

**RE-EVALUATION
FORM****1. GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION**A. Re-evaluation Type: Design Change, Right of Way PhaseB. Original approved Environmental Document:**Document Type:** Type 2 CE**Date of Approval:** 07/15/2016**Project Numbers:**

12556

424501-1-22-01

N/A

ETDM (if applicable)

Financial Management

Federal-Aid

Project Name: I-275 (SR 93) FROM 54TH AVE S TO N OF 4TH ST NORTH**Project Location:** FDOT District 7 (Pinellas County)**Project Limits:** I-275 from south of 54th Avenue South to north of 4th Street NorthC. Prior Re-evaluation(s):

FM Number	Type				Date District Approved	Date Lead Agency Consultation	Date Lead Agency Approved (if applicable)
	PE	DC	ROW	CON			
424501-1-22-01	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	04/18/2017		04/26/2017

Description of Approval:

The previous Design Change Re-evaluation proposed a repurposing of one of the two approved Type 2 CE express lanes in order to accommodate the provision of three general use through lanes, one auxiliary lane, and one express lane in each direction throughout the limits from south of Ulmerton Road to south of the Howard Frankland Bridge. Under the previous Design Change Re-evaluation, there were no changes in impacts.

424501-1-22-01	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	06/20/2019	03/01/2019	N/A
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Description of Approval:

The following Design Changes are proposed related to bridge lengthenings to accommodate future widening of I-275:

- Lengthening of the general purpose lane bridge over I-275 connecting southbound I-275 with 4th Street North.
- Realignment and lengthening of the general purpose lane bridge (Ramp P) over I-275 connecting northbound I-275 to Roosevelt Boulevard.

The following Design Changes are proposed related to express lane connections between Gateway Express, I-275, and Roosevelt Boulevard:

- Realignment of general purpose lane and express lane bridges over I-275 and Roosevelt Boulevard connecting Gateway Express to I-275 north of Roosevelt Boulevard.
- Widening and construction of new I-275 bridges for express lanes (northbound and southbound) and general purpose lanes (northbound) over Roosevelt Boulevard.

D. Project or project segment(s) being evaluated

FAP Number	FM Number	Project/ Segment Name	Project/ Segment Location	Type				Project/ Segment Letting Type	Funding
				PE	DC	ROW	CON		
	424501-1-22-	I-275 (SR 93)	District 7 -	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Design Build	Federal

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	01	FROM 54TH AVE S TO N OF 4TH ST NORTH	PINELLAS						
	424501-4-31- 01	I-275 FROM S OF ROOSEVELT BLVD TO N OF 4TH ST NORTH	District 7 - PINELLAS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Design Build	Federal
	424501-5-43- 01	I-275 (SR 93) FROM 54TH AVE S TO S OF ROOSEVELT BLVD	District 7 - PINELLAS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Design Build	Federal
D718-052-B	430500-1-31- 01	SR 687/4TH STREET N FROM S OF BIG ISLAND GAP TO S OF I- 275/SR 93	District 7 - PINELLAS	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Design-Bid- Build	Federal

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The FHWA approved a Type 2 Categorical Exclusion (CE) on July 15, 2016 for I-275 (SR 93) from South of 54th Avenue South to north of 4th Street North for an approximate corridor length of 16.3 miles. The Type 2 CE concept provided lane continuity improvements from south of 54th Avenue South to south of Gandy Boulevard and express lane improvements from south of Gandy Boulevard to north of 4th Street North. The lane continuity improvements consisted of intermittent widening and restriping of existing lanes on I-275 to form two continuous lanes in each direction. The ultimate express lane configuration provided one express lane in each direction from south of Gandy Boulevard to 118th Avenue North/Roosevelt Boulevard and two express lanes in each direction of I-275 from 118th Avenue North/Roosevelt Boulevard to north of 4th Street North.

This re-evaluation assesses the impacts of adding a second express lane from Gandy Boulevard to north of 4th Street North, and the addition of two express lanes from north of I-375 to south of Gandy Boulevard. These proposed improvements would tie-in with planned improvements to the Howard Frankland Bridge (FPID 422904-2 and 422904-4).

This re-evaluation provides an initial analysis of the bridges on 4th Street North over Big Island Gap and the trail connections from the Howard Frankland Bridge to 4th Street North and Ulmerton Road, as well as evaluating ramp connection modifications at the Gandy Boulevard interchange area. To meet drainage and stormwater requirements, pond sites will be needed to accommodate additional impervious surface due to widening to accommodate express lanes. Several of these new pond site locations will be outside of the existing right of way.

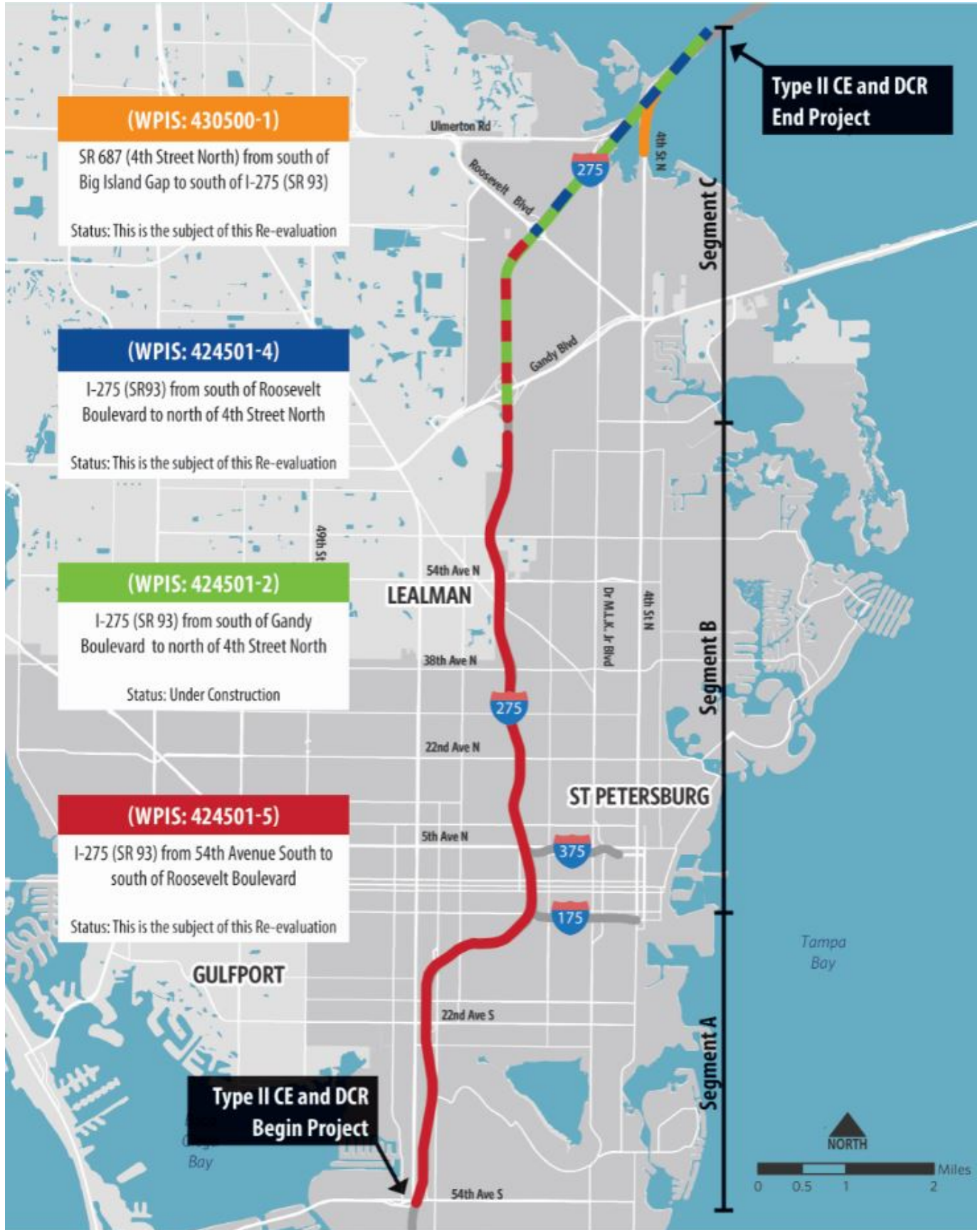
Status of Design Segments within Study Limits

- I-275 (SR 93) from 54th Avenue South to south of Roosevelt Boulevard (WPIS: 424501-5). - ***This is the subject of this Design Change Re-evaluation and ROW Re-evaluation***

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- I-275 (SR 93) from south of Gandy Boulevard to north of 4th Street North (WPIS: 424501-2) - 1 express lane in each direction. - *Status: Under Construction*
- I-275 (SR 93) from south of Roosevelt Boulevard to north of 4th Street North (WPIS: 424501-4) - 2 express lanes in each direction. - ***This is the subject of this Design Change Re-evaluation***
- SR 687 (4th Street North) from south of Big Island Gap to south of I-275 (SR 93) (WPIS: 430500-1). - ***This is the subject of this Design Change Re-evaluation***

RE-EVALUATION FORM



Project Location Map

3. CHANGES IN APPLICABLE LAW OR REGULATION

Are there changes in federal or state laws, rules, regulations, or guidance that require consideration since the date of the original Environmental Document or subsequent Re-evaluation(s)? Yes

Since approval of the Type 2 CE and most recent Re-evaluation, the status of the following federally listed species has changed:

- Changes to the protection status for federally listed species has occurred since the **July 2016 WEBAR**.
 - The protection status for the West Indian manatee was changed from "endangered" to "threatened" effective May 5, 2017.
 - The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) reclassified the gopher tortoise from a "species of special concern" to a "threatened" species in May 2002. *Gopher Tortoise Permitting Guidelines* were developed in 2008. The current version of the permitting guidelines is dated January 2017.
- Changes to the protection status for federally listed species has occurred since the **April 2017 Re-Evaluation**
 - The protection status for the West Indian manatee changed from "endangered" to "threatened" effective May 5, 2017. The Effect Determination Key for the Manatee in Florida (April 2013) was as amended as of May 2019.
 - The following species were removed from the Florida's list of endangered and threatened species (FWC, Dec. 2018) - mangrove rivulus, snowy egret, white ibis, the brown pelican, and the gopher frog. The protection status for several species was changed from "species of special concern" to "threatened", including the American oyster catcher, black skimmer, several wading birds (roseate spoonbill, little blue heron, reddish egret, and tricolored heron), and the Florida burrowing owl.
 - The Eastern indigo snake Programmatic Effect Determination Key was revised as of August 2017.

4. EVALUATION OF MAJOR DESIGN CHANGES AND REVISED DESIGN CRITERIA

Are there major design changes, including but not limited to changes in the alignment(s), typical section(s), drainage/stormwater requirements, design control and criteria, or temporary road or bridge? Yes

The current Design Change Re-evaluation includes a typical section change in Segment B to extend two buffer-separated express lanes in both directions, as well as a 12-ft wide outside shoulder to accommodate bus-on-shoulder operations from north of I-375 to south of Gandy Boulevard. In Segment C, the typical section change accommodates a second express lane from south of Gandy Boulevard to north of 4th Street North. This concept supersedes the 2017 Design Change Re-evaluation concept. The current Design Change Re-evaluation also includes trail connections from the Howard Frankland Bridge to 4th Street North and Ulmerton Road. The 4th Street North bridges over Big Island Gap will be replaced due to them being functionally obsolete; the bridges will be widened to accommodate the new trail connection.

Access to southbound I-275 from the Gandy Boulevard interchange will be modified by connecting the westbound-to-southbound loop on ramp and the eastbound-to-southbound on ramp into a frontage road system that provides one entry point onto southbound I-275. Finally, additional drainage and stormwater requirements, such as pond sites, will be needed to accommodate the new impervious surface due to the express lane widening. Several of these new pond site locations will be outside of the existing right of way. The current concept is consistent with the Tampa Bay Express (TBX) Master Plan.

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- Pond 2A (0.7 acres within existing R/W) is located north of 54th Avenue South within the I-275 median.
- Pond 7B (1.0 acres outside of existing R/W) is located west of I-275, south of the I-175 interchange area.
- Pond 11C (7.5 acres outside of existing R/W) is located east of I-275, north of 9th Avenue North.
- Pond 12A (2.0 acres outside of existing R/W) is located west of I-275, south of the CSX Railroad line.
- Pond 13B (1.0 acres outside of existing R/W) is located west of I-275, north of 26th Avenue North.
- Pond 14A (1.9 acres within existing R/W) is located south of 38th Avenue North within the I-275 median.
- Pond 15A (1.0 acres outside of existing R/W) is located west of I-275, north of 38th Avenue North.
- Pond 16A (1.2 acres outside of existing R/W) is located west of I-275, north of 46th Avenue North.
- Pond 17A (1.6 acres within existing RW) is located within the 54th Avenue North interchange area.
- Pond 18A (4.1 acres outside of existing R/W) is located east of I-275, south of Gandy Boulevard.
- Pond 19A (2.1 acres within existing R/W) is located within the Gandy Boulevard interchange area.
- Pond 20A (2.1 acres outside existing R/W) is located west of I-275, north of Gandy Boulevard.

All clearances have been completed for cultural resources, threatened and endangered species, and contamination.

RE-EVALUATION FORM



Pond Site Locations

5. PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

Were there additional public involvement activities? Yes

A Public Hearing was held on Tuesday, September 24, 2019 from 5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. at the First Baptist Church - Heritage Hall located at 1900 Gandy Boulevard, St. Petersburg, FL 33702. The public hearing was noticed in the Tampa Bay Times and via mail and email to elected and appointed officials, agencies, property owners, and interested parties. The Hearing was an opportunity for the public to comment and provide input regarding specific location, design, socio-economic effects, and environmental effects associated with the recommended alternative. One hundred forty-one (141) people signed into the meeting. During the Hearing's open house, a court reporter was available to receive comments in a one-on-one setting. In addition, verbal statements, written statements, and exhibits submitted at the Hearing became part of the official Public Hearing record. Comments submitted via mail were to be postmarked by October 4, 2019 to become part of the official Public Hearing record. There was no observed controversy during the Public Hearing.

Eleven people verbally commented on the project during the formal portion of the hearing and 13 written comments were received at the hearing. Also, two oral statements were taken by the court reporter during the public hearing. An additional 44 written comments were received via email, an online comment on the project website or by U.S. Postal Service prior to October 5, 2019 when the official comment period closed. Overall, 19% of the comments were in favor of the project, 39% not in favor, 3% were mixed in support, and 40% indicated no preference for or against the project. The Department received comments in support for noise barriers, as well as substantive comments concerning the placement of pond sites, including 7B and 18A. Comments in support of the noise barriers were responded to by indicating FDOT's commitment to constructing noise barriers, where feasible, and directed citizens to review noise barrier locations in the Concept Plans. The Department responded to the comments related to the pond sites by indicating that a separate Environmental Look Around (ELA) is being conducted in conjunction with our local partners to identify opportunities to reduce or eliminate right-of-way required for the pond sites. The ELA will be completed during the design phase and the results shared with the communities affected.

Presentations were given to local officials and agencies such as Forward Pinellas to apprise local officials of the project status, specific location, and design concepts, and to receive their comments. In addition to scheduled meetings, participation in other meetings with the public, elected officials, special interest groups, and public agencies occurred.

[\[1 - I-275_Public_Hearing_Transcript_and_Certification\]](#)

6. PROJECT or SEGMENT(S) PLANNING CONSISTENCY

Segment FM Number: 424501-1-22-01

Planning Consistency is not required for this project segment.

Segment FM Number: 424501-4-31-01

Currently Adopted CFP-LRTP	Comments				
Yes	Found in the Forward Pinellas 2045 Cost Feasible Plan.				
Phase	TIP/STIP	Currently	\$	FY	Comments

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		Approved			
PE (Final Design)	TIP	Yes	\$0	-	Project funding is outside the current TIP/STIP.
PE (Final Design)	STIP	Yes	\$0	-	Project funding is outside the current TIP/STIP.
R/W	TIP	Yes	\$0	-	-
R/W	STIP	Yes	\$0	-	-
Construction	TIP	Yes	\$0	2024	Project funding is outside the current TIP/STIP.
Construction	STIP	Yes	\$0	>2023	Project funding is outside the current TIP/STIP.

Segment FM Number: 424501-5-43-01

Currently Adopted CFP-LRTP	Comments				
Yes	Found in the Forward Pinellas 2045 Cost Feasible Plan.				
Phase	TIP/STIP	Currently Approved	\$	FY	Comments
PE (Final Design)	TIP	Yes	\$5,505,000	2020-2024	Project limits and improvements are consistent between TIP and STIP. Funding matches between TIP and STIP.
PE (Final Design)	STIP	Yes	\$5,506,698	<2020->2023	Project limits and improvements are consistent between TIP and STIP. Funding matches between TIP and STIP.
R/W	TIP	Yes	\$27,544,900	2021-2024	Project limits and improvements are consistent between TIP and STIP. Funding matches between TIP and STIP.
R/W	STIP	Yes	\$27,544,900	2021-2023	Project limits and improvements are consistent between TIP

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					and STIP. Funding matches between TIP and STIP.
Construction	TIP	Yes	\$268,704,433	2024	Project limits and improvements are consistent between TIP and STIP. Cost difference between documents is \$7M which is within the allowable variance on 20% AND \$2m.
Construction	STIP	Yes	\$275,735,843	>2023	Project limits and improvements are consistent between TIP and STIP. Cost difference between documents is \$7M which is within the allowable variance on 20% AND \$2m.

Segment FM Number: 430500-1-31-01

Currently Adopted CFP-LRTP	Comments				
Yes	Found in the Forward Pinellas 2045 Cost Feasible Plan.				
Phase	TIP/STIP	Currently Approved	\$	FY	Comments
PE (Final Design)	TIP	Yes	\$531,246	<2020	See comments below.
PE (Final Design)	STIP	Yes	\$564,631	<2020-2020	See comments below.
PE TIP Comments	Project limits shown in TIP are 119th Ave S to S of I-275/SR 93. Project limits shown in the STIP are Big Island Gap to S of I-275/SR 93. This is a bridge replacement and the project limits shown are describing the same location.				
PE STIP Comments	Project limits shown in TIP are 119th Ave S to S of I-275/SR 93. Project limits shown in the STIP are Big Island Gap to S of I-275/SR 93. This is a bridge replacement and the project limits shown are describing the same location.				
R/W	TIP	Yes	\$0	-	-
R/W	STIP	Yes	\$0	-	-
Construction	TIP	Yes	\$8,156,020	2022	See comments below.
Construction	STIP	Yes	\$8,964,304	2022	See comments below.
Construction TIP Comments	Project limits shown in TIP are 119th Ave S to S of I-275/SR 93. Project limits shown in the STIP are Big Island Gap to S of I-275/SR 93. This is a bridge replacement and the project limits shown are describing the same location. Cost difference between documents is \$0.8m which is within the allowable variance of 20% AND \$2m.				
Construction STIP	Project limits shown in TIP are 119th Ave S to S of I-275/SR 93. Project limits shown in the STIP are Big Island Gap to S of I-275/SR 93. This is a bridge replacement and the project limits shown are describing the same location.				

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Comments	Cost difference between documents is \$0.8m which is within the allowable variance of 20% AND \$2m.
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[\[6 - 424501-4_LRTP\]](#)[\[7 - 424501-4-1_Planning Consistency_3-9-2020\]](#)[\[8 - 424501-5_LRTP\]](#)[\[9 - 424501-5_Planning Consistency_3-9-2020\]](#)[\[10 - 424501-5_STIP_3-5-2020\]](#)[\[11 - 424501-5_TIP\]](#)[\[12 - 430500-1_LRTP\]](#)[\[13 - 430500-1_Planning Consistency_3-9-2020\]](#)[\[14 - 430500-1_STIP_3-5-2020\]](#)[\[15 - 430500-1_TIP\]](#)**7. EVALUATION OF CHANGES IN IMPACTS****a. SOCIAL & ECONOMIC****Are there changes in impacts to the social, economic, land use, mobility, and/or aesthetic effects?** No**Are there changes in right-of-way needs?** Yes

Minor right of way is required for the mainline roadway improvements. Right of way is also needed for the stormwater management facilities. These pond site locations are identified below:

- Pond 7B (1.0 acres outside of existing R/W) is located west of I-275, south of the I-175 interchange area.
- Pond 11C (7.5 acres outside of existing R/W) is located east of I-275, north of 9th Avenue North.
- Pond 12A (2.0 acres outside of existing R/W) is located west of I-275, south of the CSX Railroad line.
- Pond 13B (1.0 acres outside of existing R/W) is located west of I-275, north of 26th Avenue North.
- Pond 15A (1.0 acres outside of existing R/W) is located west of I-275, north of 38th Avenue North.
- Pond 16A (1.2 acres outside of existing R/W) is located west of I-275, north of 46th Avenue North.
- Pond 18A (4.1 acres outside of existing R/W) is located east of I-275, south of Gandy Boulevard.
- Pond 20A (2.1 acres outside existing R/W) is located west of I-275, north of Gandy Boulevard.

Is there a change in anticipated relocation(s)? Yes

The number of residential and business relocations have increased over the previously approved Type 2 CE (2016) and previous re-evaluation, which reported no anticipated relocations. A Conceptual Stage Relocation Plan (CSR), dated August 2019 and is available in the project file, was developed as part of this Re-evaluation. The results of the study estimate 16 residential relocations and 7 business relocations (all of which are landlord businesses). None of the businesses proposed for acquisition are considered to be major employers and do not appear to present any unusual relocation issues. Sufficient comparable replacement sites are available or will be made available for residences and businesses alike.

In order to minimize the unavoidable effects of Right of Way acquisition and displacement of people, the Florida Department of Transportation will carry out a Right of Way and Relocation Assistance Program in accordance with Florida Statute 421.55, Relocation of displaced persons, and the Uniform Relocation Assistance and Real Property Acquisition Policies Act of 1970 (Public Law 91-646 as amended by Public Law 100-17).

Are there changes in impacts to Prime or Unique Farmlands? N/A

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Are there changes in impacts to cultural resources pursuant to Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (historic sites/districts and archaeological sites)? No

The Cultural Resource Assessment Survey (CRAS) Re-evaluation Technical Memorandum, dated August 2019, and CRAS Addendum, dated January 2020, indicate that no previously recorded archaeological sites were located within the Area of Potential Effects (APE) and the archaeological field survey yielded negative results. Both of these reports can be found in the project file. All pond site locations analyzed in the CRAS Re-evaluation Technical Memorandum fell within the APE.

The results of the CRAS Re-evaluation Technical Memorandum indicate that there are no archaeological sites eligible or considered eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) within the APE. However, one historic resource, the St. Petersburg City Theatre (8PI13237), appears eligible at the local level under Criterion A, in the areas of Performing Arts/Theater, Education, and Entertainment. This resource was identified as part of the re-evaluation of the I-275 corridor and is not located within or adjacent to any of the proposed pond sites. No additional enhancements are proposed for this area of I-275; therefore, this segment of the project does not have the potential for any direct, indirect (visual or audible), or cumulative effects to the resource.

The CRAS Addendum focused on the new trail connection at the 4th Street North bridge over Big Island Gap that will undergo either widening or reconstruction. As a result of the historical/architectural field survey two historic resources (8PI12953 & 8PI12954) were newly identified, recorded, and evaluated within the historic APE. These include two five span, concrete stringer - multi beam bridges constructed in ca. 1959. Overall, the bridges are typical examples of a Common Post-1945 concrete stringer - multi beam bridge with no known significant historic associations that lack sufficient architectural features. In addition, the bridges are not a notable type, style, or method of construction, and therefore, do not appear eligible for listing in the NRHP, either individually or as part of a historic district.

In summary, based on background research and field survey, the proposed undertaking will have no effect on any cultural resources, including archaeological sites and historic resources, which are listed, determined eligible, or that appear to be eligible for listing in the NRHP.

SHPO concurrence for the CRAS Re-evaluation Technical Memorandum was received on September 26, 2019.

SHPO concurrence for the CRAS Addendum was received on March 11, 2020.

[\[4 - SHPO Concurrence CRAS Addendum\]](#)[\[16 - SHPO Concurrence CRAS 2019\]](#)

Are there changes in effects to Section 4(f) of the Department of Transportation Act protected resources or other protected public lands? No

Are there changes in impacts to lands purchased under Section 6(f) of the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act? N/A

Are there changes in impacts to recreational areas or other public lands? N/A

c. NATURAL

Are there changes in impacts to protected species and habitat, wetlands and other surface waters, and/or essential fish habitat? Yes

A Natural Resources Evaluation (NRE) Addendum, dated August 2019, was developed as part of this Re-evaluation. This document can be found in the project file.

Protected Species

Federally listed wildlife observed or which have the potential to occur within the study area reviewed as part of this Re-evaluation include fish (Gulf sturgeon and small-tooth sawfish), reptiles (sea turtles and Eastern indigo snake), birds (wood stork, piping plover and rufa red knot), West Indian manatee.

- **West Indian manatee (*Trichechus manatus*)** - The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) *Standard Manatee Conditions for In-Water Work* (2011) would be implemented during construction to eliminate the possibility of construction-related manatee injury or death and these guidelines would be incorporated as part of the final project design. Additionally, the FDOT would coordinate with the NMFS should pile driving or blasting be necessary. Since the *Manatee and Marine Turtle Construction Conditions for In-Water Work* would be implemented and impacts to seagrass habitat mitigated, and based on guidance from the USACE Effect Determination Key for the Manatee in Florida (2013), as amended (USFWS 2019), it is anticipated that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the West Indian manatee.
- **Smalltooth sawfish (*Pristis pectinata*)** - The NMFS developed *Sea Turtle and Smalltooth Sawfish Construction Conditions* (2006) to protect the species during construction. The FDOT will adhere to these construction conditions and will coordinate with the NMFS should pile driving and/or blasting be necessary, in order to avoid impacts to the smalltooth sawfish. Based on this information and given the low likelihood of occurrence within the project area, it is anticipated that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the smalltooth sawfish.
- **Eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon corais couperi*)** - Due to the presence of fragmented habitat and historic occurrences of the indigo snake within Pinellas County, the USFWS *Standard Protection Measures for the Eastern Indigo Snake* (2013) will be followed during construction. Given FDOT's commitment to protect the indigo snake during construction and per the Eastern Indigo Snake Programmatic Effect Determination Key (2013), it is anticipated that the project may affect, but is not likely to adversely affect the Eastern indigo snake.
- **Nesting Shorebirds** - Although nesting was not documented within the area reviewed as part of this Re-evaluation, nesting shorebirds have been recorded nearby. In order to prevent adverse effects to nesting shorebirds, pre-construction surveys will be completed prior to any construction that may occur during the breeding season. Since FDOT would require pre-construction surveys and would avoid impacting active shorebird nests, no adverse effect is anticipated.

The US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) concurrence correspondence are attached to this document.

**RE-EVALUATION
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The Preferred Build Alternative results in approximately 5.17 acres of impacts to wetlands, including approximately 1.29 acres of forested saltwater wetlands, 0.21 acres of herbaceous saltwater wetlands, 3.08 acres forested freshwater wetlands, and 0.59 non-forested freshwater wetlands. Compared to the previously approved Build Alternative, the Re-evaluation Preferred Build Alternative results in an additional 3.54 acres of impacts to wetlands.

The Preferred Build Alternative results in approximately 1.424 acres of impacts to seagrasses, including approximately 1.42 acres of seagrasses north of the Howard Frankland Bridge and 0.004 acres of seagrasses along Big Island Gap. Under the previously approved PD&E Study, there were seagrass impacts on the south side of the Howard Frankland Bridge, but due to the northward shift, seagrass impacts to the south were avoided. Also, the previous study did not analyze the 4th Street North Big Island Gap bridges, therefore there were no seagrass impacts associated with that study. Compared to the previously approved Build Alternative, the Re-evaluation Preferred Build Alternative results in an additional 0.684 acres of impacts to seagrasses.

The Preferred Build Alternative results in approximately 14.47 acres of impacts to surface waters, including approximately 0.34 acres of tidal surface waters and 14.13 acres of freshwater surface waters. Compared to the previously approved Build Alternative, the Re-evaluation Preferred Build Alternative results in an additional 9.78 acres of impacts to surface waters within the Old Tampa Bay which includes the Pinellas County Aquatic Preserve.

Wetland, mangrove and seagrass impacts that result from construction of the preferred alternative would be mitigated pursuant to Section 373.4137, F.S., to satisfy all mitigation requirements of Part IV of Chapter 373, FS, and 33 USC 1344. Mitigation options evaluated as part of this PD&E Study included permittee-responsible opportunities and private mitigation banks.

On-site permittee-responsible mitigation opportunities for mangroves and seagrasses were evaluated. Depending on the final design, opportunities to mitigate on-site could include replacement or enhancement of mangrove habitat along the project corridor. Opportunities for restoration partnerships that lead to off-site mitigation solutions on nearby public lands could be permissible on a case-by-case basis depending on land use restrictions and site-specific restoration needs at the time of permitting. Given proximity to the Weedon Island Preserve, opportunities for mangrove restoration could be developed in cooperation with Pinellas County in areas historically impacted by mosquito ditching per the Weedon Island Tidal Wetland Restoration Feasibility Study. Opportunities to provide seagrass mitigation through prop-scar restoration along Weedon Island Preserve within Tampa Bay could also be evaluated.

Private mitigation banks provide an alternative to on-site, permittee-responsible wetland mitigation when available and mitigation banks are recommended by the permitting agencies. Mitigation bank credits were limited within the Tampa Bay/Anclote River Watershed Area at the time of this Re-evaluation and credits were only available to compensate impacts to estuarine herbaceous or mangrove wetlands. Freshwater forested and herbaceous credits were not available and would likely need to be purchased from an out-of-basin mitigation bank. Mitigation for impacts to seagrass habitat would require additional coordination as seagrass mitigation banks were not an option at the time of this re-evaluation. However, Tampa Bay Watch and the City of St. Petersburg were permitting the North Shore Park Seagrass Mitigation Bank near downtown Saint Petersburg. If available at the time of permitting, this bank could potentially provide credits needed to offset any potential seagrass impacts.

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Given the variety of the mitigation concepts evaluated, as well as potential emerging opportunities within the region, this NRE concluded that appropriate mitigation would be identified and negotiated with the regulatory agencies at the time of permitting.

Essential Fish Habitat

An Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) Assessment was conducted within the study area reviewed as part of this Re-evaluation to account for impact changes associated with the Re-evaluation design concept. The project will result in impacts to seagrass habitat due to the pedestrian trail along the Howard Frankland Causeway and in association with widening the I-275 Bridge and the 4th Street North Bridge over Big Island Gap. Estuarine habitat impacts would also be anticipated to construct the pedestrian trail north of Ulmerton Road.

Based on requirements to utilize standard water quality protection measures during construction, including regulatory requirements to protect Outstanding Florida Waters (OFW), as well as the requirement to coordinate with NMFS for in-water work associated with pile driving and/or blasting, and to provide mitigation for project impacts, the project is expected to minimally impact EFH or species listed in the FMPs of the GMFMC. All jurisdictional wetland and seagrass impacts that result from the construction of this project will be mitigated pursuant to Section 373.4137, Florida Statute (F.S.), to satisfy all mitigation requirements of Part IV of Chapter 373, F.S., and 33 U.S.C. 1344.

USFWS concurrence was received on September 19, 2019.

NMFS concurrence was received on September 5, 2019.

[\[2 - USFWS Concurrence Letter\]](#)[\[5 - NMFS Reasonable Assurance Letter\]](#)[\[17 - West Indian Manatee Key\]](#)[\[18 - Eastern Indigo Snake Key\]](#)

Are there changes in impacts to designated Aquatic Preserves, Coastal Barrier resources, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and/or Outstanding Florida Waters? No

Are there changes in impacts to Floodplains and/or Water Quality and Stormwater? Yes

Results of the Stormwater Management Facility (SMF) Siting Report, dated August 2019 and is available in the project file, that was prepared as part of the Design Change Re-evaluation indicate 12 new proposed pond sites and sizes compared to the previously approved PD&E Study. These 12 pond sites total 19.9 acres outside of the existing right of way and 6.3 acres within the existing right of way.

d. PHYSICAL

Are there changes in Air Quality? No

What is the status of Highway Traffic Noise?

The primary objectives of the Noise Study Report Addendum (NSRA), dated August 2019 and can be found in the project file, were to determine whether noise barriers are a potentially feasible and reasonable noise abatement measure for the residences in Noise Study Areas (NSAs) 49, 54, 55, 57, 59, 61, 63, 66, and 67 and determine whether the existing noise barrier for NSA 69 should be lengthened.

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As a result of the initial PD&E Study, a noise barrier was not recommended for further analysis for NSA 49 because the reduction in highway traffic noise with a barrier did not meet the FDOT's noise reduction design goal (NRDG) of 7 dB(A) for one or more benefited receptors. Therefore, for this Re-evaluation, a full analysis was performed to determine if a noise barrier would be a potentially feasible and reasonable noise abatement measure for the residences in NSA 49. The results of the evaluation indicate that at barrier heights from 10 to 14 feet, all 30 impacted residences would receive a benefit from a reduction in traffic noise of 5 dB(A) or more, the NRDG of 7 dB(A) would be achieved, and the cost of the noise barrier would be below the FDOT's cost reasonable criteria. A noise barrier is predicted to provide the minimum noise reduction requirements at a cost below the cost effective criteria, therefore the noise barrier was evaluated further.

For NSAs 54, 55, 57, 59, 61, 63, 66, and 67 the initial PD&E Study indicated that barriers were a potentially feasible and reasonable noise abatement measure. Therefore, the current analysis was performed only to confirm that the barriers remain a potentially feasible and reasonable noise abatement measure. The results of the evaluation indicate that the barriers for NSA 54, 55, 57, 59, 61, 63, 66, and 67 remain a potentially feasible and reasonable noise abatement measure to reduce predicted highway traffic noise at the residences in these NSAs.

Because the current design change has the potential to reduce the benefit of the barrier for the residences in NSA 69 and the barrier is being constructed at the maximum height, the current analysis only evaluated whether the NSA 69 barrier should be lengthened. Based on results of the analysis, the existing noise barrier does not have to be lengthened to remain a feasible and reasonable noise abatement measure.

The FDOT is committed to the construction of the potential noise barriers identified in this NSRA contingent on the following:

- Detailed noise analyses during the final design process supports the need, feasibility, and reasonableness of providing abatement;
- Cost analysis indicates that the cost of the noise barrier(s) will not exceed the cost reasonable criterion;
- Community input supporting types, heights, and locations of the noise barrier(s) is obtained; and
- Safety and engineering aspects as they relate to the roadway user and the adjacent property owner have been reviewed and any conflicts or issues resolved.

What is the status of Contamination?

A Level I Contamination Technical Memorandum (Tech Memo), dated August 2019 and can be found in the project file, provides an update to the Contamination Screening Evaluation Report (CSER), dated April 2016, completed during the previously approved PD&E. This update is necessary due to slight adjustments to the roadway alignment and the addition of off-site stormwater ponds. The original CSER investigated 15 sites within the study corridor; zero sites ranked "No Risk", two sites ranked "Low", nine sites ranked "Medium", and four sites ranked "High". Of the 15 sites analyzed in the original PD&E Study, four have changes to their risk rating under this re-evaluation. These sites are Site 7 (change from High to Low), Site 10 (change from Low to Medium), Site 14 (change from Medium to Low), and Site 15 (change from Medium to Low).

Additional sites were identified since the original CSER, dated April 2016, resulting in a total of 102 potential sites within the study corridor; 66 sites ranked "No Risk", 23 sites ranked "Low", eight sites ranked "Medium", and five sites ranked "High". For the locations with a risk rating of "Medium" or "High," Level II field screening should be conducted.

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- Landhill Inc., 1950 102nd Avenue North
- Bridgeway Acres Landfill, 10901 28th Street North
- 7-Eleven Food Store, 5301 34th Street South
- Sunoco #0613-4415, 5100 34th Street South
- Former Sixty Minute Cleaners, 3320 22nd Avenue South
- Angelo's Recycled Materials, 855 28th Street South
- Kozuba & Sons Distillery Inc., 1960 5th Avenue South
- Shuttle Service Center, 5001 Haines Road North

Contamination Sites Ranked "High"

- 1839 Building, 1839 Central Avenue
- Argos USA - St. Petersburg Plant, 1020 31st Street South
- FDOT District 7 - I-275 ROW, I-275 at Central Avenue
- 1839 BLDG LLC Property, 1839 Central Avenue
- City of St. Petersburg Fleet Management Facility, Pinellas Suncoast Transit Authority, 1800 7th Avenue North

Twelve pond sites were also evaluated as part of this Tech Memo, dated August 2019, resulting in five sites ranked "No Risk", five sites ranked "Low", and two sites ranked "Medium".

Pond Sites Ranked "Medium"

- Pond 11C
- Pond 12A

Are there changes in impacts to Utilities and Railroads? No

Are there changes in impacts to Navigation? Yes

A United States Coast Guard (USCG) permit is required. Coordination with USCG from February 2020 in project file.

8. COMMITMENT STATUS

Are there prior commitments from the Environmental Document or previously approved re-evaluation(s)? Yes

Are there new environmental commitments? Yes

List new environmental commitments added since approval of the original Environmental Document or most recent Re-evaluation.

- The FDOT will implement the USACE *Standard Manatee Conditions for In-Water Work* (most current version) and will incorporate guidelines per the FDOT Program Management Standard Specifications included in the July 2019 Workbook.
- The FDOT will coordinate with the NMFS if in-water acoustical work is required in association with pile driving and/or blasting to facilitate construction of the pedestrian trail north of the Howard Frankland Causeway and the I-275 Bridge and the 4th Street North Bridge over Big Island Gap.
- The size/style of piles, quantity of piles, number of piles driven per day, number of strikes per pile, and other information needed to determine potential hydroacoustic impacts to the smalltooth sawfish and sea turtles is currently

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unknown. The FDOT will continue coordination with NMFS on potential impacts associated with pile driving activities.

- The contractor will be required to use a ramp-up procedure during the installation of piles. This procedure allows for a gradual increase in noise level to give sensitive species ample time to flee prior to initiation of full noise levels. This approach can also reduce the likelihood of any secondary or sub-lethal effects from sound impulses associated with pile driving.
- Implement the *Standard Protection Measures for the Eastern Indigo Snake* prior to construction.
- The FDOT will ensure nesting shorebird protection during construction by surveying appropriate habitat during the nesting season.

[\[3 - 424501-1_ProjectCommitmentRecordReport\]](#)

9. STATUS OF PERMITS**Federal**

Segment	Name	Descriptor	Status	Date
	USACE Section 10 or Section 404 Permit		Needed	
	USCG Bridge Permit		Needed	

State

Segment	Name	Descriptor	Status	Date
	DEP National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit		Needed	
	DEP or WMD Environmental Resource Permit (ERP)		Needed	

Local

None anticipated.

Other

None anticipated.

10. CONCLUSION

- The project has been re-evaluated pursuant to 23 CFR § 771.129. The FDOT has determined that no changes to the project affect the original decision. Therefore, the Administrative Action remains valid and the project can advance.

11. DISTRICT REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Name and title of FDOT Preparer: Robin Rhinesmith, Environmental Administrator

The environmental review, consultation, and other actions required by applicable federal environmental laws for this project are being, or have been, carried out by the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) pursuant to 23 U.S.C. §327 and a Memorandum of Understanding dated December 14, 2016 and executed by the Federal Highway Administration and FDOT.

OEM approval required? Yes

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Robin Rhinesmith

April 23, 2020

District approving authority or designee

Date



Electronically signed within SWEPT
on April 23, 2020 7:40:39 AM EDT
(electronic signature on file)

12. OEM CONCURRENCE

Jason Watts

May 19, 2020

Print Name

Date

Director of the Office of Environmental Management or Designee



Electronically signed within SWEPT
on May 19, 2020 1:15:34 PM EDT
(electronic signature on file)

13. Links to Supporting Documentation

**RE-EVALUATION
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- 1 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-I-275_Public_Hearing_Transcript_and_Certification-2020-0416.pdf](#)
- 2 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-USFWS_Concurrence_Letter-2020-0220.pdf](#)
- 3 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-424501-1_PCR_042220-2020-0316.pdf](#)
- 4 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-SHPO_Concurrence_CRAS_Addendum-2020-0312.pdf](#)
- 5 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-NMFS_Reasonable_Assurance_Letter-2020-0220.pdf](#)
- 6 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-424501-4_LRTP-2020-0312.pdf](#)
- 7 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-424501-4-1_Planning_Consistency_3-9-2020-2020-0312.pdf](#)
- 8 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-424501-5_LRTP-2020-0312.pdf](#)
- 9 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-424501-5_Planning_Consistency_3-9-2020-2020-0312.pdf](#)
- 10 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-424501-5_STIP_3-5-2020-2020-0312.pdf](#)
- 11 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-424501-5_TIP-2020-0312.pdf](#)
- 12 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-430500-1_LRTP-2020-0312.pdf](#)
- 13 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-430500-1_Planning_Consistency_3-9-2020-2020-0312.pdf](#)
- 14 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-430500-1_STIP_3-5-2020-2020-0312.pdf](#)
- 15 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-430500-1_TIP-2020-0312.pdf](#)
- 16 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-SHPO_Concurrence_CRAS_2019-2020-0320.pdf](#)
- 17 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-West_Indian_Manatee_Key-2020-0512.pdf](#)
- 18 - [42450112201-CE2-D7-Eastern_Indigo_Snake_Key-2020-0512.pdf](#)