extend I-75 south to Miami,  
7 and that's why you have 75 out there in  
8 Hillsborough County today.

9 So in short, we need better transit choices.  
10 TBX is going to add to more congestion without the  
11 other transit alternatives that the Tampa Bay  
12 region desperately needs.

13 Thank you.

14 MR. GAO: Thank you.

15 Next I have Ben Chapinski.

16 MR. CHAPINSKI: Hi. My name is Ben Chapinski.  
17 I would like to say that I've lived in both the  
18 East and the West. I've lived in the Workers'  
19 Paradise. And listening to these comments, I can  
20 see that a lot of people are unhappy. So I'd like  
21 to just say a few things.

22 I don't think that these bureaucrats represent  
23 us. I don't think that they care about us. A few  
24 years ago -- I've been living here for  
25 approximately 20 years. I used to come to many

1 meetings just like this in the Soviet Union -- the  
2 Workers' Paradise side, as I said -- and the  
3 bureaucrats over there I think are quite similar  
4 to here.

5 A few years go I complained about hubcaps, et  
6 cetera, falling into my backyard. It was  
7 dangerous for the children, and therefore we  
8 couldn't allow the children out there. Then what  
9 happened is somebody shot a gun. The gun [sic]  
10 went through our fence, the gun went into my  
11 wife's car -- I mean, into our family car, went  
12 through the windshield, and hit the mirror. If  
13 someone was in the car, they would have been  
14 killed.

15 So therefore I called the city. I got ahold  
16 of a fellow by the name of Mr. Bennett. He sent  
17 someone over. They checked out the area, and what  
18 did they did do? They planted a few bushes in the  
19 backyard. So that is why I would like to say that  
20 these people don't represent you. This is a joke.  
21 I hope this is on TV; maybe it will make national  
22 TV. Something has to be done. Maybe the new  
23 mayor will do something.

24 What's very pertinent and is pertinent to all  
25 of us is that we need a protective sound barrier,

1           like this first gentleman said, to protect the  
2           children and to protect the community. Many  
3           states all around the country have these fences.  
4           We don't have them. What's the reason?

5           Thank you very kindly. Thank you for  
6           listening.

7           MR. GAO: Laura Lawson?

8           MS. LAWSON: Good evening. My name is Laura  
9           Lawson. I live at 304 West Hilda Street in Tampa.  
10          That's in Central Tampa. I appreciate you-all  
11          having me here. As you know, we've been having a  
12          robust discussion about this project over there.  
13          You've probably read about that. But my feeling  
14          is that 275 is Pinellas and Hillsborough's  
15          interstate, and we need to be careful when we  
16          think about what we're doing with it.

17          My major concern that affects you-all as well  
18          is that this project doubles down on our region's  
19          greatest transportation weakness, automobile  
20          dependency. The previous gentleman spoke to this  
21          issue. While at least in Hillsborough where it's  
22          touted as an express bus project, the buses aren't  
23          funded, but just merely promoted. It fails to  
24          even begin to transform our flawed, unbalanced  
25          approach to transportation in the region.

1           Beyond that, the automobile travel option is  
2           limited to those who can afford it due to the  
3           tolling model. Beyond that, the state is going  
4           into billions of dollars of debt to be paid back  
5           over many years. If the tolls fail to support the  
6           debt payments, we may never see another major  
7           transportation project in this area for more than  
8           a generation. I think that's a significant  
9           concern when we're talking about investing  
10          billions of dollars.

11          Despite that, this project is being pushed  
12          forward with a great deal of speed when it should  
13          be given sober consideration in light of all of  
14          the things that we've learned since the '90s when  
15          the idea of expanding the interstate first came  
16          into play -- things like induced demand causing  
17          more traffic congestion, things like sprawling  
18          development associated with huge large highways  
19          that impact the ability of our region to provide  
20          walkability, other transportation objects,  
21          meaningful public transportation. These are the  
22          things for the millennial generation, which I'm  
23          not actually part of, but I admire them for their  
24          commitment and desire to see more options and to  
25          see more livability.

1           So in any event, for all of these reasons, I  
2 believe that this project needs more consideration  
3 than it has received at this point due to the  
4 speed which it has moved forward.

5           Thanks.

6           MR. GAO: Thank you.

7           Jason Ball?

8           MR. BALL: Hi. My name is Jason Ball. I'm a  
9 resident of Tampa. I used to live over in the  
10 Pinellas Park area for several years, back in the  
11 '90s/early 2000s.

12           Some of you folks want to keep in mind when  
13 you're looking at this project we're talking about  
14 tonight that it's not just you folks that are  
15 looking at this project. They want to do this  
16 kind of tolling thing on the entire interstate  
17 system in the Bay area. The early plan they have  
18 right now is about 78 miles of these on Interstate  
19 4 and 275 and 75. They're building them right now  
20 on the Veterans Expressway, they're extending them  
21 up to the Suncoast corridor, and they want to  
22 bring them down to St. Pete. They're talking,  
23 kind of, about doing it just to Gandy, but it's  
24 already in your Pinellas MPO LRTP that they'll  
25 take them all the way to the Skyway and into

1 downtown St. Pete.

2 Also keep in mind the cost they're talking  
3 about tonight is a couple hundred million. Again,  
4 that's just this segment, just this piece. The  
5 overall project is so expensive we honestly still  
6 don't know how much it costs. They won't tell us.  
7 They put out a graphic earlier this year that the  
8 piece only at Tampa will be about 6 million. That  
9 didn't include basic stuff like buying the land  
10 and actually getting an estimate from the builder  
11 who was going to build it. So that price is going  
12 to go way up; right?

13 Just like they did the I-4 connector, they  
14 said it was going to cost 324 million, and it  
15 winded up being over 600. So there's always cost  
16 increases. Just keep that in mind. The road  
17 they're talking about is going to pretty much use  
18 up all of our transportation revenues for decades  
19 to come.

20 Thank you.

21 MR. GAO: Thank you.

22 Leo Murray?

23 LEO MURRAY: Good evening. My name is Leo  
24 Murray. I'm here representing the Meadowlawn  
25 neighborhood association, and our interest in the

1 project from the association is the area of the  
2 northbound lanes from 62nd Avenue North up to  
3 Turner Creek 77th Avenue. Turner Creek is the  
4 outflow from Sawgrass Lake Park, and we have a  
5 number of homes that border the right-of-way. The  
6 right-of-way fence is the back of their backyard  
7 property.

8 We have other homes that are in cul-de-sacs  
9 where the right-of-way fencing is on the side of  
10 their house, and then we have other homes on 22nd  
11 Street where the right-of-way fence is directly in  
12 front of their house. They have 22nd Street --  
13 it's kind of narrow because it just ends in a  
14 cul-de-sac. There are about a dozen homes there.  
15 The right-of-way fence isn't much further than the  
16 wall right there from the edge of their property  
17 where the gutter is.

18 So our concern is the noise abatement. And I  
19 talked with you tonight and I also talked to  
20 another gentleman back there in the yellow shirt  
21 earlier tonight. They indicated -- you had both  
22 indicated that there is a noise abatement included  
23 in the project along there, but I couldn't get a  
24 definitive answer as to whether it would survive  
25 to the final funding and actually be built.

1           Those homes along there were built in the  
2           early '70s. I talked to several people that are  
3           still the original owners and were there at the  
4           time the homes were built back in '72. I actually  
5           looked at one of them when they had some model  
6           homes there along 22nd Street just north of 62nd  
7           Avenue. They were told at the time that there was  
8           going to be a noise abatement wall put in, but  
9           none was ever put in. I don't know if that's true  
10          or not or whether it was misrepresented by the  
11          builder, but it never went in.

12          The noise along there is considerable, and  
13          we're just hoping that when everything is said and  
14          done that the noise abatement wall will be  
15          included in this project, like I said, between  
16          62nd Avenue and 77th Avenue or Turners Creek on  
17          the east side of the interstate on the northbound  
18          lanes.

19                 Thank you.

20                 MR. GAO: Thank you.

21                 Chris Vela?

22                 MR. VELA: Hello. My name is Christopher  
23                 Vela. I live in Hillsborough County right by the  
24                 I-4/I-275 interchange in historic Ybor City. I'm  
25                 also a representative of Sunshine Citizens, and

1 I'm here today to tell you to really be critical  
2 about this project. Empower yourself with the  
3 knowledge that we have on our website. Take  
4 yourself over to the MPO and understand what this  
5 project means.

6 You're going to lose a lot of property in  
7 this. You're going to lose a lot of money on this  
8 project. We actually have a study here that was  
9 in the TBX master Plan in particular to this  
10 segment over here. Looking at the FDOT traffic  
11 counts, you don't need additional lanes. In fact,  
12 we don't even need toll lanes.

13 And as Jason was saying, this is actually a  
14 part of a larger network. This part of it is  
15 called SIS. So the State of Florida wants to run  
16 express lanes throughout the whole state basically  
17 going from Miami to Alabama, then to Georgia. So  
18 they basically want to toll the heck out of  
19 everybody in the state, plus try to fund this  
20 project that's going to be over \$9 billion. Keep  
21 in mind that most of these projects are done  
22 through like design/build. And so what that means  
23 is once a contractor kind of gets ahold of that,  
24 you're going to have very little input and  
25 oversight. So there's going to be a middleman

1           involved.

2           I can tell you that, at least on the  
3           Hillsborough County side, we're having a lot of  
4           commitment issues, and this has occurred all the  
5           way back from the '90s. There was a lot of  
6           crosswalks that were supposed to be, you know,  
7           installed and of course improvements. Many of  
8           those things never occurred, and if they did  
9           occur, they were decades later. So there is a  
10          huge commitment issue as well.

11          Someone said here earlier that there's a lot  
12          of projects that are still incomplete, and that is  
13          true. We need to take care of what we have right  
14          now, and we also need to look at alternatives. No  
15          build is definitely a good option, but also  
16          looking at other transit opportunities like  
17          dedicated bus services, circulators. We need to  
18          put those things first. We need to bring those  
19          options to the table. I mean, this meeting right  
20          here they're talking about eminent domain issues  
21          and land acquisitions. I mean, that's not how you  
22          start a good conversation about transportation.

23          So, again, please just go to your MPO, your  
24          local MPO. We will have -- I will be available  
25          after this meeting if anybody wants to talk about

1 the next steps or educating yourself about  
2 transportation.

3 Thank you all for being here. It's wonderful.  
4 Have a good evening.

5 MR. GAO: Thank you.

6 Next is Kathleen Ford.

7 MS. FORD: Hello. I'm Kathleen Ford, 7477  
8 18th Street Northeast. And I just read this  
9 little bit here on "A Smart Solution-Tampa Bay  
10 Express. TBX is helping change things by giving  
11 you an exciting new commuting option. TBX allows  
12 drivers who choose to pay the express lane toll a  
13 smoother ride to wherever they're going."

14 Honestly, folks, that just sucks. I don't  
15 like any of the express lanes. I don't like that  
16 at all for our state. I don't think that's what  
17 Eisenhower envisioned when he put into place this  
18 magnificent interstate system that we have in the  
19 United States of America.

20 We have neglected it, no doubt. We need to  
21 take care of it. It's an important piece of our  
22 infrastructure. But to suddenly create a class of  
23 citizens who can go fast over a class of citizens  
24 who cannot by merely paying is just atrocious. I  
25 just wanted you-all to know that I am adamantly

1           opposed to this.

2           MR. GAO:   Dan Harvey?

3           MR. HARVEY:   Good evening.   Dan Harvey at 1425  
4           Central Avenue, St. Petersburg.   I would like to  
5           say that I think the interstate systems worked  
6           very well in St. Pete for 40 years, and I would  
7           like to thank those who had the insight to put it  
8           through.   Coming down the west coast of Florida  
9           through our county or through the city and being  
10          able to get to the beaches so quick is really  
11          nice.   And the interstate feeders into the  
12          downtown area -- 375 and I-175 -- I think is  
13          ingenious.   I would never like to see those roll  
14          back.   I would also commend you on the trees that  
15          you've planted in the right-of-ways.

16          I hope through this public input all these  
17          problems that we're talking about can be addressed  
18          and solved.

19          Thank you.

20          MR. GAO:   Thank you.

21          Is there anyone else that would like to make a  
22          statement?

23          ATTENDEES:   (No response.)

24          MR. GAO:   Okay.   So the public hearing  
25          transcript, written --

1           One more?

2           UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: I have a question. I  
3 haven't seen anywhere who pays for this. Where is  
4 the money coming from? Did I miss that? Is it in  
5 there?

6           MR. SHUSTER: You didn't miss it. It's not in  
7 there.

8           UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It's not in there? Who  
9 pays for this? Is it the federal government?  
10 state government? county?

11          MR. SHUSTER: Federal.

12          UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Is it me who pays for  
13 it? I just want to know who is going to pay for  
14 it?

15          UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Federal highway  
16 dollars.

17          UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Do you answer  
18 questions?

19          MR. GAO: Well, this is a public hearing  
20 format. I would love to get with you after this  
21 hearing and have a discussion with you.

22          UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Okay. That's great.

23          UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Just out of curiosity,  
24 why does it have to be a sidebar discussion where  
25 nobody else can hear the answer?

1           MR. GAO: Well, projects are paid for by  
2           transportation trust funds -- state, federal, and  
3           local. They all come together. That's something  
4           I can discuss, but it will take a long time. This  
5           is a public hearing. I would like to wrap this up  
6           and be done and we can have a discussion.

7           MR. STARKEY: And just to add to my comment  
8           from earlier. Living here 26 years, I would for  
9           once, before I die, in this lifetime love to see  
10          traffic flow normal without any major construction  
11          anywhere and see how that actually works before  
12          you guys build another major project around this  
13          area. That would be nice.

14          MR. GAO: Thank you.

15          Anyone else?

16          MR. RASK: I have one last comment. Since  
17          I've been here, I don't think you've ever done  
18          reconstruction or added on to 275 through this  
19          area. So your planning has worked, and we're not  
20          going to get a whole lot bigger. I don't know if  
21          I'm going to spend a whole lot of money changing  
22          what we have. If modes of transportation change  
23          and people drive less cars or share cars -- we're  
24          pretty fortunate. We live in a landlocked area.  
25          I think it's been pretty well done.

1 MR. RASK: I'd also like to add, as I said  
2 earlier, I just learned about this hearing earlier  
3 today, and I forgot to say that I think it's good  
4 that we go slow on this. I do agree with some of  
5 the sentiments mentioned here before. For  
6 instance, about the tolling, that may or may not  
7 be a good idea. I don't know what I think about  
8 that. I have mixed experiences with tolling in  
9 the state of Florida.

10 The reason to go slow is because technology is  
11 changing very quickly. People are working from  
12 home; they're telecommuting; Uber; driverless  
13 cars, which will increase the throughput on these  
14 interstates. We may find in 15 years that we just  
15 need the capacity we have now as far as the  
16 physical capacity because we'll actually be able  
17 to put more cars through. We don't know. Nobody  
18 has an answer to that. So in a way, I'm glad this  
19 project would develop over a long period of time  
20 because things change very quickly.

21 Thank you.

22 MR. GAO: Anyone else?

23 MR. LEE: I also would like to add -- do I  
24 need to get to the microphone?

25 MR. GAO: Please, so the court reporter can

1 report it.

2 MR. LEE: I also would like to add that I  
3 moved here last year from Washington, D.C., and  
4 early on I had to take public transportation. The  
5 buses run like every hour. I think if we can  
6 change the time on the bus, add a circulator, add  
7 some ferries so people can get back and forth  
8 across the water, that will cut down on the  
9 traffic as well.

10 I think that is what someone had mentioned  
11 earlier. That would be key to starting a project  
12 rather than having the citizens come up with  
13 money, doing tolls, express lanes, and suff like  
14 that. So I think we should start small and try to  
15 grow transportation first, increase the timing,  
16 run more frequently so that people can be more --  
17 you know, have more incentives in using public  
18 transportation rather than trying to drive through  
19 heavy traffic.

20 MR. GAO: Thank you.

21 If you don't mind, can you restate your name  
22 again so we can have it in the official record?

23 MR. LEE: Yes, sir. My name is Jay Lee.

24 MR. GAO: Thank you.

25 And would you state your name?

1           MR. SHUSTER: Yes. I need to put my name in  
2           the official record. John Shuster, 2035 26th  
3           Avenue North.

4           And I would just like to reiterate that I  
5           don't believe for a moment that the city would be  
6           out replacing upgraded waterlines running right  
7           along the interstate fence into my yard unless  
8           they plan to expand over into my property like I  
9           said before. So it's very hard for me to believe  
10          that this project, as Mr. Gao is telling us, isn't  
11          going forward and that they don't know where the  
12          ponds are going to be going. I find that very  
13          hard to believe.

14          I can't imagine why the city would decide to  
15          just come out into my little neighborhood there  
16          and replace these lines right along the  
17          interstate, right where they are in the way of  
18          that pond expanding, like I said. With this extra  
19          lane being added at 22nd Avenue North, I just will  
20          never believe that for a moment.

21          I wish that DOT could be more forthcoming on  
22          what their plans are in that regard.

23          Thank you.

24          MR. GAO: Thank you.

25          Anyone else?

1 MS. BROWN: Yes. My name is Amanda Brown. I  
2 live in Tampa, Florida 33610. I've lived in  
3 St. Pete previously. I'm also a member of the  
4 shuffleboard club and many other cultural  
5 institutions here in St. Pete.

6 While I think some of the lane continuation  
7 projects proposed here are a good idea, I'm  
8 seriously concerned as to why these are coming  
9 about now and being bundled with the Tampa Bay  
10 Express project. I would like to see them  
11 unbundled from the Tampa Bay Express project, and  
12 they can still continue on without Tampa Bay  
13 Express.

14 I would also like to see possible alternatives  
15 put forth into this project. A lot of people in  
16 this community would like to see the 175 and 375  
17 either removed or seriously whittled down because  
18 it just brushes people past downtown and breaks up  
19 a lot of the cultural and urban street cred within  
20 the downtown area. So I hope that FDOT would  
21 seriously consider those projects as part of this.

22 And also I think FDOT needs to do a much  
23 better job of public outreach in terms of this.  
24 Like many people have echoed here, many of us just  
25 learned about this meeting this week. I think

1           that's fairly sad. Thank you.

2           MR. GAO: Another speaker?

3           MR. HARDISON: Hello. I'm Dylan Hardison of  
4           5368 78th Avenue, which is in Pinellas Park. I'm  
5           a statistic of one probably. But I am 30 years  
6           old. I have lived in Pinellas County my entire  
7           life, and I do not drive a car. In the meanwhile,  
8           it takes a very long time to bike here -- it's  
9           just kind of crazy -- because of the interstate.  
10          So I'm not sure if this is a good idea or not.  
11          But if there is funding for this, then I would  
12          hope that there's funding to make it a little bit  
13          less dangerous to get to certain parts of our  
14          county, at the very least, not to speak of  
15          actually being able to get to Tampa from here.

16          So that's my comment.

17          MR. GAO: Thank you.

18          Anybody else?

19          MR. MULLEN: My name is Robert Mullen. I've  
20          lived in the same house for 30 years right up  
21          against 275, and I honestly believe that you  
22          people -- and when I say "you people," I mean the  
23          people involved in this project -- are going to do  
24          it regardless of what we say because you can. I  
25          would like to find where there is some more input

1           before you go ahead and do this project. I would  
2           also like to know if they're going to -- how much  
3           of my property they are going to take. Am I going  
4           to lose my house? All this and I have no way of  
5           knowing that tonight.

6           When I moved into that house, it was right up  
7           against 275. I had people tell me my property was  
8           worth 10- to 15,000 less because of the area I  
9           lived in.

10          If you put another lane in there, my house is  
11          going to be worth a heck of a lot less or I'm  
12          going to end up losing it if you say you need the  
13          property because I'm right up against the fence.  
14          I don't think it's going to help anything because  
15          it's been there for -- when I moved into that area  
16          that I'm in right now, you were just finishing up  
17          on 275, and I had the impression that was it. 275  
18          was what was going to take care of everything,  
19          transportation problems. There were all these  
20          people that had the brains that said this was  
21          going to work. Thirty years later you're saying  
22          "No, it's not going to work. People can pay money  
23          to go back and forth." What's going to happen in  
24          another 30 years from now? I just think somebody  
25          has got to have some input in this before they

1 start doing these things.

2 I just don't think that my being here tonight  
3 is going to change anything, and what I'm saying  
4 is not going to change anything. But when I have  
5 to walk out my front door and go, at least I know  
6 I tried.

7 Thank you.

8 MR. GAO: Anyone else?

9 MR. SHUSTER: I'm going to leave one last  
10 thing with you. We're told that this project may  
11 be built or it may not be built. I believe the  
12 decision has already been made to build, as I've  
13 said. But to believe that it may be built or it's  
14 not going to be built, then why are we talking  
15 about the relocation? Why are we taking about  
16 taking people's property? We're at a meeting  
17 where the plan is not showing anyone's property  
18 being lost. "This is just a project. We won't  
19 know until the actual plan who is going to lose  
20 their property."

21 So this idea that the project may go forward  
22 or it may not go forward, we're upsetting a lot of  
23 people over losing their property when this may  
24 not happen. Is that responsible?

25 So either DOT is not being upfront with us as

1 far as whether this is a done deal -- I believe it  
2 is -- or they're being irresponsible by scaring a  
3 bunch of people when this may not even go forward.  
4 Now, which is it? Are you being irresponsible or  
5 dishonest? Because those are the two choices.

6 Thank you.

7 MR. GAO: Thank you.

8 MS. KLINKER: Hi, everyone. Thank you. My  
9 husband and I have lived in the same --

10 MR. GAO: Could you state your name and  
11 address, please?

12 MS. KLINKER: Thank you. Jeanette Hitowa  
13 Klinker, and I live at 3718 21st Street North. My  
14 husband Greg and I have lived in the same house  
15 for going on 21 years. Okay?

16 We had very little notice -- a little less  
17 than two weeks' notice in the mail for this. Very  
18 poor planning on their part, DOT. Okay?

19 We have raised a family, and now we are  
20 raising grandchildren. Grandchildren. Okay? I'm  
21 40 years old raising grandchildren. Okay? And  
22 I've read that you've done your archeological  
23 research. Okay? That's broadband.

24 Now, you started out talking about buying out  
25 people's properties. That's real -- that's wrong.

1           Okay? You've done your research, and now you're  
2           talking about sending people out to appraise  
3           properties. Did you once send people out to talk  
4           about, "Hey," you know, "who are you as a person?  
5           What are your families like?" You can give me a  
6           dollar or \$100,000, but you are not taking my  
7           house. I don't care. I don't care. They can try  
8           to take my house. Okay?

9           UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Eminent domain, they  
10          can take your house.

11          MS. KLINKER: Okay. You can say what you  
12          want, but you are not taking my house. I don't  
13          care. You can try, but you're going to have a  
14          fight on your hands. Go ahead.

15          MR. GAO: Anyone else that would like to make  
16          a statement?

17          I would like to ask the next speakers to  
18          please get a speaker card.

19          MS. CONNOR: I have one.

20          MR. GAO: Go ahead.

21          MS. CONNOR: Hi. My name is Annmarie Connor,  
22          4621 23rd Street North. Our front door faces 275.  
23          It's level with the side of the street, a fence,  
24          and a chain fence, and then cars all day long, all  
25          day long, all day long.

1 I came to this meeting because I was concerned  
2 about the noise, the view. Listening to all of  
3 you, you know, my suggestion really would be to --  
4 why don't you get -- approach this with making  
5 this more pleasant and helpful to the residents  
6 that live along I-275 instead of going for the  
7 meat [sic] and the roads and building it and then  
8 worrying about the residents?

9 Thank you.

10 MS. HOLMES: Hi. My name is Mary Holmes, and  
11 I live at 6672 23rd Street North here at St.  
12 Petersburg. I just want to say I'm a disabled  
13 person, and I'm here to represent disabled people  
14 as well. The south barrier wall, it is a very  
15 important issue that we've been having to fight  
16 for so many years, but to me it's more about  
17 safety. We have had cars crashing behind our  
18 walls, our fences that are almost ending in our  
19 backyards. Is that taken in consideration? It's  
20 got to be taken in consideration.

21 I don't care if you want to expand the  
22 highway. Please build that wall. It's not a  
23 sound barrier wall only. It is a safety issue  
24 that we are all carrying living there. And we all  
25 decided to buy those homes. That wasn't your

1 decision; it was ours. But we're trying to keep  
2 the house pretty, and as much as possible, please  
3 help us with that.

4 The other issue is if you don't build that  
5 wall, our value of our homes are just decreasing  
6 and nobody wants to buy those homes. We don't  
7 want to move. We're trying to do our best to pay  
8 it off, but in the future -- nobody knows what the  
9 future is. I was fine until a year ago when I  
10 became disabled. You just don't know what's going  
11 to happen. So please help us. I'm asking for  
12 help on building that sound barrier wall, and  
13 please do it safely for our children, our  
14 families.

15 Another thing that I want to say is I heard  
16 the representative here for PSTA, the  
17 transportation system. As a disabled person I  
18 want to say it is very disappointing to see how  
19 these people -- the drivers treat disabled people.  
20 He's terrible. To hear and see the treatment from  
21 the drivers to the disabled people. I used to  
22 take the bus, and I don't want to anymore because  
23 they treat us so badly.

24 Thank you very much.

25 MR. GAO: Thank you.

1           Anyone else?

2           MR. HARVEY: I don't know whether anybody has  
3           considered it, but I've been sitting there  
4           thinking about it. If you buy people's  
5           property -- and you can if you want to. I  
6           understand you can make somebody sell if they  
7           don't want to in eminent domain -- the money that  
8           you give me for my house, I couldn't go someplace  
9           else and buy the equivalent because it's worth  
10          less money against 275. I've had real estate come  
11          by and tell me what my house is worth and people  
12          ain't going to buy it. So I decided to fix my  
13          house up because I'm going to die there. I'm 76.  
14          I went ahead and spent thousands of dollars on my  
15          house all on the inside and everything. You  
16          people won't give me that money. You'll give me  
17          just what you think the house is worth, you know.  
18          I've had a bank check it out because of the area.  
19          The area has a lot to do with it. So you're  
20          robbing people when you make them move, period.

21          MR. BALL: Jason Ball from Tampa again. I  
22          just wanted to add real quick too, folks.  
23          Obviously pretty much everybody here has got a lot  
24          of concerns about this. Do not feel like you do  
25          not have a say in this or like it's already done

1 and we're just stuck having to pay billions of  
2 dollars for decades to come.

3 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: It is done.

4 MR. BALL: They're not done. They have to do  
5 a design process --

6 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: They can do -- I was  
7 told they can do what they want to do.

8 MR. BALL: Well, potentially. But if we raise  
9 enough stink, they'll stop.

10 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Eminent domain will  
11 take your house.

12 MR. BALL: That's the one thing we do have  
13 going for us is the MPO organizations. They have  
14 one in Hillsborough and one in Pinellas County.  
15 These are formed by the federal government to make  
16 sure that when federal funding is used on  
17 transportation projects that the communities needs  
18 are met by those projects. That's something like  
19 the state agency doesn't come and just bulldoze  
20 through your neighborhood when nobody wanted it.

21 So there is an entire process they have to  
22 follow. There is elected officials you can reach  
23 out to. Ken Welch is primary, the Board of County  
24 Commissioner. His entire district is where 275  
25 is. He would definitely be somebody to reach out

1 to. He is also on the MPO board.

2 These people have to answer to you to get  
3 elected into office. That's how they get on the  
4 MPO board. So this is what I'm saying to you.  
5 Reach out to your county commissioners, reach out  
6 to MPO board members; tell your friends, your  
7 family, your neighbors, your coworkers. They want  
8 your money, and there is only one way to stop it.  
9 That's by speaking up. That's why we live in a  
10 democracy, not in a royalty or whatever they did  
11 in Europe when we left.

12 Thank you.

13 MR. GAO: Thank you.

14 Anyone else that would like to speak?

15 Seeing none. The public hearing transcript,  
16 written statements, exhibits, and reference  
17 materials will be available for public inspection  
18 in the District 7 office, 11201 North McKinley  
19 Drive, Tampa, Florida, within three weeks.

20 It is approximately 7:33 p.m. I hereby  
21 officially close the formal portion of the public  
22 hearing for the I-275 PD&E Study. The Florida  
23 Department of Transportation thanks you for  
24 attending.

25 Remember, be alert today, alive tomorrow, and

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

safety doesn't happen by accident. Good night.

(Meeting concluded at 7:33 p.m.)

- - -

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

STATE OF FLORIDA )  
COUNTY OF PINELLAS)

I, Heidi Fabrikant, FPR, do hereby certify that I was authorized to and did report the foregoing meeting, and that the transcript, pages 1 through 51, is a true and correct record of my stenographic notes.

Dated this 19th day of October, 2015.

*Heidi Fabrikant*  
Heidi Fabrikant FPR

